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Adult English learners with Disabilities' Perceptions of Self-Efficacy and Algebra 1 Capabilities

Laura Ann Guillion
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Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

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Laura Ann Jackson Guillion

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Walden University

2024

Abstract

Adult English learners with Disabilities' Perceptions of Self-Efficacy

and Algebra 1 Capabilities

by

Laura Ann Jackson Guillion

MS, Trinity Washington University, 1998

BA, Xavier University of Louisiana, 1993

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy Education (Self-directed P-20)

Walden University

January 2024

Abstract

English learners with disabilities graduate from high school at lower rates than non-disabled, non-minority peers. These students face complex learning and performance challenges because of their learning disabilities and lack of English proficiency. The qualitative research question addressed how ten adult alternative high school English learners with disabilities perceived their self-efficacy to complete Algebra 1 graduation requirements amidst their dual classifications and perceived challenges. This general qualitative methodology design used Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1994) as a basis to create the interview protocol and drive the data analysis. Selection criteria included adult, alternative high school English learners with learning disabilities who needed the Algebra 1 state assessment or course as part of their high school graduation requirements. The descriptive, general qualitative analysis included open coding and thematic development processes with qualitative data from ten selected interviewees. The analysis showed how the participants' responses aligned with the theory components and influenced self-efficacy perceptions. The results highlighted that the interviewees held negative self-efficacy perceptions about their dual classification, capability to learn in school, and potential to pass Algebra 1 graduation requirements. The results revealed how this subgroup needs self-efficacy awareness instruction to improve dual classification usage and reduce academic failure rates. Self-efficacy awareness can improve compliance with dual classification services and increase student performance outcomes. The study supports using nationwide transition planning initiatives to bolster dual classification self-efficacy awareness, improve academic outcomes, and career preparedness options.

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Dedication

This dissertation research project was dedicated to my family, friends, and various supporters who loved and supported me throughout the years. I dedicate this study to the loving memory of my dad, James Daniel Jackson Jr., and mother, Lenore Marie, whom I miss dearly. To my spiritual mother, Rebecca Banks, who showed me unconditional love from the moment we met. For my unborn child, I informally named Unique, I always loved you...you stay in my heart, and I miss you more than you could ever know. To my beloved family members: America Madere, L'Ester Jackson, James D. Jackson Sr., Walter Pascal, Augustine Smith, Betty Smith, Joseph Jackson, Denise Jackson, Cynthia Jackson, Cynthia French, Joel Vincent, Louise Catron, Nancy Horn, Gloria Williams, and a host of others who touched my life. These beautiful spirits and others inspired my dreams, interests, goals in ways that I will never forget. Without you, this project would never have made it to completion.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

English learners with disabilities have unique learning challenges associated with their distinct dual classification as an English learner and student with disabilities as certified by the U.S. Department of Education. Schools in the United States are increasingly struggling to improve poor educational outcomes for English learners with disabilities despite the enactment of federal mandates such as the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975 (Suk et al., 2020; Sugarman, 2019; Tefera, 2019). English learners with disabilities from all high school settings, including adult students, graduate with a regular or standard high school diploma at rates that are significantly lower than their non-disabled, non-minority peers, a challenge that permeates across the nation (Rivera-Singletary & Cranston-Gingras, 2020; Sugarman, 2019). Poor performance outcomes for English learners with disabilities in content areas, specifically mandatory math courses like Algebra 1, contribute to their unsuccessful or delayed completion of high school (Lei et al., 2020; Yamaguchi et al., 2020). Educators need studies that concisely uncover information related to why English learners with disabilities experience failures and challenges to meet important high school course requirements like Algebra 1.

English learners with disabilities constitute one of the fastest and largest growing student populations in the United States. Research confirmed that English learners comprise about ten percent of the total student population; English learners with disabilities, a subset of the English Learner population, account for roughly 15% of students classified with disabilities nationwide (Blazar & Archer, 2018; Carnock & Silva,

2019; Hoover et al., 2018). These statistics confirm high enrollment rates of English learners with disabilities in elementary, middle, and high schools.

Students with the dual classification of English learner with disabilities typically received the English learner status as their initial educational classification. The English learner classification stipulates that these students receive educational services to support challenges associated with limited English proficiency (Carnock & Silva, 2019; Kangas, 2018, 2020; Trainor et al., 2019). This student classification indicates that these learners have learning issues associated with learning academic language. It enables them to receive services and resources towards become proficient in the use of English language, particularly to support academic language development across subject areas. This classification also indicated that the students had challenges with academic language. Academic language are words needed to achieve success in specific subject areas.

Furthermore, students with this specific dual classification consequently received the disability status as their second educational classification; once identified, the student received a specific disability classification. Disabilities such as specific learning disabilities, emotional/behavioral disabilities, other health impairment, speech or language impairment, mild intellectual disabilities, dyslexia, dysgraphia, and attention deficit-hyperactivity disorder are considered “high-incidence disabilities” (Friedensen et al., 2021; National Center for Education Statistics, 2021; Thull, 2019).

My dissertation research only included participants who were English learners diagnosed with learning disabilities and emotional/behavioral disabilities. There is limited literature on English learners with disabilities, particularly among older students

in this group who are close to or at the age of majority. Additionally, there is a lack of focused literature that highlights English learners with disabilities understanding of and perceptions about their disability classification with emphasis on those in high school versus middle school. Some studies that examined teacher perceptions and younger English learners with disabilities' perceptions revealed that targeted groups' perceived capabilities to learn and perform in academic courses affected their learning outcomes (Kangas, 2020; King-Sears & Strogilos, 2020). However, few studies explore English learners with disabilities' personal perceptions of their capabilities as students, particularly those classified as adults in high school settings with the simultaneous learning challenges of being an English learner with a disability.

As a high school special education professional, I have encountered many English learners with disabilities struggling to reach academic benchmarks across subject areas necessary to meet high school diploma requirements. Many of these students experienced challenges understanding and using services associated with their dual classification. While supporting these students during their enrollment and candidacy assessment, I noticed that in most instances, they were usually over the age of 18 and had been in high school for extended periods. After these meetings, in most cases, the recommendations entailed granting the adult students access to academic services, accessibility, and accommodations to work towards meeting their high school graduation requirements.

The lack of focused literature related to English learners with high-incidence disabilities has failed to highlight or address complex educational issues due to learning challenges associated with these identified dual classifications. Educators found that the

distinct educational challenges faced by English learners with disabilities affected their learning because these students received assessment scores with rates usually below the rates of their peers with single classifications of English learner or student with disabilities (Sugarman, 2019). Additionally, the lack of focused literature failed to reveal that as these students get older, their learning challenges tended to shift, if not increase, due to circumstances within and outside of school. Students with this dual classification had multifaceted societal, economic, and educational challenges to successfully learn and perform in academic environments partially attributed to their compounded barriers of limited English proficiency and disability status (Carnock & Silva, 2019; Kangas, 2018, 2020; Lei et al., 2020; Trainor & Robertson, 2019). Many English learners with disabilities had a long history of academic struggles ongoing minimally through middle school and into their high school settings. Somehow, amidst their arduous educational challenges, these students found ways to stay in school because clearly there was a desire to learn.

It is an accepted belief that English learners with disabilities' desire to learn often does not match their learning outcomes, but it is believed that self-efficacy is an effective tool to achieve desirable learning outcomes. Bandura (1977) formulated the concept of self-efficacy to explore how it can act as a predictor for a person's behavior. Bandura (1977) used self-efficacy in research to explain people's beliefs in their capabilities to achieve outcomes, stating that self-efficacy describes people's assuredness that they can execute actions that will lead to specific, successful outcomes. The four elements that inform people's self-efficacy include performance accomplishments, vicarious

experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states (Bandura, 1977). Each of these elements can influence self-efficacy. These elements inform whether people may have high or low levels of self-efficacy, which stipulates their perceived confidence to achieve specific outcomes. Some educational research explored self-efficacy to evaluate if it impacts student outcomes (King-Sears & Strogilos, 2020; Pham et al., 2020; Unrau et al., 2018; Vukman et al., 2017). These studies substantiate that positive self-efficacy does support increases in positive outcomes.

Self-efficacy is a relevant area to examine students while they attend high school to see how it might inform their academic behaviors and outcomes. The concept of self-efficacy asserts that it can help or hinder student outcomes. Self-efficacy in high school students impacts academic performance (Vukman et al., 2017). Current trends in educational research focused on how self-efficacy as an element impacted student outcomes, showed that self-efficacy had a direct impact on subject area outcome rates (Kangas, 2020; King-Sears & Strogilos, 2020). Self-efficacy encompasses pupils' beliefs about their capabilities to complete upcoming assignments or reach educational goals (Unrau et al., 2018; Yuen & Datu, 2021; Zeldin & Pajares, 2000). Studies confirmed that positive self-efficacy influences positive results (Yuen & Datu, 2021). If students felt confident or believed they could do well, the performances tended to be good or desirable. Conversely, negative self-efficacy usually resulted in poorer outcomes (Soland & Sandilos, 2020). If students lacked confidence or did not believe they knew the material, they tended to receive lower scores or struggled with the tasks.

Despite the enactment of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 and Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 1975, which act as protective federal mandates for students with disabilities and limited English proficiency, English learners with disabilities experienced significant rates of inequitable instruction, unfair academic practices related to special education and English Learner services, and oppressive educational policies and racist ideologies directed at them in U.S. school districts (Cruze & Lopez, 2020; Kangas, 2018, 2020; Suk et al., 2020; Tefera, 2019). These academic experiences must have some effect on how English learners with high-incidence disabilities feel about their capabilities to learn in school.

Many English learners with disabilities experience non-academic challenges such as interrupted or reduced formal schooling, poor attendance, lack of healthcare, unstable medical care, and economic disadvantage (Carnock & Silva, 2019, Fontenot et al., 2019). These negative experiences place English learners with high-incidence disabilities in adverse positions to assess their capabilities to be present and learn in school as they encounter different external barriers with their dual learning challenges. Some studies determined that English learners with disabilities' decisions not to use both sets of services related to their dual classification contributed to their low-performance rates (Kangas, 2020; Tefera, 2019). Different personal and academic challenges place many English learners with disabilities in positions where they periodically must think about their capabilities to learn amidst these educational and personal circumstances. As previously mentioned, assorted reasons contribute to many English learners with disabilities falling behind academically and placed this student population in

disadvantaged positions to continue receiving instruction that might not effectively meet their needs.

These circumstances position English learners with disabilities to matriculate through less challenging subject courses to meet graduation requirements. Consequently, English learners with disabilities do not follow the same academic trajectory as their general education peers. For example, Kangas and Cook (2020) noted that in many instances, middle school English learners with high-incidence disabilities do not register in required or higher-level courses in math, science, and English. Because of the lack of academic achievement of many English learners with disabilities (Kangas, 2019; Sugarman, 2019; Trainor & Robertson, 2020), they tend to not keep pace with sequential course expectations and fail to meet expected graduation expectations.

Using the Algebra 1 course requirement as an example, many English learners with disabilities experienced delayed grade enrollment and poor performance outcomes (Lei et al., 2020; Yamaguchi et al., 2020). Failures in this course caused students to be placed in Algebra 1 remedial courses or to repeat the same Algebra 1 courses. For example, state education agencies created courses like Algebra 1 part 1 and Algebra 1 part 2, which offer a two-year option to complete the Algebra 1 math requirements. States like Louisiana, Virginia, and New Hampshire offer alternative math course graduation requirement options affiliated with their disabilities classification status to students identified as English learners with disabilities; these options divide year-long courses into two-year course options (Zinth, 2012). In these situations, the students spend at least an additional summer or year attempting to satisfy the Algebra 1 graduation requirements.

In Virginia, some school districts use Algebra Functions and Data Analysis (AFDA) as a remediation course to strengthen students' capacities to pass the Algebra 1 state benchmark assessment. The selected school district where the current study takes place reported that there are several alternative high school programs that offer AFDA as a course option for meeting graduation requirements. An alternative high school program location is appropriate because it has adult English learners with high-incidence disabilities who need to pass the Algebra 1 assessment to meet the state math graduation requirements. English learners with disabilities at this location hold enrollment status in either the AFDA course or need to repeat the Algebra 1 course to participate in remediation strategies to meet the math requirement. These remediation course offerings tend to bridge typical math offerings such as summer school to help them satisfy the requirement. These identified parameters led to the choice to use participants in a suburban east coast school district either presently or having just completed the courses of either Algebra 1 or AFDA as part of the setting for the study.

English learners with disabilities who are enrolled in the remediation or alternative course options generally extend their graduation timeframe to meet graduation requirements. Studies showed that students within this group used this extended graduation time option. The delays or inability to reach satisfactory performance rates across content areas caused many English learners with high-incidence disabilities to take compulsory education courses as adults (between the ages of 18 and 22). This educational situation placed these students in adverse positions to either not graduate with a standard high school diploma, or to graduate high school significantly later than their non-dual

designated peers (Rivera-Singletary & Cranston-Gingras, 2020; Sugarman, 2019). Consequently, there is a need for research to obtain data on English learners with disabilities to focus information about how these challenges affect these English learners with disabilities' perceptions about learning high school content as adults alongside younger students in high school settings. Furthermore, the same research would provide information regarding how these perceptions affect their self-efficacy that, in turn, affects their academic mindset, which directly impacts their academic performance, persistence, and behavior.

Background

This section provided information pertaining to English learners with disabilities' background as to why they experienced classification and learning issues that resulted in poor performance outcomes. This section also gave insight into the perceptions that adult English learners with disabilities hold and why it is important to study this demographic. The literature discusses why this demographic of students might understand and hold certain perceptions related to their dual classifications and their capabilities to learn in high school. Educational research strives to examine how English learners with disabilities' perspectives of their capabilities in the connection to the dual classification impacts their mindsets, social skills, behaviors, and performances in different educational courses and settings (Farrington et al., 2012; Han et al., 2020; Wanzer et al., 2019). First, I discussed why English learners with disabilities might not understand their classifications. I then provided information as to why English learners with disabilities may have negative outcomes in educational settings relative to their dual classification

status. Information was also included about why many English learners with disabilities transferred to alternative high school programs, and why many English learners with disabilities experienced prolonged years in high school settings as compared to their peers. Next, I explained why many English learners with disabilities received compulsory educational instruction as adults and described negative circumstances and outcomes for English learners with disabilities depending on when they completed the math requirement of Algebra 1, including subsequent secondary course options and graduation timelines. Lastly, I shared why I chose to focus my research on English learners with disabilities enrolled in two specific math courses. The information in this section provided a broad description of circumstances and common experiences of adult English learners with disabilities to offer key background information about the participants I used the study in my research.

Dual Classification Decision-Making Issues

Despite federal mandates to reduce educational inequities for English learners with disabilities, including adult students, studies have highlighted how English learners with high-incidence disabilities frequently experienced misclassification of either special education or English learner eligibility (Golloher et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2017; Trainor et al., 2019). Furthermore, educators continue to struggle with the appropriate identification of disability classifications for English learners with disabilities (Trainor et al., 2019). Additionally, as English learners with disabilities matriculate into their later years of schooling, their educational classifications and services become more concentrated on special education needs and lack English language educational services (Kangas, 2019;

Lei et al., 2020). These circumstances offer reasons why English learners with disabilities lack understanding of their dual classification status in terms of how the classification status has associated challenges that impacted their learning (Golloher et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2017; Trainor et al., 2019). These circumstances are challenging for English learners with disabilities to know how their barriers affect their capabilities to learn. It also causes English learners with disabilities to feel uncertain about when and how to use services associated with their dual classifications.

Explanation of Some ELSWD Negative Outcomes

Studies have shown that students with dual classifications received inequitable, inadequate educational services in comparison to their peers considered non-minority, non-disabled, or singularly classified as either English learner or as a student with high-incidence disabilities (Kangas, 2018, 2020; Lei et al., 2020; Trainor & Robertson, 2019). This may explain why English learners with disabilities often receive instruction not accessible or understandable for them. The lack of instruction may cause English learners with disabilities to be more likely to fall behind their grade-level peers academically (Kangas, 2018, 2020; Lei et al., 2020; Trainor & Robertson, 2019). However, these researchers do not discuss if English learners with disabilities realize the precarious academic positions they could encounter. Trainor and Robinson (2020) reiterated how educators that lack information about the different academic activities, academic language structures, delivery of instruction, class communication structures, perceptions of insider/outsider peer or student relationships might influence English learners with disabilities' abilities to learn, receive instruction, or perform. Additionally, this lack of

information directly affects English learners with disabilities' beliefs about learning or potential decision-making options that influence their behaviors and performances. Furthermore, this lack of information impacts what educators know about English learners with disabilities' self-efficacy to engage as individuals and collaboratively with peers to learn and practice necessary decision-making skills.

Reasons English learners with Disabilities Transfer to Alternative High School Programs

Historically, comprehensive high schools have failed to meet the academic needs and challenges faced by English learners with disabilities. Research findings demonstrate that student challenges such as continued academic failures, expansive classroom enrollment sizes, specificity of dual academic needs, and unavailability of appropriate curricula in comprehensive high schools do not meet the dual educational needs for English learners with disabilities (Flores, 2021; Kangas, 2019). These challenges lead many English learners with disabilities to transfer to other high school educational settings that might provide the appropriate support to meet their academic needs. Students classified as English learners, students with high-incidence disabilities, and English learners with disabilities are some populations commonly enrolled in alternative high school programs. Students register in these academic locations as they often offer specialized curricula to improve learning outcomes and/or remediation courses for academic credit recovery frequently not provided in comprehensive high schools (Dougherty & MacDonald, 2020; Flores, 2021; Honeycutt et al., 2017). Moreover, many alternative high schools offer specialized career exploration courses that not only enable students to meet high school graduation requirements but also support preparedness to

transition into postsecondary education or employment placement (Cushing et al., 2019; Dougherty & MacDonald, 2020; Plasman et al., 2020). However, there is limited literature on how English learners with disabilities perceive their capabilities to learn in an alternative high school in relation to comprehensive schools.

Extended Time in High School for English learners with Disabilities

The prolonged academic failures and specialized needs of English learners with disabilities, particularly due to ineffective academic instruction and lack of related resources for special education and English Learner services in high school settings, often cause these students to remain in high school in some cases even through young adulthood. As a result, high school settings across the nation have many students who are between the ages of 18 and 22. The federal mandates, Every Student Succeeds Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act stipulate that students certified as students with disabilities and ELs are entitled to prescriptive academic services associated with these dual classifications through the age of 22 (Cushing et al., 2019; Honeycutt et al., 2017; Smith et al., 2021; Tomasello & Brand, 2018; Tucker et al., 2019). Additional research is needed to establish the link between self-efficacy and how English learners with disabilities' dual classification status influences their perceptions about their abilities to remain in school to meet high school requirements in nontraditional high school settings.

Reasons Adult English learners with disabilities Receive Compulsory Education Instruction

Although English learners with disabilities are legally understood to be adults, they receive academic services under compulsory education to meet their respective state

general high school diploma requirements. Just like their underage peers, these students receive evidence-based educational services that are rooted in current pedagogical practices. These adult students learn in teacher-controlled settings where the respective state governing educational agencies determine subject matters taught and ways to use learning processes (McNally et al., 2019), as outlined by the respective state departments of education. Students who are over 18 in high school settings do not receive educational services through self-directed instructional methods geared for adults known as andragogical practices. Andragogical practices give more autonomy and responsibility for performance and learning to the adult student and tend to focus on continued learning processes within specific careers (McNally et al., 2019). Educational services for English learners with high-incidence disabilities must align with pedagogical practices as stipulated with the federal mandates ESSA (2015), IDEA (2008), and WIOA (2014).

Reasons Why I Selected to Use Students in Algebra 1 and AFDA

Delays in access to classes, lower performance rates, and unsuccessful completion of courses such as Algebra I, which is a requirement for graduation, significantly contributes to English learners with disabilities being less likely to graduate from high school and lower on-time graduation rates (Cipollone et al., 2020; Corin et al., 2020; Thompson, 2017; Yamaguchi et al., 2020). As one of the first required high school courses, Algebra 1 is a critical indicator of students' preparedness to access rigorous analytical high school courses, higher education placements, and competitive employment in the global marketplace (Thompson, 2017; Yamaguchi et al., 2020). If students did not pass this course early in their high school career, it possibly incurred a

delayed graduation timeline. Many high school English learners with disabilities do not receive appropriate math instruction across math subjects because their programming favors a focus on the math content academic language (Lei et al., 2020). Some research highlights how critical lack of preparedness rates in Algebra 1 for English learners with disabilities is problematical and contributes to this population being in jeopardy to require more time to finish high school or not graduate (Cipollone et al., 2020; Corin et al., 2020; Trainor et al., 2019). Any delay or repetition of this course can subsequently have negative impacts on students not having access to higher analytical courses or matriculate sequentially through courses as state graduation benchmarks outline. This course, therefore, is critically important because it informally serves as a regulated pathway to meet graduation requirements. Plus, pending the grade level students might take the course, it partially dictates the parameters of students' graduation timelines. There is a lack of information about English learners with disabilities' perceptions of their capabilities and reasons for enrollment in these courses. These perceptions might offer information about self-efficacy perceptions as they influence their academic mindsets, academic behaviors, and academic perseverance levels.

Researchers found that English learners with disabilities in a suburban east coast school district displayed low performance and inadequate Algebra 1 assessment outcomes (Yamaguchi et al., 2020). The study indicated the low performance and inadequate Algebra 1 assessment outcomes were the results of their levels and lack of preparedness to take the course content. The study also discussed that some students are not ready to take Algebra 1 content in earlier years such as middle school even though it

is an enrollment practice in many school districts (Yamaguchi et al., 2020). The researchers suggest that many English learners with disabilities do not experience successful outcomes with this course requirement. It is possible that some English learners with disabilities may struggle to meet these academic requirements because of dual educational challenges associated with academic language or mathematical skills. What the study did not establish was the role that self-efficacy could have played to support the students obtain higher Algebra 1 outcomes regardless of age that they attempt to meet this course requirement.

The information from the study provided a clear indication of the linkage between the completion of Algebra 1 and successful outcomes related to graduation requirements. In the school district where this research was conducted, alternative high school programs reported having several adult English learners with disabilities in classes for Algebra 1 remediation to meet the math graduation assessment requirement. These elements led to the selection of the Algebra 1 and Algebra Functions and Data Analysis courses of choice in Virginia as part of the setting for the study. This study provided information about how adult English learners with disabilities' self-efficacy perceptions, beliefs, and feelings related to their dual classifications impacted their decision-making in the specified courses targeted to support students' efforts to satisfactorily meet Algebra 1 requirements. Like many subject area courses, students must receive instruction in various formats, take notes, complete assignments such as guided practice and individual tasks, take informal and formal assessments, work independently and collaboratively with peers, etc. These courses offered me the opportunities to pose questions about how these

adult English learners with disabilities, relative to their dual classification status, perceived their capabilities to learn and make decisions within the context of selected factors while in these classes.

Problem Statement

English learners with disabilities are one of the fastest and largest identified student demographics who display significantly lower high school graduation rates in comparison to their non-disabled, non-minority peers across the nation. One of many aspects that contribute to the lower graduation rates are that many adult English learners with disabilities take required courses, such as those to meet Algebra 1 requirements later than anticipated. Studies indicate that the lack of Algebra 1 preparedness contributes to poor performance outcomes, which then result in delayed or unsuccessful completion of high school (Lei et al., 2020; Sugarman, 2019; Yamaguchi et al., 2020). Furthermore, the delayed or unsuccessful completion of high school for English learners with disabilities effects postsecondary placement options such as lower matriculation rates into higher education placements, vocational placements, and trouble securing gainful competitive domestic and global careers for English learners with disabilities as compared to their non-disabled, non-minority peers (Cipollone et al., 2020; Corin et al., 2020; Trainor et al., 2019).

Distinctly, these studies do not address how self-efficacy could affect the choices of dual designated students regarding to taking, persisting in, and being successful in required courses such as Algebra I or beyond. Furthermore, there is a lack of information about how the delays in taking Algebra 1 affect English learners with disabilities' self-

efficacy perceptions about their abilities to complete these courses. Studying English learners with disabilities' self-efficacy perceptions of their dual classification will offer information related to their feelings and perceptions of learning or performing in courses, especially their math classes. It is possible that the English learners with disabilities' self-efficacy perceptions may affect how they learn and perform in the classes as well as how self-efficacy is in turn affected by their performance. Regardless, there is a lack of evidence how these delays influence the self-efficacy of English learners with disabilities in relationship to how these courses influence their potential to enter other desired postsecondary placements.

There are many students classified as English learners with disabilities who attend the alternative high school program I selected for this study. For the past 10 years, English learners with disabilities in this school shared their acknowledgment of issues that impacted their learning and performance. Throughout these years, I have seen English learners with disabilities struggles in classes in areas such as academic language associated with content instruction, taking notes, attend classes despite personal problems, abilities to read and follow instructional directions, use notes to study for quizzes or tests, orally initiate or respond to class lectures, complete assignments independently or collaboratively in class, fail quizzes, and experience failure or difficulty to start or finish classwork or homework. During informal meetings with these English learners with disabilities to discuss their academic challenges, we formulated academic plans for remediation, students shared information about their academic hardships, learning difficulties, frustrations with being in academic settings, disappointments with

their academic performance failures, plus anger and confused statements about not being able to learn as individuals and as their peers. Many times, the students would speak about feelings of isolation but also not wanting to work with peers. The statements included admittance of low attendance, inconsistent low grades across subject area courses, preferences to work alone, tendencies to have after-school jobs despite attending high school full-time, not liking their classification as English learners or students with disabilities, and their inability or inaccuracy to state the nature of their disabilities.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this general qualitative analysis study was to explore how adult English learners with disabilities perceive self-efficacy related to their dual classifications of English Learner and special education influence their beliefs as learners and their decision-making, and how these beliefs influence their school performance, specifically to meet the Algebra 1 requirements. The research question explored how their self-efficacy regarding their dual classification influenced their beliefs in themselves as learners, and their decision-making processes about their education. I framed the inquiry on how their perceived self-efficacy influenced and manifested in meeting Algebra 1 requirements at an alternative high school program. The study explored the students' perceptions of their academic abilities and perceived constraints related to their dual classification status, which include being a student with a disability and an English learner. Furthermore, the study explores if the students' perceptions of self-efficacy in relation to this dual designation influenced their beliefs and feelings about themselves as learners and contributed to their rationale for why they felt they were or were not

successful or capable of being successful. The courses to meet Algebra 1 requirements offer opportunities for the study to capture the array of examples of what English learners with disabilities' self-efficacy perceptions might include.

There is a gap in the research literature regarding how English learners with disabilities, particularly those in high school settings and adult students in high school settings, understand and perceive their dual classification status. This lack of understanding, in turn, leads to a possible inability to determine their academic needs, and affects their capabilities to learn, which is further impacted by either individual classification status. The study's purpose encompassed the possibility to gain an understanding of the participants' self-efficacy with the dual classifications that had the potential to come close or align with their perceptions of their potential for learning and corresponding possible performance outcomes. There was lack of evidence if these adult English learners with disabilities' perceptions of self-efficacy influenced their capacity to make informed decisions, noted receptiveness to believing that the dual classification support capability to perform, and provided an understanding of specific course requirements, including Algebra 1. Therefore, research is needed to provide understanding as to whether and how these English learners with disabilities state and act on their self-efficacy perceptions and explain its connective influence on their secondary and postsecondary needs, interests, goals, behaviors, and outcomes.

Research Question

Many studies have shown a link between self-efficacy and academic achievement in academic areas such as Algebra 1(King-Sears & Strogilos, 2018; Pham & Murray,

2019; Soland & Sandilos, 2020; Unrau et al., 2018). These studies showed that English learners with disabilities struggle to pass required courses at similar rates and ages as their non-minority and non-disabled peers. Some issues that impacted academic achievement included expansive enrollment sizes, poor performance outcomes, specificity of their dual academic needs, and unavailability of appropriate curriculum in comprehensive high schools in many instances do not meet the dually-certified educational needs for English learners with disabilities (King-Sears & Strogilos, 2018; Pham & Murray, 2019; Soland & Sandilos, 2020; Unrau et al., 2018). Therefore, many English learners with high-incidence disabilities tended to take high school courses as adults versus traditional high school students who are usually under the age of 18.

As a result of not effectively using resources in comprehensive high school settings, many English learners with disabilities transferred to alternative high school programs to use credit recovery services to support their completion of high school requirements. This situation contributed to continued and extenuated barriers for English learners with disabilities to meet high school diploma requirements. There is a lack of research regarding the causes of these challenges. The challenges included a lack of understanding of their dual classification, resulting in a lack of use of English learner and special education (SPED) services that have proven to increase graduation rates. These factors led many English learners with disabilities to spend extended years in high school plus transfer to alternative high school programs to meet graduation requirements. There is a lack of focused information regarding why some English learners with disabilities may or may not feel high levels of self-efficacy with their dual classification, especially

with the latitude of support services associated with the forms of eligibility. This study has the potential to provide information as to why the English learners with disabilities do or do not hold levels of self-efficacy or lack thereof. This study provides information to inform other analyses to improve student understanding and learning in courses. The following research question guided this study:

RQ 1: How do adult English learners with disabilities perceive their self-efficacy while completing Algebra 1 requirements in an alternative high school setting?

I asked interview questions that elicited information about how they viewed their dual classifications, learn, consider options, and make certain decisions in their academic classes, particularly math classes to meet the Algebra 1 requirements. The question explored the self-efficacy beliefs of these adult English learners with disabilities as to how they perceived their dual classification influenced their perceived capabilities to learn.

Theoretical Framework

A theoretical framework informs the preliminary format and subject formation of a study regarding the foundational premise for the problem statement, literature review, data collection, and data analysis (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). This statement meant that a theoretical framework gives insight and a path towards a researcher's specific way to explore an issue or phenomenon. Ravitch and Carl (2021) reiterated that a theoretical framework reflects the manner that a researcher selects to not only employ a particular theory to a phenomenon, but deliberately have it guide the study's components

development. A theoretical framework allowed me to examine ways a confirmed theory was relevant, connected to, and informed people's thoughts, perspectives, or actions.

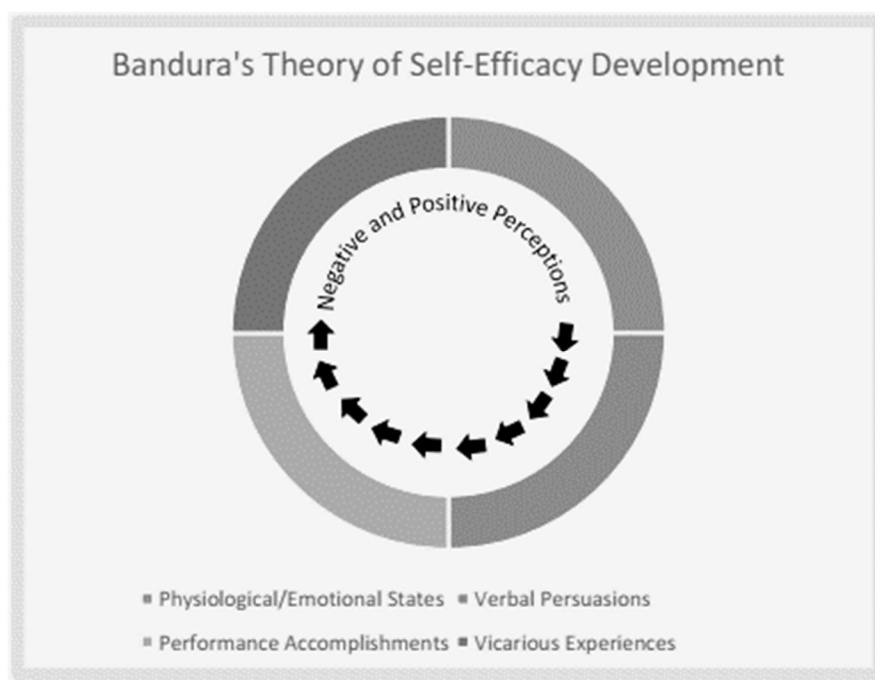
The theoretical framework chosen for this research was Bandura's self-efficacy framework. For the purposes of this study, I explored adult English learners with disabilities' self-efficacy perspectives related to their dual classification. Bandura (1977) created the concept of self-efficacy to explore how it can act as a predictor for a person's behavior. Bandura used self-efficacy in research to explain people's beliefs in their capabilities to achieve select outcomes. Bandura (1977) stated that self-efficacy explains people's assuredness that they can execute actions that will lead to specific, successful outcomes. The four elements which inform people's self-efficacy include performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states (Bandura, 1977). Each of these elements can influence self-efficacy. These elements inform whether people may have high or low levels of self-efficacy, which stipulates their perceived confidence to achieve specific outcomes. Some educational research explored self-efficacy to evaluate if it has an impact on student outcomes (King-Sears & Strogilos, 2020; Pham et al., 2020; Unrau et al., 2018; Vukman et al., 2017). These studies substantiated that positive self-efficacy does support increases in positive outcomes.

I created a model to illustrate how Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1994) might relate to adult English learners with disabilities to succeed in academic settings (see Figure 1). I wanted to explore how they perceived their dual classifications influenced their capabilities to succeed. The exploration aimed to provide an

understanding of how students perceive their self-efficacy as individuals and members in specific math classes within the contexts of specific factors. I wanted to understand how the self-efficacy of their dual classification informed their perceptions of their learning challenges, beliefs to learn, and decisions they made within the context of specific factors while in learning environments. This study examined how they perceived these specific factors informed their social interactions, academic mindsets, academic perseverance, academic behavior, and academic performance.

Figure 1

Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1994)



Nature of the Study

This dissertation was a basic qualitative research study. The dissertation research used a general qualitative design to conduct a general descriptive qualitative analysis. I examined English learners with disabilities' perceptions regarding if there was a

relationship of their self-efficacy and their dual learning challenges. The study aimed to investigate the perspectives of ten adult English learners with disabilities taking specific math courses to meet Algebra 1 requirements at an alternative high school program.

Qualitative research allows researchers opportunities to investigate perspectives of any select population of choice (Maxwell, 2013). I used this qualitative study to share unique perspectives of adult English learners with high-incidence disabilities impacted by special learning barriers not previously explored in educational research.

Qualitative research is an inquiry that enables researchers to uncover and chronicle specific people's actions and thoughts that represent or signify to them in richly descriptive written forms. Qualitative research allows one to describe how and why people feel, think, act, or react in a specific setting such as time, place, or circumstances that may not seem apparent or they may not be aware of. Ravitch and Carl (2021) declared how qualitative research uncovers these descriptions through the term, epistemology. The researchers stated that epistemology is a philosophical assumption of qualitative research that expresses how one sees, identifies, and learns information: "How you view and gain knowledge as well as know what you know" (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 5). This qualitative research provided details regarding how the participants' perceptions of self-efficacy about their dual classifications influenced their beliefs, decision-making, learning, engagement, and behaviors in the specific math class in ways that the students themselves might not comprehend or acknowledge. My qualitative design decision supported my choice to investigate how this group understood their self-efficacy and viewed their dual status as it related to their abilities to learn and make decisions.

Definitions

For this study, the terms defined include.

Adult English learners: This term referred to students classified as English learners between the ages of eighteen through twenty-two (McFarland et al., 2019).

Alternative high schools/programs: This term referred to small, high school settings where high school students receive specialized instruction focused on academic credit recovery, behavioral adaption, or career exploration in areas such as science, technology, engineering, and mathematics (Dougherty & Macdonald, 2020; Plasman et al., 2020).

Beliefs: This term was defined as “part of a system that includes our values and attitudes, plus our personal knowledge, experiences, opinions, prejudices, morals, and other interpretive perceptions of the of the social world” (Saldana, 2016, p. 132).

Classification: This term referred to contextual, educational categorization defined by specific federal education criteria outlined by the U.S. Department of Education (Tefera, 2019).

English learners: This term referred to students classified as English learners diagnosed with limited English Proficiency who receive educational assistance for language and linguistic assistance barriers related to culture, ethnicity, linguistics, or diversity to support English language proficiency and academic standards achievement (Lei et al., 2020; McFarland et al., 2019; Trainor & Robinson, 2019; Turkan et al., 2019).

English learners with disabilities: This term referred to English learners with disabilities, who are dually classified students that receive services to support English language proficiency and one or more specific disabilities (Trainor et al., 2019).

Assumptions

There are three assumptions that I made in this qualitative study. This study included students classified as English learners with disabilities in a state on the east coast. My first assumption was that each of the dually classified student participants would respond honestly to each question in the interview protocol. This assumption entailed students speaking about their perceptions of self-efficacy regarding beliefs and decision-making related to their dual classifications of English Learner and special education statuses, not from the perceived voices of what they feel their family members, friends, peers, or teachers believe.

The second assumption included dual designated students' status as adult students who attended an alternative high school program because they strived to complete requirements for a standard high school diploma. I assumed that the students selected to participate in this study made their own decisions to attend an alternative high school program since they had this decision-making autonomy given their demographic status of having reached the age of majority.

The final assumption involved the notion of each participant being accurately classified as students with the dual classifications of English Learner and special education statuses. I assumed that no misidentification of English Learner or special education status existed. I assumed that each student received certification of having a

learning barrier associated with their English proficiency and with a least one type of disability that impacted their learning and performance in a general academic setting(s). I also assumed that each participant was aware and knowledgeable of their specific dual classification status as it related to their classification as a student with a high-incidence disability and English learner.

Scope and Delimitations

I elected to confine the study to using specific parameters, including selecting participants by their educational status, age, educational setting, and theoretical framework. The framework set parameters for the use of select evidence-based factors that informed student outcomes. Specifically, points of inclusionary criteria determined the population for this study. The inclusionary criteria included students classified as adult English learners with disabilities. These students had specific reasons they continued to be in high school at this age, held their unique educational classification status, and elected to attend alternative high school settings. Secondly, I chose specific courses taken by the students as a remedial or alternative course option that met graduation requirements and served as a school district graduation indicator. Potential candidates included adult English learners with disabilities at an alternative high school program who took a version of Algebra 1 or Algebra Function + Data Analysis to fulfill the math graduation requirements.

Several decisions determined the selection of exclusionary criteria for my study. I chose to exclude English learners with disabilities under the age of majority because their perspectives, needs, limitations, and motivations are often different from those of an

adult. I excluded English learners with disabilities who attended comprehensive high school settings. English learners with disabilities in comprehensive high schools who effectively used supports to sustain enrollment in general high school settings that my participants might not have accessed to or needed were undesirable. Additionally, the sustained registration of English learners with disabilities in comprehensive schools meant that they figured out how to effectively use identified supports in those settings that my participants did not. I narrowed the selection of factors used in this study to reflect ways in which self-efficacy related to outcomes mentioned in several related studies. Lastly, the decision to include these selected factors stemmed from my teaching experiences with this population because these students frequently made references to these factors. This study, using an evidence-based approach, provided the opportunity to examine how adult English learners with disabilities' perspectives of self-efficacy relative to their dual classification informed their perceptions of abilities to learn and make decisions.

Up to this time, I conducted informal assessments with these students, where I used the student information I gleaned and believed I helped these students. Yet I did not know how effective my methods were in these instances. This study provided me the opportunity to conduct an evidence-based examination where I practiced how to obtain data to support student outcomes. This study can help educators like me gain information to strengthen how we support and instruct this student population.

Limitations

There were a few potential limitations that impact this study. The identified dual classifications of English Learner and student with high-incidence disabilities, specifically those identified with a primary disability classification of specific learning disabilities limited the types of students used in the study. Two participants had the secondary disability classification of emotional/behavioral disability. The sample size did not exceed ten participants due to the number of students available in the selected alternative high school programs and identified math courses. The age of the student and high school placement were other limitations. I needed to finish the interviews during dates outside of the state-criterion subject area assessments. There is limited research which examines adult students with this dual classification in compulsory settings, particularly alternative high school programs. The selection of students who needed to meet the Algebra 1 requirement was a limitation. The participants in this study were adult English learners with disabilities who learned in pedagogical settings that focused on aiding students to meet compulsory education requirements; therefore, the literature reviewed to support my research questions maintained a focus on pedagogical methods and outcomes. This requirement informs future course offerings, which consequently makes it a gatekeeper for access to subsequent high school courses. The timeframe for taking the course can affect graduation timelines (including on-time and extended). The last limitation included the selection of the specified factors to frame the analysis of the data that informed the study. I elected to use the four components of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1994) to analyze the data.

Significance

The findings of this study were significant because understanding English learners with disabilities' self-efficacy beliefs may enable educators to better support these students to shift towards positive or proactive beliefs and behaviors that can improve their capabilities to learn and reach desirable academic outcomes. If students can understand their self-efficacy perceptions, they can empower themselves to better identify potential learning barriers and make more informative decisions on how to navigate the circumstance and use of classification resources to reduce potential negative repercussions. If students use self-efficacy perceptions to navigate their learning conditions and scenarios more effectively, they increase the likelihood to experience positive outcomes such as access to rigorous academic content, experience on-time or extended-time graduation opportunities, and greater career preparedness options. This study provided information about adult English learners with disabilities' self-efficacy perceptions, beliefs, and feelings related to their receptiveness of the dual classifications and how these perceptions impacted their decision-making, especially as it related to learning and their use of the dual services to achieve positive academic outcomes. Despite federal mandates to support English learners with disabilities, including adult students, to achieve positive educational outcomes, studies highlighted how English learners with disabilities frequently underwent misclassification of either SPED or EL eligibility processes, which contributed to their lack of understanding of their dual classification status (Golloher et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2017; Trainor et al., 2019). This study aimed to understand if these adult English learners with disabilities held any

misunderstandings, misuse, or misconceptions about their dual classification learning challenges and perceived capabilities to learn in their math courses to fulfill the Algebra 1 requirement. The study also sought to reveal if the participants could identify whether their self-efficacy perceptions had any impact on their decisions to engage in specific academic behaviors and affect their educational outcomes, particularly in Algebra 1, which is a requirement for graduation. Additionally, this study intended to uncover reasons as to why adult English learners with disabilities held perceptions related to potential perceived perspectives related to their perceptions of success in school, how these feelings about their dual classification influenced decisions made in general education, special education, and English Learner classes, and if they recognized the importance how their perceptions of these dual classifications impacted their abilities to learn.

This study may provide a premise for changing SEA and LEA transition planning policies, processes, and procedures across the nation, thereby establishing me as a social change agent in the areas of special education, English Learner, secondary school settings, and math. This study may potentially shift how educators understand and support adult English learners with disabilities to better understand how the students' self-efficacy perspectives about dual classifications could impact options and outcomes related to their social, educational, and employment opportunities. This study can also strengthen federal and state compliance of these resources as they relate to dual classification and general education instruction and implementation services. As a social change agent, I seek to enable educators to become social change agents. This study

seeks to facilitate social change by influencing educators to better understand the potential impact of adult English learners with disabilities' dual classification self-efficacy related to secondary and postsecondary outcomes.

This study may provide a foundation for best practices associated with English learners and special educators in the areas of IEP development, English Learner development, decision-making, transition planning, and implementation with an emphasis on student awareness, student agentic traits, student motivation, student engagement, student accountability, and self-advocacy. This study could drive additional research in SPED and English learners in explorations related to student perceptions of destiny and outcomes; student motivation, accountability, self-advocacy, and self-efficacy; and dual classification transition planning, implementation, and IEP development.

Summary

Prior research highlighted the unique learning challenges across high school settings associated with students classified as English learners with disabilities. Researchers noted the need for more research that identifies ways to improve low-performance outcomes across content areas with entitled educational services mandated by law, especially for this population in math. Research is needed to improve English learners with disabilities' academic outcomes in all high school settings to support their propensity to graduate with a regular high school diploma. There is a critical need to provide educators with support to aid English learners with disabilities, including adult students, to increase this population's abilities to achieve their high school requirements,

including the ability to pass the Algebra 1 benchmarks, as this requirement is needed for high school graduation. Educators need research studies concerning the dual classification of English learners with disabilities to inform the critical importance of how their dual learning challenges impact students' performances in math and, more importantly, graduation capability. I planned to conduct a study that examined if there was a relationship between the dually classified adult students' self-efficacy perceptions to satisfy Algebra 1 requirements and their dual classification.

In Chapter 2, the review included the rationale for researching this issue. I provided an overview about the historical context of adverse academic outcomes that led to educational federal mandates delineating how this population received the dual classification services and educational rights associated with their dual classifications. It also discussed studies using the selected theoretical framework to reduce negative outcome rates for English learners, students with disabilities, and English learners with disabilities. The literature review noted studies which examined students' math challenges, especially related to Algebra 1 requirements. It also discussed purposes for alternative high school settings. I also provided a profile of the school district, and the site of where the research study took place by providing specific demographic information.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Chapter two includes information about how the historical context of adverse educational outcomes led to federal mandates and studies aimed to improve performance rates, especially related to math graduation requirements for English learners with disabilities. There are select federal mandates that stipulate the criteria to qualify for educational services for individuals dually classified as English learners and students with disabilities. Adult English learners with high-incidence disabilities are not as likely to graduate from high school and achieve on-time graduation rates due to tendencies to lag with accessibility to classes, decreased performance rates related to nondisabled peers, and failure to complete courses like Algebra 1. Adult English learners with high-incidence disabilities are not as likely to graduate from high school and achieve on-time graduation rates due to limited access to classes, decreased performance rates relative to non-English Learner and nondisabled peers, and failure to complete benchmark courses like Algebra 1. The purpose of this general qualitative analysis study was to explore how adult English learners with disabilities perceived self-efficacy related to their dual classifications of English Learner and special education, influenced their beliefs to meet the Algebra 1 requirements. It inclusively explored their self-efficacy perceptions as learners, their decision-making processes, and how these beliefs influenced their school performance, specifically to satisfy the named graduation requirement.

It is essential to understand the historical context of students classified as both English learners and students with high-incidence disabilities who receive special education in U.S. public schools. The selected civil rights legislation mandates bring the

essential context of how historical educational and socioeconomic violations against the racial/ethnic affiliation and learning obstacles of English learners with disabilities caused widespread, adverse outcomes.

This literature review focused on the connectedness of how the learning obstacles and adverse educational outcomes of English learners with disabilities on a national level stemmed from their binary barriers of limited English-proficiency and disability need, which warranted federal protection of educational rights and services. The selected studies showed how various violations not only damaged or limited English learners with disabilities' capability to learn during compulsory education years but placed them in undesirable positions of matriculation into negative or minimized postsecondary employment options. These studies situated the premise of why there is a critical need for this study. Thus, this literature review provided evidence of the gap in the literature related to English learners with disabilities' understanding of why they need to simultaneously use special education and English Learner educational services to improve academic outcomes. My literature review presented the urgent problem of how English learners with disabilities' lack of understanding of their dual classifications contributed to their decisions to forego or underuse support services to which they are entitled and subsequent adverse academic outcomes. My study aimed to contribute evidence-based data regarding one sample of adult English learners with disabilities' perceptions about their abilities to make educational decisions based on their dual classifications.

This literature review included studies that highlighted adverse outcomes garnered by English learners with disabilities due to decisions to forego their dual classification services. It also identified relevant intervention studies aimed to improve academic outcomes with English learners with disabilities, along with those for students with high-incidence disabilities and English learners because many of the studies include English learners with disabilities inclusively. Consequently, the content discussed barriers for English learners with disabilities that affected efforts to increase graduation rates across high school settings in traditional and alternative high school programs.

My review overtly discussed high school students who were English learners with disabilities, were 18 years old, and that received special education and English Learner services. I explained how Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA), and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) attempted to uphold civil rights benefits and provide equitable education options for adult English learners with disabilities to prepare them to graduate high school and obtain gainful employment.

This literature review also noted how in special education, English learners with disabilities' lack of self-efficacy led to adverse outcomes such as low graduation and low on-time graduation rates compared to peers in other student populations. Some English learners with disabilities' lack of confidence and decisions to not appropriately use their dually classified services in Algebra 1 culminated in their inability to pass the class on time, if at all, which inadvertently affected their abilities to graduate. This literature review also highlighted the need for self-efficacy studies related to students dually

classified as English learners with disabilities. Specifically, this review intended to show the need for self-efficacy studies with English learners with disabilities, especially those labeled as adults, in mandatory courses required for high school graduation such as Algebra 1.

Literature Search Strategy

The quantitative and qualitative articles reviewed provided insight into different areas related to improving student outcomes through special education and English Learner services. Some studies examined outcomes of English learners with disabilities related to Algebra 1 and measures to meet high school graduation requirements. Other studies explored the implementation, documentation, communication, and compliance of the dually classified services across English learners with disabilities, peers with and without disabilities, and peers with and without the demographic classification of minority or non-minority status in various high school settings. Lastly, I also reviewed qualitative studies that described the perspectives, attitudes, and perceptions of roles associated with implementing dually classified educational services and compliance with this special education and English Learner services.

I took several steps to search for empirical documents to use for this literature review. Initially, I reviewed federal and state websites, which included various links from the U.S. Department of Education, U.S. Congress, U.S. Department of Labor, Virginia Department of Education to gather data related to the federal mandates ESSA of 2015, IDEA of 2008, and WIOA, 2014. Next, I used the Walden University Library, through Thoreau, to use select databases for the literature review search. The databases included

Academic Search Complete, ERIC, Education Source, and Sage Open Publications. I also used Google Scholar to find peer-reviewed documents with the selected key terms, many derived from the research question. I searched under the custom time range of years from January 2018-November 2021. Some of the earlier referenced articles in the literature review come from prior searches, which used the same key words and formerly written documents in my Walden University doctoral program. I checked off the option to use peer-reviewed articles. I primarily selected evidence-based documents consisting of peer-reviewed journals and reports. This literature review search key terms consisted of combinations using the indicators (AND or OR) with the following terms: *students with high-incidence disabilities or special education, transition planning, English learners or English Language Learners or ELL, high school or secondary school, Algebra 1 or math, self-efficacy or self-efficacy, alternative high schools or alternative high school programs, Every Student Succeeds Act, Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, and Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act*. Some of the articles included students in middle school because Algebra 1 is a course taught in middle school, as well as high school. I gathered statistical data from several websites, including the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) website and the United States Department of Education.

Theoretical Foundation

A theoretical framework sets the tone for configuring and developing a study's problem statement, literature review, data collection, and data analysis (Grant & Osanloo, 2014). The chosen theoretical framework shares information about a researcher's lens to investigate the subject or phenomenon. A theoretical framework enabled me to

intentionally explore potential outcomes using an evidence-based theory that is germane, associated with, and infers one's thoughts, beliefs, or activity of a select sample.

Bandura (1977) initially created self-efficacy as a psychological concept to treat dysfunctional human behavior. Later, the idea received generalized usage as a concept that informed changes in one's behavior. Bandura (1977) shared how self-efficacy derives from the levels of intensity a person has of their assuredness to carry out actions necessary to generate specific outcomes. People can perceive they have high or low levels of assuredness to carry out actions that lead to outcomes. If there are high perceptions of assuredness, then the person believes they can execute a specific outcome; hence, high self-efficacy leads to positive self-efficacy. Conversely, with low perceptions of assuredness, the person believes they are less likely to achieve outcomes; therefore, low self-efficacy leads towards low self-efficacy. Self-efficacy can affect personal decision-making related to educational activities, behaviors, settings, or performances. Bandura (1977) discussed how self-efficacy influences their levels of effort and persistence to reach their desired outcomes while it informs their coping mechanisms even though barriers and adverse histories. Bandura additionally explained that if a person pushes through adversities and completes the activities, they build a repertoire of experiences that formulate their lens of positive self-efficacy over time. He also stated that if the coping mechanisms do not suppress the adversity from the barriers, these experiences construct negative thinking, cultivating negative self-efficacy. Importantly, Bandura (1977) sustained that a person's self-efficacy influences their potential to achieve outcomes, whether negative or positive.

The self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1977) has four primary sources of information known as performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasion, and physiological states. Each of these elements has contingencies that can increase or lower a person's self-efficacy. A person's sense of self-efficacy might fluctuate or change pending if they attribute their achievements to academic prowess or academic effort (Bandura, 1977). A person might feel a sense of high self-efficacy if they exert little effort and time to reach desired outcomes. Conversely, people might feel low self-efficacy if they spend a lot of time and effort to achieve desired outcomes. Additionally, a person's outcome experiences impact self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). For instance, a person might have lower levels of self-efficacy if they experience many achievements with simpler assignments. However, a person may feel high levels of self-efficacy if they experience many achievements with complex or difficult tasks. Furthermore, a person with high self-efficacy will access, seek, or try to work in difficult circumstances if they believe they are capable of success (Bandura, 1977). On the other hand, a person with low self-efficacy will shun or dodge difficult circumstances if they perceive they are not capable of success (Bandura, 1977). Self-efficacy can be a more significant indicator for a person to forecast their capability to reach outcomes with unfamiliar, challenging academic tasks. Building self-efficacy in students can aid them to achieve desirable short- and long-term outcomes.

Performance accomplishments are one of four elements that can inform self-efficacy by recollecting a person's proficiency experiences (Bandura, 1977). The culmination of achievements or positive outcomes increases mastery rates, strengthening

self-efficacy perceptions. However, the culmination of failures or adverse outcomes reduces mastery rates, lowering self-efficacy perceptions. Bandura (1977) also stated that self-efficacy varies with position, either positive or negative, and in scope, high and low levels. People's perceptions of self-efficacy shift through variations in positions and scopes, pending the frequency of outcomes and affect experiences related to those outcomes. Their performance accomplishments contribute to short-term or long-term shifts of a person's self-efficacy at any given time.

Vicarious experiences are the second of four elements that can inform self-efficacy through a person feeling capable that they can meet outcomes after viewing peers struggle yet complete challenging activities (Bandura, 1977). With vicarious experiences, the person convinces themselves that since their peers reached given outcomes, the person is like the peers and can perform the outcomes as well. Vicarious experiences can influence one's self-efficacy through the person seeing several episodes of one or more people with multiple skill levels hit roadblocks but persist in finishing the same or similar tasks (Bandura, 1977). Vicarious experiences allow the person to see how others identified problems related to the assigned tasks, took academic risks associated with attempts to finish the task, pushed through the challenges (academic and social), used academic supports if appropriate or necessary, and found solutions.

Verbal persuasion is the third of four elements that can inform self-efficacy. With this element, others convince a person that they can adjust to overcome barriers to reach outcomes (Bandura, 1977) successfully. A group of people can coax a person into believing they can meet challenging outcomes, especially when given appropriate

resources to meet the designated challenging outcomes. In a classroom environment, peers might convince uncertain students to take academic risks with complex problems that they would not usually attempt to try individually.

Physiological arousal is the fourth element that can inform self-efficacy. When a person endures overwhelming or stressful conditions, it can reveal information about their capabilities to reach outcomes (Bandura, 1977). When a person feels high levels of distress, disturbance, apprehension, or vulnerability, it negatively affects their abilities to achieve desirable outcomes. Conversely, a person may feel assured that they can do well when they have high levels of calmness, even-tempered, confidence, and a sense of safety. The person's self-efficacy can be either high or low, pending their state of mind.

The theoretical framework conceived by Bandura (1977) encompasses not only one's perceptions of their options and weaknesses but their receptiveness to excel and persevere to the extent of reaching the accomplishment. Pajares and Graham (1999) depicted the definition of self-efficacy by Bandura (1986) as students' awareness of their abilities to satisfactorily execute academic activities. Many researchers referred to self-efficacy as one's ability to gauge or levels of confidence to complete finite tasks or actions (Einav et al., 2018; Lopez-Garrido, 2020; Soland & Sandilos, 2020). Another definition described self-efficacy as being centralized in proficiency experiences, live encounters, societal influences, and sentimentality (Clarke-Midura et al., 2019). Within the field of education, many studies expanded and adapted the theory of self-efficacy to describe variations of the view for specific areas of concentration. Research espoused a need for evidence-based studies with intervention foci to improve students' levels of self-

efficacy from the perspective of students' voices across the educational setting, content areas, and subgroups (Unrau et al., 2018). This information proves that there is a need for studies across different subgroups and content areas, including students with disabilities, English learners, adult learners, students in various high school settings, and high school students over the age of majority.

This literature review briefly discussed some self-efficacy theory variations that align with this study's problem statement, the purpose of study, and research questions with English learners with disabilities such as academic or educational self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, career self-efficacy, and math self-efficacy. Academic self-efficacy entails youth's confidence in their capability to reach educational benchmarks and complete academic activities in secondary and postsecondary educational environments (Datu & Mateo, 2020; Einav et al., 2018; Fairless et al., 2021; Pajares & Graham, 1999; Soland & Sandilos, 2020; Yu & Jen, 2021). Social self-efficacy defines one's perceptions of confidence to form and sustain fluid interpersonal connections (Datu et al., 2021; Fairless et al., 2021). Career self-efficacy supports an integrative lens of mindfulness, disability awareness, and gender characterization with one's beliefs regarding their ability to plan and prepare for postsecondary training/education and career employment (Lindstrom et al., 2019; Yu & Jen, 2021). Math self-efficacy involves connected self-efficacy as an indirect vehicle to build students' confidence in their math abilities and opportunities to extend students' math opportunities (Rakoczy et al., 2019). The term self-efficacy in general and the variations mentioned above are significant for my study because this exploration shall investigate how the English learners with disabilities

perceive their dual classifications inform their perceived abilities to make decisions to achieve accomplishments towards meeting math requirements necessary for high school graduation.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts

Throughout time and various settings, education has been filled with discriminatory experiences and adverse outcomes for marginalized people, including English learners with disabilities. From the past to the present, Congress, both past and present, uses deficient statistics to depict and situate how adverse educational outcomes in schools impact minority students with disabilities (Atwell et al., 2019; Carnock & Silva, 2019; McFarland et al., 2018). Currently, legislators use English learners with disabilities' outcome rates to show the scope of ill-preparedness and inequity of positive results compared to other subgroups associated with completing high school and competitively entering the workforce.

Federal Laws that Mandate Equity Demographically in Schools

This section of the literature review briefly discussed distinct federal mandates leading to the generation of Every Student Succeeds Act (2015); Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (2008); and Workforce Improvement Opportunity Act (2014) (Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015; Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 2009; Workforce Improvement Opportunity Act, 2014). The federal authorizations and their subsequent reauthorizations discussed in this study reflect the use of the combined demographic and educational classifications associated with English Learner and special education dual service provisions. This dual

classification option facilitates access and effectiveness with academic services and resources for English learners with disabilities to promote desirable matriculation throughout high school graduation and adulthood.

Research studies found that the effective use of dually classified educational services for English learners with disabilities is directly connected to student outcomes and graduation rates as they move throughout high school, even as adult students (Tefera, 2019; Trainor et al., 2019). This literature review discusses several topics relevant to my study. First, I reviewed select federal mandates which outline entitled educational services for students classified with special education and English Learner services. Next, I discussed the types of special education classifications affiliated with this chosen group of dual classified students which include both teens and young adult students in middle and high school settings. Additionally, I explained adverse academic outcomes related to dual classification service implementation for English learners with disabilities in traditional high schools and alternative high school programs. Lastly, I reviewed studies which discussed academic interventions and outcomes of English learners with disabilities.

Before the 1960s in America, white people experienced access to schools and resources that were separate and of better quality distinctively from local education agencies (LEAs), primarily with minorities such as African Americans and Latinos. In the 1960s, the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights additionally confirmed that schools provided little or no educational services to students lacking English proficiency despite considerable data which indicated high enrollment rates of

students with limited or no English proficiency in public schools (Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 2020). To remediate this problem, Congress developed the Civil Rights Act of 1964, which prohibited racial discrimination in schools and segregation based on gender, race, color, or nationality (Civil Rights Act, 1964; Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 2020). The federal law mandated public schools to provide educational services to students who do not speak English (Civil Rights Act, 1964; Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education, 2020). The Equal Educational Opportunities Act of 1974 (EEOA) is a continuation of the aforementioned federal policy. This reauthorization mandated that school districts provide accommodations and appropriate educational resources to students of any nationality with limited English proficiency in their first languages and English as a second language (Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 1974). In 1982, the subsequent reauthorized EEOA required schools to educate undocumented students with their naturalized American peers (Equal Educational Opportunities Act, 1982). This mandate served as the initial federal regulatory use of the term “limited English proficiency.” From this point forward, the term became a demographic classification for students in the field of education.

This set of federal mandates started the legislative directives to offer paths to reduce discriminatory inequity based on racial classifications nationwide. Historically, these mandates marked the beginning acknowledgment of needs for protection and accessibility of general rights for subgroups based on ethnicity and race. Unfortunately, these mandates did not offer sufficient protection or utility of service in educational

sectors. Legislators later realized that the Civil Rights Act authorizations' scope and depth of intervention would not be enough to reduce adverse societal outcomes, particularly those associated with academic and employment advancement.

Congress noted the inadequacies of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to remediate repercussions associated with discrimination across the nation. During this time, schools began to report academic performance data by demographic subgroups such as white, Latino, Asian, and African American. Later in the mid-1970s, Congress mandated data collection by subgroup categories listed under racial demographic labels and disability status. As time went by, Congress requested and acknowledged demographic classification statistics, which revealed significantly low academic performance rates of several minority subgroups, distinctly English learners and students with disabilities, as separate classification entities. These federal mandates set the formative stage of how issues related to my study came into being – failed academic outcomes of ELs and students with high-incidence disabilities.

Nationwide for several decades, specific populations, including Latinos, African Americans, ELs, students with disabilities, and Native Americans, achieved poor student outcomes across subject areas and settings (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965). Congress authorized this set of mandates because statistics historically showed that specific student groups, such as white and students without disabilities, scored significantly better across content areas than their peers classified as minorities and students with disabilities. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 authorized state school programs to improve academic outcomes for students regardless

of disability status, learning issues, low socioeconomic status, or limited English proficiency (Elementary and Secondary Education Act, 1965). Its subsequent reauthorizations include the Education Consolidation and Improvement Act of 1981; the Hawkins-Stafford Elementary and Secondary School Improvement Act of 1988; Improving America's Schools Act of 1994; No Child Left Behind Act of 2001; Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015. The earlier renditions of this mandate aimed to improve adverse academic outcomes of specific populations such as students classified as minorities, including English learners, and students with disabilities. Later variations of this mandate authorized schools to use annual state content assessments as accountability measures to create or improve educational programs for all classifications of student groups over time regardless of demographic affiliation, citizenship status, English proficiency, or disability status (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001; Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). These mandates direct state education agencies (SEAs) to provide educational support to LEAs through the designation or adaptation of educational programs to meet the academic accessibility needs of specific classifications of populations like ELs and students with disabilities to improve low academic outcomes (No Child Left Behind Act, 2001; Every Student Succeeds Act, 2015). Unfortunately, consistent nationwide low student achievement rates indicated inequities that necessitated additional sets of these reauthorized mandates. These reauthorizations support educators' aims to meet academic and accessibility needs with content in any compulsory instructional setting for student classification groups to include but not limited to English learners, students with disabilities, and English learners with disabilities (Kangas &

Cook, 2020; Trainor et al., 2019). These mandates fund and regulate initial learning and intervention programs to improve outcomes across educational classifications. The mandates preceding the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 focused on monitoring standard assessment outcomes of SEAs by specific student classifications as separate entities, such as English learners or students with disabilities. In other words, Congress instituted this set of mandates in isolation of any other civil right, educational, or employment preparedness mandates. The existence of this mandate continues to showcase difficulties school districts have to provide equitable access to education that offers high standards and accountability to specific groups of students, including English learners with disabilities.

Before 1975, schools refused to educate many children with disabilities, specifically, those classified as deaf, blind, emotionally disturbed, or intellectually disabled (U.S. Department of Education, 2020a, 2020b). The Education for All Handicapped Children Act (EHA) in 1975 attempted to remediate poor outcomes associated with this nationwide injustice (U.S. Department of Education, 2020c). EHA stipulated that each student with a disability must receive a free, appropriate public education throughout the country (U.S. Department of Education, 2020c). In 1986, EHA underwent reauthorization to provide services to children with disabilities from the moment of birth (U.S. Department of Education, 2020d). Later, Congress changed the name of the federal mandate to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) of 1990. This adaptation of the mandate added traumatic brain injury and autism as disability classifications (U.S. Department of Education, 2020d). IDEA of 1997

expressed directives for schools to improve outcomes for students with disabilities in the least restrictive environment (U.S. Department of Education, 2020d). In 1983, additional language for IDEA delineated that schools give students with disabilities individualized access to specialized instruction and related services to receive educational benefit across academic settings U.S. Department of Education, 2020d). The 1980s and 1990s amendments of IDEA stipulated those students classified with disabilities have the right to receive transition services in high school to prepare for matriculation into adulthood (U.S. Department of Education, 2020d). The last reauthorization occurred in 2004 and underwent a name change, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEIA) (U.S. Department of Education, 2020e). IDEIA of 2004 authorized the alignment of educational services and requirements to jointly improve student outcomes regardless of their special education classification in general and special education settings (U.S. Department of Education, 2020e). Language of IDEIA regulations relevant to special education classifications and services changed in 2006 to reflect directives to use research-based methods to determine special education eligibility, and subsequently, classification (U.S. Department of Education, 2020e). IDEIA regulatory language shifted again in 2008 to clarify and bolster special education administrative programs and implementation (U.S. Department of Education, 2020e). These regulations included terminology for students classified with disabilities in secondary settings to receive additional assistance to train for and engage in preparatory activities to secure gainful employment after high school graduation (U.S. Department of Education, 2020e). IDEIA 2015 regulations stipulated that state education agencies create and use alternate

assessments in local education agencies if students qualify under certain special education classifications and academic needs to meet specific educational standards associated with graduation requirements (U.S. Department of Education, 2020e). The 2017 revision marked the latest modification of IDEA, where the classification of mental retardation changed its label to intellectual disability (U.S. Department of Education, 2020e). Regrettably, this set of reauthorized mandates supported partial reductions of consistent inequities in student achievement rates for select student populations with disabilities like students classified as white with disabilities and black with disabilities. Other student groups classified with disabilities, including English learners with disabilities, still faced substantial accessibility and equity issues related minimally to their disability status.

The 2000s led to significant growth rates of student groups with the classification statuses of EL and special education, English learners with disabilities, in educational systems across the nation (Lei et al., 2020). U.S. school district population statistics showed students classified as English learners with disabilities as the fastest-growing populations of students who receive limited English proficiency and special education services (Kangas, 2018; Tankard et al., 2019). These mandates provide regulatory parameters and resources to meet instructional needs, remediation, or intervention support to improve student attainment of a high school diploma across special educational classifications. The mandates preceding the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 focused on improving standard content assessment outcomes of specific student classifications in SEAs as separate entities, such as English Learner or students with

disabilities. In other words, Congress instituted this set of mandates in isolation from any other educational mandates.

The unceasing presence of the IDEIA mandate highlights many school districts' continued noncompliance to provide free and appropriate educational services to many minority students with disabilities, which includes English learners with disabilities. Research recounted examples of civil rights discrimination through their study, which reiterated how many minority students labeled as Hispanic and African American receive a special education classification status far more frequently than white students (Grindal et al., 2019). Furthermore, these two demographic labels of minority students with disabilities, inclusive of English learners with disabilities, tend to receive placements in more restrictive educational environments, which statistically reflected this occurrence happens significantly less often to their non-minority peers (Grindal et al., 2019). This study situated how relationally English learners with disabilities face discrimination associated with their racial/ethnic demographic affiliation and federal compliance violations based on their disability status.

Federal mandates stipulate those students found eligible with high-incidence disabilities must participate in all decision-making processes related to meeting their disability needs in general and special education settings (Cavendish & Connor, 2018; Cook & Rao, 2018; Kern et al., 2019). Approximately sixty percent of students with disabilities in public schools who receive special education services fall into a grouping category known as high-incidence disabilities (Murray et al., 2021). High-incidence disabilities include the following special education classifications: specific learning

disabilities (SLD), emotional or behavioral disorders (ED/BD), mild intellectual disability (MID), high-functioning autism, attention-deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), other health impairment (OHI), and speech and language impairment (SLI) (Brawand et al., 2020; Gage et al., 2012; Massey et al., 2020; Qian et al., 2020; Ray, 2018; Virginia Department of Education, 2011). High-incidence disabilities is the most frequent type of disability status associated with learning and performance challenges for English learners with disabilities. The highest reported disability classification for English learners with disabilities is the high-incidence disability known as a specific learning disability (Blazar & Archer, 2018; Bondie & Zusho, 2017; Carnock & Silva, 2019; Hoover et al., 2018; Kangas & Cook, 2020). This study will solely include students classified in a category identified as one of the high-incidence disabilities labels who receive educational services in public school settings.

Studies showed that the progression through high school into postsecondary options like training and employment for numerous students with high-incidence disabilities is complex, scary, and challenging (Houter 2017; Knight et al., 2018). There is significant documentation that students with high-incidence disabilities frequently do not understand how their disability classification affects their abilities to learn, and consequently, struggle to make informed decisions or make errors in judgment in how to engage in learning and performance with the use of the (Knight et al., 2018). The U.S. Department of Education developed transition services for students with disabilities, including high-incidence disabilities, to promote intentional, collaborative, informative decision-making pathways which promote the propensity to graduate from high school

and successfully matriculate into desirable, appropriate postsecondary education and employment placements (Hanson et al., 2020; Holzberg et al., 2019; Knight et al., 2018). The precursor to transition services is transition planning because it involves the decision-making processes which drive all activities and assessments related to transition services (Virginia Department of Education, n.d.). This information is pertinent to my study because it provides a legislative understanding of some information that English learners with disabilities may or may not consider when considering decisions related to their educational classification.

Secondary transition services and transition planning fall under the federal definition of transition services, defined as “(including courses of study) needed to assist the youth in reaching those goals” (Definition of Transition Services, 34 CFR § 300.320(b)(2) (2004)). Transition planning is part of state-enacted regulations of the IDEIA (2015) federal mandate, which encompasses students with disabilities being part of the decision-making process formally documented in individuals’ Individualized Education Programs (IEPs) to prescriptively access and appropriately utilize special education services to graduate from high school and prepare for life after high school (Virginia Department of Education, n.d.). According to the Virginia Department of Education, “The transition planning process should enable the student to move successfully from school to postsecondary education and training, employment, independent living, and community participation based on the student’s preferences, interests, and abilities” (Virginia Department of Education, 2021). Despite the IDEIA mandate, studies emphasized how students with disabilities, notably English learners with

disabilities, often do not take active roles in decision-making in transition planning meetings and processes (Cavendish & Connor, 2018). This information is essential to my study because I can use this information in the development of interview questions related to the decision-making processes of English learners with disabilities.

IDEIA (2015) mandates pupils to receive transition planning services if classified as students with disabilities (Cavendish & Connor, 2018). Transition planning services are part of the entitled services for students with disabilities, counting English learners with disabilities, as mandated by IDEIA, to facilitate decision-making for implementing special education services intentionally leading towards completion of high school requirements (Cavendish & Connor, 2018; Grindal et al., 2019). Research found that many students with high-incidence disabilities lacked decision-making capabilities, and some benefited from intervention support to improve their abilities to consider informed, purposeful decisions associated with their dually classified status options, a critical component of transition planning (Cavendish & Connor, 2018; Holzberg et al., 2019).

Studies indicated that when students with these specific sets of dual classifications understand the educational benefits for tandem implementation of the services, it strengthens their receptiveness and abilities to use the services effectively as strategies to improve academic outcomes (King-Sears & Strogilos, 2020; Vukman et al., 2018). The 2015 reauthorization of ESSA stipulated concurrent implementation of ESSA with IDEIA (Blazar & Archer, 2020; Hoover & deBettencourt, 2018). From this point, the federal mandates, ESSA and IDEIA would have simultaneous implementation throughout SEAs. Therefore, students who qualify under one or more of either classification,

including English learners with disabilities, will have educational accountability and receive allocations to those classified as students with EL and special education needs.

The language changes in these mandates highlight school districts' persistent inability to provide appropriate combined educational supports under both ESSA (2015) and IDEIA (2008). There is still evidence of inaccessible instruction that does not consider students' language proficiency issues or appropriately meet their disability needs. These mandates substantiate proof of violations of English learners with disabilities' civil rights to have accessible instruction to encourage learning and noncompliance of special education regulations to provide free, appropriate education services to these students. The dual classification status of English learners with disabilities indicates this student group has distinct, unique barriers that impact their abilities to access instruction and perform in school. It is uncertain how non-compliant activities and inequity barriers associated with ESSA (2015) and IDEIA (2008) influence English learners with disabilities' perceptions of their capabilities to learn and perform academically in school settings. Furthermore, it is uncertain how adverse academic outcomes associated with both educational classifications concurrently affect English learners with disabilities confidence to make decisions that impact their academic achievement and inform transition planning to meet high school requirements. What's more, there is a lack of information regarding English learners with disabilities' perceptions about their classification status as students with high-incidence disabilities, their feelings about their confidence in their abilities to perform and achieve simultaneously as English learners and students with disabilities, and their beliefs

regarding supports and challenges associated with both educational classification in terms of preparedness to graduate from high school.

The Comprehensive Employment and Training Act of 1973 (CETA) supported federal job-training programs and apprenticeships for those unemployed and summer job opportunities for high schoolers (Comprehensive Employment and Training Act, 1973). The CETA services supported unemployed and underemployed people to get on-the-job training. Economic shifts hit the country in the 1970s and 1980s, which propelled the federal workforce preparation reform development and the Job Training Partnership Act of 1982 (JTPA) (Job Training Partnership Act, 1982). JTPA authorized federal assistance programs for impoverished people and was confronted with employment barriers, including teens and young adults, to receive job training and enter gainful employment (Job Training Partnership Act, 1982). JTPA used regional Service Delivery Areas (SDAs) under federal regulation to combine educational opportunities with job training programs. The Workforce Investment Partnership Act of 1998 became the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 (WIA) (Workforce Investment Act, 1998; Workforce Investment Partnership Act, 1998). WIA of 1998 featured refinement of workforce development programs and the development of full-service career centers labeled as “one-stop employment centers” in local communities (Workforce Investment Act, 1998). One-stop employment centers assisted youth with disabilities to receive support and education to become gainfully employed after high school (Workforce Investment Act, 1998). Title One Subtitle B Chapter four of WIA (1998) stipulated local program provisions for youth to include: a) activities to bolster study skills and instruction to complete high school; b)

instituted alternative secondary educational services; c) summer employment offerings; d) paid and unpaid employment activities such as apprenticeships, internships, and job shadowing; e) occupational skill training; f) leadership development; g) support services; h) adult mentorship; i) follow-up services; comprehensive guidance and counseling, including drug and alcohol abuse referral and counseling (U.S. Congress, n.d.).

Additionally, Title Two authorized systems to support adults acquire specific literacy levels deemed necessary to be sustainable in the workforce (U.S. Congress, n.d.). Title IV Rehabilitation Act Amendments (1998) of WIA (1998) mandated coordination of assistance to aid youth and young adults with significant disabilities to receive training and help to get access to employment options with the ESEA reauthorization, Improving America's Schools Act (1994) and IDEA (1997) (U.S. Congress, 1998; Workforce Investment Act, 1998). The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act (WIOA) of 2014 (WIOA, 2014) and its previous reauthorizations, WIOA (2014) is the legislative mandate written to support all students, including English learners, students more effectively with disabilities, and English learners with disabilities, to receive rigorous academic instruction and employment preparation services that meet their needs, abilities, and interests (Cushing et al., 2019; Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act, 2014). WIOA (2014) supports the improvement of performances and quality of Job Corps Programs between their respective local programs across the nation to strengthen employment preparedness for populations like English learners with disabilities (WIOA, 2014). Additionally, WIOA (2014) mandated the creation of regional networks with state and local employment boards plus employment and labor organizations to facilitate in-school

youth (ages fourteen through twenty-one) and out-of-school youth (ages sixteen through twenty-four) who do not attend school to access employment options in their regions if listed under several classifications, including English learners with disabilities (U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.(a)). Congress adopted the language of this mandate to configure more effective efforts to provide inclusive accessibility to select subgroup classifications like English learners and students with disabilities. Yet this set of mandates still failed to reduce discrimination in schools, support appropriateness of academic content, and remediate employment preparedness for most students classified in these two subgroups.

Within the last three decades, Congress determined that the egregious educational and employment statistics for subgroups such as English learners with disabilities in schools and global businesses typified the continued relevance of these federal mandates. The past and present inequitable, dismal outcomes of subgroups, particularly the growing statistics of English learners with disabilities, informed the current tailored verbiage of these mandates. The mandates currently stipulate concurrent implementation of these current federal reauthorizations for specified subgroups, especially those with this designated dual classification.

Currently, by simultaneous decree of ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014), all students with disabilities, regardless of disability classification, receive academic instruction and use educational resources to access transition planning for informed decision-making, which allows students to execute transition service options as prescriptive measures to graduate from high school and access career preparedness

(Cotner et al., 2021; Cushing et al., 2019; ESSA, 2015; IDEIA, 2008; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; WIOA (2014). School districts' persistent inability to provide appropriate combined educational supports under ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA invoked changes of language in these mandates to work simultaneously to improve student outcomes (Cotner et al., 2021; Cushing et al., 2019; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; Wanzer et al., 2019). Evidence of SEAs reporting still confirm the need for the mandates because data affirmed the remittance of inaccessible instruction that did not consider students' language proficiency issues, racial or cultural characteristics, or appropriately meet their disability needs (Cotner et al., 2021; Cushing et al., 2019; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; Wanzer et al., 2019). The dual classification status of English learners with disabilities indicates that some in this subgroup have distinct, unique barriers, including socioeconomic status or first-generation English-speaker, that impact their abilities to access instruction and perform in school (Cotner et al., 2021; Cushing et al., 2019; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; Wanzer et al., 2019). This information is essential to my study because it gives insight into some of the academic, racial, and socioeconomic barriers possibly encountered by students classified as English learners with disabilities, the target subgroup selected for this study.

Later, Congress assembled an interagency coalition which comprises the U. S. Department of Education, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, U.S. Department of Labor, and U.S. Social Security Administration to collaboratively use high-quality services and resources from each of the agencies to facilitate academic and employment preparedness in students, including those classified as English learners with

disabilities (Cushing et al., 2019; Federal Partners in Transition Workgroup, 2016; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.(b)). The federal mandates ESSA (2015), WIOA (2014), and IDEIA (2008) include revised language to facilitate positive matriculation into the secondary career and technical education (CTE) programs; adult literacy; career, technical, and adult education; higher education; and vocational training for connections to pathways towards gainful employment services and the global workforce (Cushing et al., 2019; Nwude, A.U. & Zajicek, A., 2021; Sin & Ging, 2019; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; Tucker et al., 2019; U.S. Department of Labor, n.d.). The U.S. Departments of Health and Human Services, Agriculture, and Housing and Urban Development joined the college-to-career preparedness collective to incorporate supplementary comprehensive social services which help develop and maintain physical and emotional wellness (including food assistance, alcohol and drug abuse, homelessness, mental health, social security, healthcare, Medicaid) because evidence substantiates these supports are necessary for specific subgroup classifications, particularly some students with English Learner and special educational classifications (Cushing et al., 2019; Federal Partners in Transition Workgroup, 2016; Tomasello & Brand, 2019). The federal mandates and U.S. departments strive to improve national, regional, and local fiscal growth by matching current business needs and partnerships and implementing rapid response and reemployment activities to reduce employee attrition and layoff rates for subgroups classified as English learners with disabilities. Lastly, the mandates use collective program transparency, accountability, and evaluation systems to support informed decision-making with the effective use of evidence-based, data-driven

programs and respective activities to college and career readiness for subgroup classifications like English learners with disabilities (Cushing et al., 2019; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; Tucker et al., 2019). Research is still needed to improve English learners with disabilities ' capabilities to complete high school and enter the workforce, especially those English learners with disabilities over the age of majority.

Even with the protection of three federal mandates, many students classified as English learners with disabilities continue to lack academic preparedness to complete high school requirements. The continuation of this chapter will share evidence-based research which focuses on interventions to improve educational outcomes for English learners with disabilities in high school settings.

Self-Efficacy: Relational to ELs, Special Education, and Math

The studies primarily in this section of the literature review examined the impact of self-efficacy with subgroups who classify under the single classifications of English Learner or special education. These studies examined self-efficacy with the various student subgroups to gauge their potential to improve their academic performances across elementary, middle, and high school settings. The content areas reviewed in association with self-efficacy in the educational settings were science, reading, and math.

Lee (2009) defined self-efficacy as one's belief about their ability to demonstrate gratifying outcomes. Yuen and Datu (2021) reaffirm self-efficacy (Bandura et al., 1997) as one's beliefs in their competency with select activities and aspirations. Yu and Jen (2021) recounted self-efficacy as a person's beliefs about their capacity to successfully achieve certain tasks or show specific behaviors (Bandura,1977). Martinez-Lopez et al.

(2010) interpreted self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977) as one's perceptions about their ability to have autonomy for their activities and instances that influence their lives. Soland and Sandilos (2020) cited previous studies which confirmed how students' prior academic and social history, gender, parental expectations, and socioeconomic status could affect one's self-efficacy. Fairless et al., (2021) recounted self-efficacy as the cause and indicator for one's emotions, behaviors, points of view to navigate situations and complete specific tasks (Bandura, 1997; Bong & Skaalvik, 2003). The theorists defined self-efficacy as "expectations and judgments about one's competence (Einav et al., 2018, p. 347). Rakoczy et al., (2019) restated self-efficacy (Jiang, Song, Lee, & Bong, 2014; Pajares & Graham, 1999; Schunk, 1995) as one's ability and alignment of a specific concept related to a goal for one's future situated in interests and achievement. Bai and Wang (2020) considered self-efficacy as part of the composition for motivational beliefs for Asian youth who learn English as their second language. Bai and Wang (2020) stated that self-efficacy is a heavily embedded domain-specific belief that fluctuates pending the students' proficiency perceptions with prior educational episodes across academic content areas.

Self-efficacy has utility as a proactive measure for students. Lopez-Garrido (2020) stated how the theoretical framework, Self-Efficacy (Bandura, 1977) and amended (Maddux & Meier, 1995), is applicable for use with youth. Margalit et al., (2019) found self-efficacy bolstered positive mental health through one's perceived ability to regulate their life amidst challenges, stress, and changes in life with Israeli teens with disabilities. Rhew et al. (2018) conveyed how students with higher levels of self-efficacy are apt to

embody progressive beliefs of themselves, actively and in their learning despite their perceived barriers, which results in more significant outcomes. Rhew et al., (2018) reiterated how interpretations of praise, reassurance, accomplishments, failures, inspiration, exposure, and barriers greatly inform self-efficacy levels of students with disabilities (Dweck, 2009; Dweck & Master, 2009; Urdan & Turner, 2005).

Self-efficacy also functions as an intervention measure for youth. For instance, Rhew et al., (2018) reaffirmed how students with disabilities may exhibit levels of low self-efficacy (Bergen, 2013) because their challenges to achieving desirable academic performances tend to require more time, persistence, effort, and display lower educational outcomes than their nondisabled peers. In another intervention investigation, Margalit et al., (2019) confirmed that although more prone to exhibit PTSD symptoms after viewing high levels of trauma during their EMS community service than nondisabled peers, Israeli teens with disabilities with high degrees of self-efficacy relative to their academic abilities and classifications displayed fewer PTSD symptoms because of the community service experience.

Academic self-efficacy definitions encompassed youth's confidence in their capability to perform academically, reach educational benchmarks, and complete activities (Soland & Sandilos, 2020; Yu & Jen, 2021). Yuen and Datu (2021) confirmed academic self-efficacy as one's perception of their abilities to use learning strategies, time management, analytical skills, and adaptive measures to meet academic and extracurricular activities related to school. Fairless et al., (2021) denoted academic self-efficacy as academic self-efficacy one's perceptions about capabilities to learn, meet

educational goals, and academic proficiency. Datu and Mateo (2020) referenced academic self-efficacy as one's perceptions of their ability to complete educational assignments. Rhew et al., (2018) espoused that academic self-efficacy impacts student achievement in secondary and postsecondary educational environments. Wanzer et al., (2019) stipulated that self-efficacy is a paramount iteration of an academic mindset, one's conviction that you belong in an academic environment (Farrington et al., 2012) the degree where it can positively or negatively impact one's ambition, actions, and achievement. Wanzer et al., (2019) upheld that self-efficacy, as a variation of an academic mindset, can intrinsically drive academic conviction and academic persistence.

Several studies measured academic self-efficacy. Griffin et al. (2020) restated reading self-efficacy as one's belief in their capacity to read and achieve in educational environments (Bokhorst-Heng & Pereira, 2008; Schunk et al., 2014). A study by Griffin et al. (2020) relayed that although EL students' reading self-efficacy may shift during a school year, those who have more significant reading self-efficacy usually achieve higher reading comprehension scores, additionally, just as less astute readers tended to have lower reading self-efficacy. Ardasheva et al. (2019) described vocabulary self-efficacy as adaptability to learn vocabulary acquisition strategies to understand content-specific and general terminology within and across instructional subjects, such as science. Science-focused vocabulary versus general academic vocabulary was a significant predictor of subject content with reading comprehension in association to vocabulary self-efficacy with former and current middle school ELs (Ardasheva et al., 2019). McWhirter et al., (2019) found that the afterschool intervention, Advocating for Latina/o Achievement in

School, aimed to reduce dropout rates while building academic achievement and career readiness improved self-efficacy rates in academic achievement and assertiveness for immigrant Latina high school students.

A correlational analysis confirmed that self-efficacy, growth mindset, and senses of intrinsic purpose informed self-regulated learning and positive achievement for student English language monitoring, effort regulation, academic planning, and academic goal development (Bai & Wang, 2020). Yuen and Datu (2021) reiterated that teens' academic self-efficacy and personal self-efficacy affect their academic achievement and welfare (Bandura et al., 1997). Wanzer et al., (2019) confirmed that academic mindsets, including self-efficacy, could significantly predict academic performance and considered associative with one's interpersonal skills, ways of learning, and academic persistence. Importantly, Wanzer et al., (2019) confirmed that when one considers race/ethnicity with English learners, inclusive of English learners with disabilities, there can be correlational academic progressions between one's academic mindset, which can include self-efficacy, may affect their ways of learning, influence their interpersonal skills, and conclusively impact their grade point average (GPA). Soland and Sandilos (2020) recounted findings which stipulated that teachers' adverse demeanors of English learners' language proficiency needs and academic history can negatively affect English learners' self-efficacy in their educational goals and abilities. Griffin et al. (2020) reiterated that as multilingual Latino teens encounter challenges while they matriculate through high school, their self-efficacy related to reading tends to decline. Datu and Mateo (2020) also revealed that many character strengths such as fairness, hope, and gratitude contributed to

robust degrees of academic self-efficacy in high school Filipino students. Fairless et al. (2021) revealed that self-efficacy strongly correlated with academic achievement more than social-emotional learning. Einav et al. (2018) discussed junior high school students with learning disabilities' association of positive academic self-efficacy based partially on their appropriate, resourceful usage of test accommodations. Furthermore, Einav et al., (2018) found that if the students felt their testing accommodations were relevantly beneficial to pass classes, it cultivated positive perspectives of academic self-efficacy, especially when combined with hopeful thinking.

Datu, Wong, and Rubies-Davies (2021) defined social self-efficacy as one's perceptions of confidence to form and sustain fluid interpersonal connections. Fairless et al., (2021) described social self-efficacy as one's perceptions about peer connections and assertiveness. Additionally, Fairless et al., listed emotional self-efficacy as one's perceptions about the governance of negative emotions. Similar to social self-efficacy, Yuen and Datu (2021) recorded personal self-efficacy as one's perceptions about their prowess and abilities to self-manage, be flexible, and use reflection to adapt one's ambitions and behavior. In fact, Yuen and Datu (2021) found that an association of school connectedness, one's perceptions about how they are received and respected as part of their school community, can impact one's academic self-efficacy and personal self-efficacy pending their perspective for the meaning of life. A kindness intervention curriculum grounded in social-emotional learning skills and media literacy skills found increased perceptions of social self-efficacy in female Hong Kong junior secondary school students through the improvement of positive social activities such as sensible

online conduct, critical analysis of ways media behaviors can affect others, and interpersonal media skills (Datu et al., 2021). These studies reflected how people's individual and socialization perceptions influenced their emotional states and perceptions in their educational and personally lived settings.

Pham et al. (2020) defined career self-efficacy as intrinsic awareness that influences a person to pursue planning and training in a particular career regardless of societal issues that might contribute to ability or lack thereof to enter a specific career path deemed essential for the cultivation of career interests. Lindstrom et al. (2019) explored vocational self-efficacy for female teens with disabilities through an integrative lens of mindfulness, disability awareness, and gender characterization with one's beliefs regarding their ability to plan and prepare for postsecondary training/education and career employment. Pham and Murray (2019) recounted how self-efficacy plays an essential role in students' development of career interests and selection, leading to career training. Pham et al. (2020) studied female high schoolers with disabilities, including those classified dually as ELs and having mental health challenges, confirmed that career self-efficacy is tied closely to career outcome expectations, potentially a better intervention to support planning from career goals to gainful employment. As a point of clarity, career self-efficacy and vocational self-efficacy, as mentioned earlier, could be denoted as the exact depiction of the term. One can say that career self-efficacy is dependent on academic self-efficacy because academic skills partially inform the people's career interests and potential.

Some research studied math self-efficacy of students without prescriptive educational classifications as well as with students with high-incidence disabilities. Pajares and Graham (1999) reiterated that students with higher math self-efficacy displayed greater math computation accuracy and perseverance to complete challenging problems as demonstrated through students' performances on math criterion-referenced assessments. Rakoczy et al. (2019) connected self-efficacy as an indirect vehicle to build students' confidence in their math abilities and opportunities to extend students' math opportunities. Pajares and Graham (1999) reiterated that students with higher math self-efficacy displayed greater math computation accuracy and perseverance to complete challenging problems as demonstrated through students' performances on math criterion-referenced assessments. Pajares and Graham (1999) confirmed math self-efficacy as the sole motivational element to inform math performance throughout a school year. Rakoczy et al., (2019) recalled how teacher feedback, pointedly infused with supportive comments and relevant critiques to remediate errors plus extend and adapt math concepts, cultivates math self-efficacy in students. King-Sears and Strogilos (2020) conducted an exploratory, descriptive analysis to explore students' self-efficacy about self-regulation, academic accomplishments, and school belonging. The researchers revealed that students with disabilities' perceptions of self-efficacy to belonging in the co-taught class motivated them to do their best to perform and learn in the course.

Mueller (2019) interviewed four high school students with high-incidence disabilities to understand their perceptions of their identities as it correlates to their dual educational classification status. The researcher suggests that students with high-

incidence disabilities “build a disability identity that is made up of interactions, micro and macro, that give them ideas both about the labels given to them and the way those labels should shape what they do” (Mueller, 2019, p. 264). In other words, how disabled students perceive and understand their own identities through the lens of being classified as disabled students impacts their beliefs and actions. This concept, part of their dual classification status- those students with high-incidence disabilities’ perceptions of themselves influence their self-efficacy- lies at the heart of my study, as well.

Mueller (2019) conducted semi-structured interviews with four male students with disability classifications, two with learning disabilities (LD) and two with emotional/behavioral disorders (EBD). The researcher sought to understand how these students understood their disabilities and how these understandings and perceptions affected their performance and engagement in their classes. After collecting interview data, the researcher used open coding to determine coding categories based on the students’ experiences (Mueller, 2019). This process resulted in seven data categories: “general definitions of disability, ‘getting out’ of the IEP/disability category, ‘othering’ disability, stigma of disability, stigma of special education instructional environments, and intersections of race, language, and culture with disability” (Mueller, 2019, p. 269). Overall, the researcher found that the study participants had uniquely conceptualized their disability classification. The students were all aware of the stigma related to their disabilities and to special education environments.

Each had a unique perspective in response to how the students understood themselves concerning this classification and their disabilities. The first student stated

that he hates the word disability and does not consciously acknowledge his learning disability all the time (Mueller, 2019). The second student described himself as having “problems of learning” (Mueller, 2019, p. 273) and something internal that he was born with and, therefore, over which he had no choice. The third participant seemed to lack a clear understanding of his actual learning and social/behavioral disabilities and instead interpreted his disabilities “as ‘a list of stuff’ that he needs to do better” (Mueller, 2019, p. 274). The last student also had a negative view of disability in general but did not apply this negative view to himself, preferring to focus on areas where he showed skill and accomplishment (Mueller, 2019). Although each of the study’s participants understood his disability somewhat differently, each had his understanding of what his disability meant for him.

Concerning how the students’ high-incidence disabilities affected their engagement and actions in the classroom, the study participants mentioned several strategies that they use to try to avoid the social stigma of having a disability (Mueller, 2019). One LD student described how he hides that he needs to reread a text multiple times to understand it from his peers, teachers, and even his parents. He also described lying to his peers about going to a special education class because he didn’t want them to know, although he felt that this was something he did more when he was younger. Overall, he viewed his disability and his actions to hide it from others as a personal issue and not something to be out in the open (Mueller, 2019). Another LD student described how the social stigma of being in lower-level classes caused him to be motivated to work hard to get out of those classes so he would not be associated with special education

classes. Likewise, another participant stated that he did not want to be in special education classes because “being in special ed marks you as different” (p. 276). Another student described people without disabilities as “normal” and understood his IEP as a list of behaviors that he needed to master so that he, too, could be “normal” (p. 274). He also reacted strongly and negatively to the stigma of having teachers give him extra attention in class, partially because he didn’t understand why he was the subject of this attention. These classroom reactions were often adverse and resulted in the student getting in trouble or leaving the classroom. Overall, the students in the study all described negative stigma attached to being in special education or having a disability, and each acted to avoid this stigma.

This study is pertinent to my research. It also sought to understand how a specific subgroup of special education students, English learners with disabilities, understand themselves as learners and their self-efficacy. Mueller’s (2019) work informs my research in that she found that disabled students are reflective when it comes to their disabilities and able to identify how their perceptions of their disabilities impact them as students and their actions in the classroom, both areas of interest in my study, as well.

I now understand how self-efficacy works as an evidence-based, appropriate, and valuable framework for students that goes beyond how one feels about oneself but uses this personal lens to understand how one can achieve their goal. I see how the Self-Efficacy Framework is desirable for use with high school students. It is appropriate for exploring self-efficacy perceptions with adult high school students enrolled in math classes to complete their graduation requirements. I can use Bandura’s Self-Efficacy

Theory (1994) as a framework to investigate students' perceived capabilities about their dual identities personal autonomy about decisions that affect their capabilities to learn, and individual accomplishments in a math class at an alternative high school program.

Equity Issues with English learners with disabilities

The challenge of equity for English learners with disabilities, particularly in math, is not new (Craft & Howley, 2018; Morgan et al., 2020; Tabron & Ramlackhan, 2019). A concise explanation of this critical issue states:

Further, and more fundamentally, it is the “seemingly intractable” issue of inequity in mathematics education (Aguirre et al., 2017) that makes it essential to initiate a serious discussion, reflection, and engagement among a variety of stakeholders, achieving the critical mass necessary to catalyze change in high school mathematics so that all students have the opportunity to obtain an education in mathematics that will serve them well, regardless of their interests and ambitions (National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2018, p. 2).

Holt and Dibbs (2020) found that most Algebra 1 research analyzed student subgroups classified as whites in middle-class, suburban areas and neglected subgroups such as English learners, students with disabilities, English learners with disabilities, and low socio-economic demographics. Research has suggested significant overidentification for students of color for special education services (Grindal et al., 2019). For example, the US Department of Education reported that in 2019-2020, seventeen percent of Black students received special education services as compared to fifteen percent of White

students (Irwin et al., 2021). Recent research, however, points to widespread under-identification of students of color for special education services in elementary and middle school despite long-standing theories of overidentification for students of color historically for special education services because of institutional racism and de facto school segregation (Morgan et al., 2020). Such under-identification may contribute to achievement gaps and other adverse school outcomes for students of color (Hanushek et al., 2002; Morgan et al., 2020). In addition, research has found that once identified for special education services, Black and Hispanic students are much more likely to be placed in a “substantially separate educational setting” than White students, compounding the negative consequences of such inequities for students of color in special education (Grindal et al., 2019, p.526). These findings support the established history of inequity in special education for students of color, resulting in negative academic consequences for these marginalized students.

Grindal et al. (2019) analyzed data in three US states to determine whether Black and Hispanic students in these states were more likely than White students to be identified for special education services and whether identified Black and Hispanic students were more likely than white students to be placed in separate educational settings. The researchers examined student data for K-12 students enrolled in a traditional public-school setting. The researchers used multilevel logistic regression models to estimate the identification probabilities that students educated in different groups would have a disability (also broken down by type of disability) and the likelihood of other identified students educated in a separate setting. The researchers found that non-low-

income Black and Hispanic students were far more likely than non-low-income White students to have a high-incidence disability typically identified in school (e.g., emotional, intellectual, or learning disability) (Grinder et al., 2019). There was also a statistically significant difference in the probability of being found eligible for special education between racial groups for low-income students. However, the risk ratio for low-income students of color was smaller than for non-low-income students of color (Grinder et al., 2019). Similarly, the researchers found that the likelihood of being in a separate educational setting was greater for identified Black and Hispanic students than for identified White students (Grinder et al., 2019). These findings support the premise that many English learners with disabilities may receive instruction and services associated with their dual classification that does not meet their educational abilities or needs or compliance for remission in the least restrictive environment for students.

Morgan et al. (2020) analyzed eleven states in the southern US to determine if Black and Hispanic students were being over-or under-identified for special education compared to White students in the same region. The researchers also compared identification statistics from 2015 to statistics from 2003 in the same states and the region to see if there were differences in identification trends for Black and Hispanic students. The researchers analyzed data from the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP) to estimate logistic regression models to estimate the likelihood of being identified for special education for elementary and middle school students in the region for 2003 and 2015. Morgan et al. (2020) conducted a second analysis to control for other risk factors such as socioeconomic status, English Language Learner status, gender, and

mathematics achievement to determine if identification differences existed between Black, Hispanic, and White students. The researchers determined that similarly situated Black and Hispanic students to White students were statistically less likely to be identified for special education in the US South (Morgan et al., 2020). This finding is significant because, although it dissents from the traditional narrative of overidentification of students of color for special education, under-identification still results in inappropriate educational opportunities and placement for affected students, which, in turn, may result in achievement gaps and adverse academic outcomes for minority students with disabilities.

Craft and Howley (2018) conducted a qualitative case study of nine African American students who had Individualized Education Plans (IEPs). There is the misrepresentation of African American students in special education programs in the US (Craft & Howley, 2018; Morgan et al., 2020). There is little research examining these students' perceptions of their experiences in special education (Craft & Howley, 2018; Morgan et al., 2020). The researchers conducted in-depth interviews to understand the students' special education experiences in their three respective schools. Participants were all 11th or 12th grade African American students with special education designations of learning disabled or mild cognitive impairment who had received special education services for at least three years. The researchers were interested in learning how the participants perceived their special education experiences, including how they felt about being placed in special education and how the designation had affected the participants' lives. The researchers conducted a series of three 45-90-minute in-depth

interviews with each participant, delving into greater detail and depth with each successive interview. After transcribing and coding the interviews, the researchers identified several salient themes.

Notably, the participants in the study reported that they had been referred and found eligible for special education services after they had experienced traumatic events in their lives, such as a death in the family or severe illness of a family member. (Craft & Howley, 2018). Students reported feeling unsupported in these life events, which led to misbehavior or difficulty with schoolwork. Therefore, these traumatic events directly precipitated their identification for special education, a conclusion the researchers found to be especially important. Once they were found eligible, the students also reported feeling that special education was a “dead end,” although some participants acknowledged the program’s benefits (Craft & Howley, 2018, p. 24). This study is relative to my research because it sheds light on information, I can use to develop my potential interview protocol related to possible perspectives my participants might have regarding their special education status.

This research directly supported the need for and importance of my study. First, like the goals of my research, Craft and Howley (2018) examined special education students’ perceptions of their experiences in a special education program. Craft and Howley (2018) focused on African American students, a subgroup of students who are routinely overrepresented in special education and experience similar educational challenges to those experienced by English learners with disabilities, such as lower performance and limited access to rigorous coursework. While similarities exist, English

learners with disabilities are widely absent from the literature, justifying the need to focus on this subset of commonly marginalized students. Also, the qualitative research approach of in-depth interviewing of a narrow pool of participants aligns with my study's research approach, supporting the validity.

In addition to inequities in identification, students with disabilities also face inequitable access to educational opportunities (Tabron & Ramlackhan, 2019; Yu et al., 2018). For example, Tabron and Ramlackhan (2019) report that “only 63% of students with disabilities have access to a full range of courses such as Algebra I, Geometry, Algebra II, Calculus, Biology, Chemistry, and Physics” (p. 182). Students with disabilities are less likely than their non-disabled peers to take college preparatory courses in high school and less likely to be enrolled in higher-level mathematics courses (Yu et al., 2018). In addition, according to the US Department of Education, while 86% of all public-school students graduated on time in 2018-2019 (the most recent data available), only 68% of students with disabilities graduated on time (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2019). These limitations have significant impacts on disabled students' chances to participate equitably in high school academic opportunities and their postsecondary options. Indeed, as previously stated, a significantly lower number of students with a specific learning disability complete postsecondary education than students without disabilities (Southward & Davis, 2020; Yu et al., 2018). These trends indicate a need for additional research that uncovers ways to improve the high school academic experiences and outcomes for students with disabilities, as my study seeks to do.

English learners

English learners in US public schools represent about ten percent of pupils who attend public schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). According to federal law, English Learner students must receive language instruction to acquire English proficiency and accessible instruction in academic content areas to meet grade-level standards (Auslander, 2018; Castaneda v. Pickard, 1981; Cruze & Lopez, 2020; Every Student Succeeds Act of 2015, 2015; Lau v. Nichols, 1974; No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, 2002). Therefore, English Learner students are guaranteed by law the opportunity to receive academic instruction to advance their academic content knowledge and English language proficiency.

However, data and research show that English learners are not receiving the same opportunity to learn as their native-English speaking peers and are facing inequitable outcomes as a result (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016; Cruze & Lopez, 2020; McWhirter et al., 2019; Sanders et al., 2018; Umansky, 2016). According to the US Department of Education, while 86% of all public-school students graduated on time in 2018-2019 (the most recent data available), only 69% of English learners graduated on time (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). This statistic can be tied, in part, to the barriers ELs face in accessing rigorous academic courses throughout middle and high school (Cruze & Lopez, 2020; McWhirter et al., 2019; Sanders et al., 2018; Umansky, 2016). Even ELs without disabilities face significant challenges in gaining higher-level academic classes that prepare them for graduation and postsecondary success.

For example, Callahan and Shrifler (2016) examined National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data to determine whether differences in high school course-taking existed between English Learner students (both those receiving English Learner services and those not enrolled in English Learner coursework) and native-English speaking students. The researchers examined high school transcripts to understand the likelihood that each group of students took class credits required for high school graduation and the possibility of taking college preparatory courses. College preparatory courses included the courses needed for high school graduation in addition to having taken math through at least Algebra II, courses in at least two fields of science, and two years of a world language.

The researchers found significant gaps in high school graduation course-taking and college-preparatory course-taking for English Learner students (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016). For example, concerning high school graduation course-taking, 51% of native English-speaking students completed all the necessary credits compared to 44% of non-native English speakers not receiving English Learner services. Only 19% of English Learner students receiving English Learner services completed high school graduation course requirements (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016). The gap was significant for college preparatory coursework: 38% of native English-speaking students met requirements versus 31% of language minority students not receiving English Learner services and only 11% of English Learner students (Callahan & Shifrer, 2016). These findings suggest that English Learner status alone leads to opportunity gaps for secondary students. There are critical needs for additional research into ways schools can support English Learner

students to take rigorous coursework in high school to improve positive academic outcomes, as this study aims to do.

The challenge for equity for English learners who are also in special education in the US is exceedingly complex. English learners with disabilities make up 14.2% of the total English Learner population in the United States (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). In 2017, the US Department of Education's Office of English Language Acquisition reported that English learners with disabilities students graduated from high school at a rate of 19.2 percentage points below their disabled non-English Learner peers in 2013-2014, and English learners with disabilities dropped out of high school at a rate of 6.6 percentage points higher than their non-English Learner disabled peers (OELA, 2017). These statistics support the critical need for research to better support and outcomes for secondary English learners with disabilities.

Many school districts struggle with appropriate classification and services for both disabled and English learners, frequently resulting in misidentification of English learners for special education services and inappropriate or lack of services for one of the two service needs (Kangas, 2018). Research into the identification practices for English learners with disabilities has determined that English learners with disabilities run the risk of being both over-and under-identified for special education (Kangas, 2018). In Texas, only 7.3 percent of English learners received special education services in 2016 compared to 8.7 percent of native English-speaking students (Rosenthal, 2016).

The second vein of research examined federal laws and mandates for students with high incidence disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities.

While federal law mandates that schools provide both language and disability services for English learners with disabilities, many schools favor one classification over the other regarding service provision (Kangas, 2018), resulting in both achievement gaps long-term negative consequences for English learners with disabilities. Zehler et al. (2003) conducted a foundational study of noncompliance with federal mandates for English learners with disabilities, noting that once English learners were found eligible for special education, they received significantly less, or in some cases, no support for language.

As previously noted, research that focuses specifically on English learners with disabilities is rare. Zehler et al. (2003) published a critical early study of this sub-group, surveying over 900 school districts about their service provisions for English learners with and without disabilities. The data revealed several significant findings. First, English Learner students were less likely to be identified for special education services. The researchers noted that this may or may not represent under-identification broadly but highlighted the challenges districts face when determining eligibility and appropriate special education services for English Learner students (Zehler et al., 2003). The researchers also found that English learners with disabilities were more likely to receive education outside the general education setting than their non-English Learner disabled peers. At the same time, they were likely to receive “extensive” English Learner services than their non-disabled English Learner peers (Zehler et al., 2003, p. 29). These challenges with service provisions for both disability and language needs foreshadowed more recent research that identifies challenges schools have with meeting both sets of needs for dually identified English learners with disabilities.

Kangas (2018) conducted a qualitative comparative case study to determine how and why schools misinterpret and misapply federal laws and policies relating to special education and English Learner statuses resulting in English learners with disabilities not receiving both sets of services to which they are entitled. At the foundation of this study is the idea that federal laws aimed at supporting students with disabilities were not created with English learners in mind. At the same time, federal policies intended to support English learners were not designed with English learners with disabilities in mind. This notion of the intersectionality of needs for this subgroup of students, English learners with disabilities, suggests that schools may fail to meet these students' needs adequately because they do not consider them when designing educational plans and programs (Kangas, 2018). Furthermore, the researcher suggests that local schools' and teachers' interpretation of federal laws and policies can impact their own beliefs and create inequities for English learners with disabilities (Kangas, 2018). In other words, educators' interpretation or misinterpretation of federal laws for students with disabilities and English learners with disabilities impact which services English learners with disabilities may receive or possibly exclude from receiving.

In this study, Kangas (2018) examined two elementary schools, collecting data over six months at each site. The first school was considered typical in that the English learners with disabilities students represent both the most common native language, Spanish, and the most common disability types, speech or language impairments (SLI) or learning disabilities (LD). The second school was atypical in that the English learners with disabilities students were from an atypical native language background, Arabic or

Bengali, and had lower incidence disabilities. In addition, the typical site was a Spanish-English dual-immersion school, and the atypical site housed the district's autism support program. The researcher conducted classroom observations, interviews, meetings and discussions, and collected school artifacts as data. A total of 33 school personnel, including teachers, administrators, and other school professionals, identified ten students in the first and third grades as focal students. In addition to artifacts and interview transcriptions, data included field notes from observations. The researcher also drafted memos during the data collection process to identify emergent themes. The researcher used descriptive coding to identify themes during the first round of data coding and then synthesized themes from both sites during the second round of deductive coding.

Kangas (2018) found that both sites examined in the study failed to provide dual services for both students' special education and English learner needs. Moreover, the researcher found that educators' beliefs about federal education laws and policies led to withholding English Learner support from English learners with disabilities students (Kangas, 2018). The researcher found that educators in both schools viewed special education services as compulsory, while English Learner services were only suggested, not required. Educators pointed to IEPs as legal documents and believed that IEPs include services only related to disability, not English Learner language needs. As a result, educators prioritized disability needs and viewed English Learner policies as "guidelines subject to interpretation" (Kangas, 2018, p. 893); services for English Learner language needs were often ignored or minimized in favor of services focused on the student's disability. For example, at one school, students were grouped into three class

categories: classes for students with disabilities, English learners, and courses for everyone else who was neither English learners nor students with disabilities. English learners with disabilities were automatically placed into classes for students with disabilities, meaning that they were excluded from English Learner classes and received little to no language support (Kangas, 2108). Services for English learners with disabilities indicated that their high-incidence disability needs consistently prioritized their language needs. The former seemed to be a prerequisite, while the latter appeared more discretionary.

This study supported the need for my research. Kangas (2018) found that schools failed to provide proper language support and services to English learners with disabilities. My study seeks to discover how adult English learners with disabilities understand their dual-identification and corresponding services and how they act upon that understanding to access services for both designations. It may be that these students, as the educators in Kangas' (2018) study, fail to understand both sets of services fully and therefore do not access the full range of services to which they are entitled, leading to academic challenges and obstacles.

Math education benchmarks and standards more pointedly than ever concentrate on supporting student preparedness for STEM courses, postsecondary vocational training, higher education, and, more importantly, career preparedness (Cotner et al., 2021; Cushing et al., 2019; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; National Council of Teachers of Mathematics, 2018; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; Wanzer et al., 2019). The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics [NCTM] (2018) noted in their publication that “US

young adults lack not only quantitative and problem-solving skills necessary for success in the workplace and postsecondary education but also the numeracy and problem-solving necessary for ‘meaningful participation in our democratic institutions’ (NCTM, 2018, p. 3). NCTM stated in their publication that their goal is to entrust students to become math learners and math lovers for life (NCTM, 2018). Evidence shows that many students, including students with high-incidence disabilities, displayed widespread behaviors of indifference or intimidation when it comes to talking about their mathematical thoughts, the rationale for math decision-making, or critical thinking about math (NCTM, 2018). However, common barriers to achieving success in math lie in students’ difficulty in receiving academic instruction that can increasingly challenge them within the given school year constraints yet also meet their educational needs (NCTM, 2018). This section substantiates equity challenges in terms of math for students classified with high-incidence disabilities.

Research highlighted high rates of significantly lower performances in math courses for students with high-incidence disabilities before starting high school (Gottfried & Sublett, 2018; Hughes et al., 2019). Many students with high-incidence disabilities have difficulty with concepts learned in math courses, including Algebra 1 (Brawand et al., 2020; Bundock et al., 2021; Cipollone et al., 2020; Corin et al., 2020; Hughes et al., 2019; Yamaguchi et al., 2020). For example, it is common for students with high-incidence disabilities to struggle with learning how to solve math word problems (Brawand et al., 2020; Bundock et al., 2021). Additionally, research cited how students with high-incidence disabilities displayed lower enrollment rates or satisfactory

completion of high school science, technology, engineering, and math (STEM) courses (Gottfried & Sublett, 2018). Low reading achievement and challenging math experiences can affect the ability of students with high-incidence disabilities to read, understand the meaning of terms, be familiar with math terminology or their multi-step processes (Brawand et al., 2020; Bundock et al., 2021; NCTM, 2018). Researchers stated that, with appropriate instructional support, students with high-incidence disabilities could effectively translate the creation of visual schematic diagrams to facilitate learning terms associated with word problems (Brawand et al., 2020). This section is informative and relative to my study because it provides insight into barriers connecting math to reading, another inference that challenges with language proficiency, comprehension, or processing could mitigate math learning for students with high-incidence disabilities.

Pajares and Graham (1999) confirmed math self-efficacy as the sole motivational element to inform math performance throughout a school year. Effectively providing rigorous math instruction is complicated for various students (NCTM, 2018). A variation of a math self-efficacy definition includes the belief that students have about their abilities to take part in and efficiently achieve across math content areas and their usage of math throughout all facets of their lives (NCTM, 2018). Soland and Sandilos (2020) recounted the association that students who displayed more excellent proficiency in reading and math usually held higher levels of self-efficacy. For students with learning barriers, such as students with high-incidence disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities, it takes significant time and effort to develop mathematic conceptual understanding, procedural fluency, problem-solving skills, cultivation of math

processes, comfort with math practices, and still build confident math self-efficacy (NCTM, 2018). The manners in which students encounter and interact with math can affect the way they perceive it, or, in other words, influence their self-efficacy in general or math self-efficacy (NCTM, 2018). The development of positive math self-efficacy for students takes shape with equitable math instruction that acknowledges students' perceptions of math come from their environment and lived experiences, especially for students with high-incidence disabilities, English learners, and English learners with disabilities (NCTM, 2018). Students with high-incidence disabilities and other groups like English learners and English learners with disabilities can generate positive math self-efficacy if they receive equitable instruction that intentionally integrates the manners in which they learn and interface with math is instituted (NCTM, 2018). The information in this section is critical because it provides information about a variation of self-efficacy that is relevant to the population I intend to study.

Kangas and Cook (2020) conducted an embedded case study to examine the tracking of English learners with disabilities in middle school. They chose to study a school district with a large population of English learners with disabilities students in Pennsylvania, reclassifying English learners with disabilities based on the 2015 ESSA mandates. To be classified as English learners with disabilities, students in this state now had to have:

- a. an Individualized Education Program (IEP),
- b. been enrolled in an ELD (English Language Development) program for at least four years,

- c. a plateauing of decreasing English language proficiency score over a 3-year period, and
- d. the recommendation of the IEP team (Kangas & Cook, 2020, p. 2424).

Using these criteria, the researchers identified ten middle school students as the participants in the study. The researchers collected school artifacts, gathered detailed field notes during observations of classes, and conducted and transcribed interviews with participating students and staff. The researchers conducted iterative data analysis, including reviewing data, analytic memo-writing, coding data sources, and generating patterns of data across sources (Kangas & Cook, 2020). During the first round of coding, the researchers used open coding to create initial codes and used NVivo to ensure intercoder reliability by running a coding comparison query. After initial coding was complete, the researchers engaged in axial coding to establish broader codes and mapping these into the study's theoretical framework of deficit thinking.

The researchers found systematic placements of English learners with disabilities into lower-level academic tracks because of the system's emphasis on standardized test scores, staff perceptions of English learners with disabilities' "inabilities" (p. 2428), and the school's leveled class system that locked English learners with disabilities into lower-level classes under the guise of inclusion (Kangas & Cook, 2020). Of particular importance, the researchers found that English learners with disabilities' scores on mathematics standardized tests weighted heavily in determining overall course placement, with staff indicating that math scores in and of themselves generally determined English learners with disabilities' content placements (Kangas & Cook,

2020). Once again, for English learners with disabilities, mathematics was the “gatekeeper” for access to higher-level classes, and not just in math, but in other content areas, as well.

Algebra involves an orderly system for completing arithmetic expressions and using judgment to deduce relationships between or across variables using known and unknown numbers (NCTM, 2018). Algebraic reasoning entails the identification and appropriate utility of processes (like reorganizing expressions into equivalent forms) with expressions (such as terms, factors, coefficients) for math in high school (NCTM, 2018). Students frequently make certain types of Algebraic mistakes; however, students receive little time to practice engagement in discussions involving math reasoning and mathematic guesswork discussions, which could help them strengthen behaviors to improve skills or remediate if not reduce certain ill-fated behaviors (NCTM, 2018). Algebraic concepts are essential for students to learn because it stages the foundation for progressive, advanced math courses such as a precursor to calculus, inform capability to complete high school requirements, and depicts procedures for solving commonplace living functions (Bundock et al., 2021; Cipollone et al., 2020; Corin et al., 2020; NCTM, 2018; Yamaguchi et al., 2020). Students need modeling and proofing opportunities to reduce mistakes, learn symbolic notations, strengthen basic math calculation skills, and associate math structures to respective symbolic, graphic, and tabular formats (NCTM, 2018). Algebra 1 thematic concepts which can be difficult for students with high-incidence disabilities to understand and show proficiency include, but are not limited to, analysis for rates of change, solving inequalities and linear equations, use of patterns with

consistency and accuracy, and deduction skills (Bundock et al., 2021; NCTM, 2018). Students with high-incidence disabilities have high rates of a lack of preparedness (notetaking, recognition of problem types; proper usage of procedures to solve multi-step problems) for math classes, including Algebra 1, which places them at disadvantages to pass this required course (Cipollone et al., 2020; Corin et al., 2020; NCTM, 2018; Trainor et al., 2019). Bouck and Cosby (2019) confirmed that, even with the use of Response to Intervention (RtI) as an Algebra course intervention with students with and without disabilities, challenges still existed including variability in achievement rates among students who received the treatment, inconsistency with the implementation of the RtI math model, and differences in student perceptions of the mathematical benefit with the intervention and instruction (Bouck & Cosby, 2019). The information in this section is important for my study because it gives insight into some of the content barriers and math strategy implementation challenges encountered by students with high-incidence disabilities.

Successful progression through high school mathematics courses is a significant indicator of postsecondary education readiness (Kangas & Cook, 2020; Office of English Language Acquisition, 2019; Thompson, 2017). According to Douglas and Attewell (2017),

a student's performance in mathematics, measured by standardized test scores and the highest level of math studied in high school, has a substantial relationship to the likelihood of attending college; of starting at a four-year institution rather than

at a community college; of attending a more- rather than less-selective college; and of completing a BA degree. (p. 648)

However, like patterns seen for students with disabilities, academic tracking in general and in mathematics courses is a prevalent problem for English Learner students in secondary school (Dunleavy, 2018; Lei et al., 2020; Umansky, 2016). According to the US Department of Education (2018), while English learners represented 6% of total high school enrollment in the US in the school year 2015-2016 (the latest data available), English learners represented 9% of student enrollment in Algebra I classes, and just 2% of student enrollment in advanced math classes (Office of Civil Rights, US Department of Education, 2018). These statistics highlight the trend for English learners to be over-represented in lower-level high school math courses and under-represented in higher-level high school math courses. Research revealed that English Learner students were less likely to be enrolled in middle school honors-level classes and more likely to be excluded from foundational content-area courses in math, science, and English language arts (Szymanski & Lynch, 2020; Tan & Barton, 2020; Umansky, 2016). Across school districts nationwide, English learners frequently had significantly less access to higher-level math courses than their non-English Learner peers (Dunleavy, 2018; Tan & Barton, 2020; Thompson, 2017). These barriers lead to long-term academic disadvantages for English learners, both in high school and beyond.

Alternative High School Programs

Some English learners with disabilities, especially those classified with high-incidence disabilities attend public, alternative high school programs to receive

specialized support to reduce the frequency of educational failures experienced at traditional high schools (Baer et al., 2011; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Lagana-Riordan et al., 2011). Nationally, at least 64% of school districts now have at least one alternative high school programs, and half of these school districts already reported totals in the overall population of alternative high school programs as underestimations at over one million students, both with and without disabilities (Schwab et al., 2016). Because of the poor secondary student outcome rates at traditional high schools, many LEAs have elected to use alternative high school programs as operative educational settings to provide general and special education services, especially for students with high-incidence disabilities (Edgar-Smith & Palmer, 2015; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Schmalzried & Harvey, 2014). Nationally, at least 64% of school districts have established at least one alternative high school program in school districts since 2009 (Schwab, Johnson, Ansley, Houchins, & Vargas, 2016). Researchers have also noted that the critical challenges and needs of many students with high-incidence disabilities at alternative high school programs increase the challenges faced by these students to understand how to use services associated with this specific dual classification to use these dual educational services to effectively reduce the high rates of adverse outcomes associated with English learners with disabilities (Beken et al., 2009; Dixon et al., 2014; Edgar-Smith & Palmer, 2015; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Kim & Taylor, 2008; Lagana-Riordan et al., 2011; Pham, 2012; Schwab et al., 2016). The research noted that alternative high school programs were understood to be educational settings offering intervention and other educational services for subgroups such as English learners,

students with high-incidence disabilities, and English learners with disabilities with histories of unsuccessful secondary outcomes, tracked by these demographic and educational classifications, at traditional high schools (Baer et al., 2011; Beken et al., 2009; Edgar-Smith & Baugher-Palmer, 2015; Foley & Pang, 2006; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Morningstar et al., 2012; Poutiatine & Veeder, 2011). Studies noted English learners with disabilities sought remediation for circumstances such as needing services either not provided or not successful at traditional high schools, which include behavioral/mental health issues, substance abuse, homelessness, teen pregnancy, failing grades, and truancy (Edgar-Smith & Baugher-Palmer, 2015; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Lagana-Riordan et al., 2011; Poutiatine & Veeder, 2011). This information indicates the need for research in the fields of English Learner and special education at alternative high school programs, particularly studies that examine how to strengthen students' understandings of their abilities and appropriately make decisions that effectively support them creating plans and act through the use of the dually classified services to increase positive student outcomes and simultaneously decrease adverse student outcomes for English learners with disabilities with high incidence disabilities at alternative high school programs.

Regardless of the support and aimed protection associated with their dual classifications from federal mandates IDEIA, ESSA, and WIOA, English learners with disabilities at alternative high school programs continue to face more significant obstacles in comparison to their single-classified peers with and without disabilities at traditional, comprehensive public high schools, to improve student achievement, bolster

student outcomes, and prepare for transitions throughout and beyond high school (Dunn et al., 2012; Foley & Pang, 2006; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Lagana-Riordan et al., 2011; Newman et al., 2016; Ofoegbu & Azarmsa, 2010; Schmalzried & Harvey, 2014).

Although alternative high school programs hold the same data accountability reporting standards, SEAs factor their data into statistics by demographic and educational classifications associated with traditional high schools within their respective school districts (Foley & Pang, 2006; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Morningstar et al., 2012).

Demographic and racial/cultural educational labels, such as English learners with disabilities, are the federal subgroup classifications mechanism used for federal and state education accountability measures to confirm and incorporate meaningful use of data to help increase student achievement and outcomes in all settings, especially at alternative high school programs (Beken et al., 2009; Edgar-Smith & Baugher-Palmer, 2015; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Roberts, 2010). Over the last decade, alternative high school programs have increasingly enrolled English learners, including English learners with disabilities, attending these locations to bridge inequity issues encountered at traditional high schools (Flores, 2021; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Lagana-Riordan et al., 2011; Zoloski et al., 2016). Wagner, Newman, and Javitz (2014) noted more frequent positive outcomes for English learners, students with high-incidence disabilities, and English learners with disabilities who attended alternative high school programs because specific interventions addressed their needs, abilities, and interests individually. Interestingly, Wagner et al. (2014) also noted that many alternative high school programs showed increased rates in academic courses but decreased rates for specialized course offerings

(like vocational classes). These trends went against the original purpose for students transferring to those sites (Wagner et al., 2014). However, some educational research revealed little about the extent to which certain types of student classifications represented student outcomes for all, most notably English learners with disabilities at alternative high school programs (Lagana-Riordan et al., 2011; Kannam & Weiss, 2019; Zoloski et al., 2016). Correspondingly, it is also unknown how students classified as English learners with disabilities utilize supports at alternative high school programs as it correlates with student achievement and outcomes (Lagana-Riordan et al., 2011; Zolkoski et al., 2016). The increased numbers of alternative high school programs across the nation represent difficulties school districts have in providing appropriate and equitable access to education that meets students' needs while still upholding accountability standards to student subgroups like English learners with disabilities (Kannam & Weiss, 2019). This literature on alternative high school programs supports the need for my study because it can add to the body of literature that examines student perspectives of a subgroup of English learners with disabilities, pointedly, those who attend alternative high school programs.

It is uncertain how noncompliance with educational regulations and use resources associated with ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014) to meet the needs and interests of students such as English learners with disabilities, especially those classified as adult students have influenced to English learners with disabilities' perceptions of their capabilities to learn and perform academically in school, especially to meet fundamental high school requirements such as Algebra 1. It is uncertain how inequitable learning

barriers associated with their English Learner and special education classifications have influenced English learners with disabilities' perceptions of their capabilities to learn and perform academically in school settings, particularly alternative high school programs. Furthermore, it is uncertain how adverse academic outcomes associated with these selected concurrent educational classifications affect English learners with disabilities confidence to make decisions that impact their academic achievement to meet high school requirements throughout their time in high school. Additionally, there is a lack of information regarding English learners with disabilities' perceptions about their classification status as students with high-incidence disabilities, how they feel about their confidence in their abilities to perform and achieve simultaneously as English learners and students with high-incidence disabilities, and their beliefs about supports and challenges associated with both educational classifications in terms of preparedness to graduate from high school. It is uncertain how English learners with disabilities, including those classified as adults, feel about their self-efficacy to make decisions about their learning and performance while enrolled at alternative high school programs. There is a gap in educational literature in knowing how attendance at alternative high school programs affects English learners with disabilities' perceptions of confidence to perform academically in these school settings. Furthermore, it is uncertain how adverse academic outcomes from their past and current educational high school settings and courses affect English learners with disabilities' confidence in their capabilities and decisions of their plans to succeed and graduate from high school. Also, there is a lack of data about English learners with disabilities' perceptions of their dual classification status in this

type of setting, how they feel about their confidence in their abilities to perform and achieve in this setting, and what they believe are supports and challenges associated with their dual classification and this setting in terms of their preparedness to graduate from high school.

Conclusion

Little research focuses specifically on English Learner students with disabilities (Kangas, 2018). In addition, much of the existing research in English learners with disabilities focuses on referral and identification processes for English learners with disabilities (Kangas, 2018). Students' performance and attainment in mathematics are predictors of high school graduation and college readiness (Douglas & Attewell, 2017; Thomson, 2017), but English Learner students, and especially English learners with disabilities, have historically been left behind in math (Kangas & Cook, 2020; Umansky 2016). These facts highlighted the need for additional empirical studies that bring greater understanding to the challenges that English learners with disabilities face that prevent them from attaining positive academic outcomes at the same rate as their native English-speaking and non-disabled peers. There is a lack of literature that addresses self-efficacy perceptions of English learners with disabilities in high school settings, especially those who are adults working towards a high school diploma. There is a gap in literature which depicts how these students feel about their capabilities, in context with the dual classification challenges, to complete their high school requirements. predictive courses act in "gatekeeper" courses such as mathematics. Findings in this study can remedy this

deficiency in existing research which discuss self-efficacy and dual learning challenges of English learners with disabilities.

In Chapter three, I discussed the design of this general qualitative research study. I shared the rationale for how I executed every phase of my dissertation research. I provided the definitions of certain concepts related to general qualitative design approach, selection of participants, data collection and data analysis. I also provided information which stipulated how I integrated ethical considerations, trustworthiness, potential researcher biases, and limitations which framed my study.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Many English learners with disabilities graduate with high school diploma rates at disparate, deficient rates in contrast to other peers in academic settings. The critical educational problem that English learners with disabilities encounter are the negative outcomes of compounded academic performance challenges partially due to their certified educational disability and limited English proficiency challenges, which manifest into difficulties to complete high school graduation requirements. Many English learners with disabilities display difficulties to achieve the Algebra 1 high school standard diploma requirement, a prerequisite course for other advanced high school math courses and other Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) courses (Stewart et al., 2019). The study also highlighted how the delays to complete Algebra 1 requirements in high school contributed to limited access to higher level high school coursework and delayed graduation rates.

Many English learners with disabilities display lower satisfactory performances than their non-minority, non-disabled classmates to meet the Algebra 1 benchmark, a requirement for attaining their high school diploma (Gottfried & Sublett, 2018; Hughes et al., 2019; Stewart et al., 2019). Despite math educational reform efforts, this specific academic challenge contributed to delayed graduation timelines or unfulfillment of the diploma requirement for English learners with disabilities (Atwell et al., 2019; DePaoli et al., 2018). These poor circumstances and barriers associated with English learners with disabilities low completion rates of Algebra 1 requirements, along with its adverse impact on graduation eligibility and postsecondary opportunities, informs the need to conduct

educational research to improve their abilities to learn (Kangas, 2020). The purpose of this general qualitative analysis study was to explore how adult English learners with disabilities perceive self-efficacy related to their dual classifications of English learner and special education, influenced their beliefs as learners and their decision-making, and how these beliefs influenced their school behavior and potential outcomes, specifically to meet the Algebra 1 requirements. This study provided information related to why adult English learners with disabilities experienced failures and challenges with critical high school course requirements like Algebra 1.

Most English learners with disabilities have the potential and capacity to complete high school graduation requirements and experience the rights and privileges of obtaining the standard diploma (Sugarman, 2019; Trainor & Robertson, 2019). However, it was imperative to examine characteristics about these students' dual classification status because this evidence shows this information can inform their decisions to access instruction, services, and resources associated with both classifications and impact their perceived abilities to engage in learning throughout their courses of study (Kangas, 2020). More importantly, exploring their perceptions regarding English learners with disabilities' dual classifications may provide information about ways to increase their autonomy and effectively understand how to effectively access support that will increase their abilities to complete high school diploma requirements (Tefera, 2019). A practical understanding of the dual classifications can influence how English learners with disabilities use of services and resources can improve their academic outcomes (Trainor et al., 2016). Studies revealed how positive self-efficacy can act as a bridging mechanism

to increase the probability of students achieving milestones associated with high school graduation and appropriate career preparedness (Bae & Wong, 2020; Lindstrom et al., 2019; McWhiter et al., 2019; Mueller, 2019; Pham et al., 2020). This study showed ways to improve adult English learners with disabilities' beliefs in their understanding of their dual classifications increases their perceptions of abilities to appropriate use of dual classified services to enhance academic coursework success rates.

A qualitative approach allowed me to describe, understand, and interpret the perspectives of a select set of purposefully chosen adult English learners with disabilities to the selected research question. Chapter three included the research design and rationale, researcher role, research questions, methodology site selection, participant selection, instrumentation, choice of qualitative data collection methods, data analysis procedures, trustworthiness methods, and ethical procedures of this study.

First, I explained the type of qualitative research methodology I used for my dissertation research. I also provided examples of the qualitative methodological types and the final methodology choice made for this study. Second, I discussed my role as the researcher, stating my perceived awareness levels in relation to my position and experiences. Moreover, I shared my understanding of how my role as a researcher was important because it informed determinations made through data collect and data analysis processes. Lastly, I shared information that informed the selections of the chosen school district, alternative high school program site, number of participants, recruitment procedures, data collection procedures, data analysis procedures, display of data results, and trustworthiness considerations.

Research Design and Rationale

Many English learners with disabilities experience challenges in passing the Algebra 1 requirements that are necessary to meet standard high school requirements. Since some English learners with disabilities had trouble satisfying high school requirements in average timeframes, they are apt to attend high school for more extended periods, including early adulthood. Some English learners with disabilities, particularly adult English learners with disabilities, tended to transfer to alternative high school programs as they struggled at comprehensive high schools, have more minor enrollment benefits, and varied credit recovery options (Flores, 2021). A few studies stated that many English learners with disabilities displayed deficits in understanding how their dually classified special education and English learner services can bolster their ability to satisfy high school requirements in core content areas, including math. Educators need information to understand issues related to the growing number of adult English learners with disabilities, including how they feel about their dual classification, and how it affects their beliefs in their capabilities to learn across content areas and various high school settings. Self-efficacy perceptions influence student achievement (Soland & Sandilos, 2020; Unrau et al., 2018; Vukman et al., 2017; Yuen & Datu, 2021). Therefore, it is possible to suggest that perceptions held by adult English learners with disabilities about their capabilities to learn in high school may provide educators with information about possible issues that influence their actions and academic outcomes. The research question for this dissertation study was:

RQ 1: How do adult English learners with disabilities perceive their self-efficacy while completing Algebra 1 requirements in an alternative high school setting?

This research used a general qualitative design to conduct a descriptive qualitative study. This qualitative approach allowed me to describe, understand, and interpret the perspectives of a select set of chosen English learners with disabilities who are adults and received educational services at a select alternative high school program. I examined adult English learners with disabilities' perceptions about self-efficacy associated with their dual classification status related to beliefs in their abilities to learn and make decisions. Erickson (2011) defined qualitative research as an inquiry that enables researchers to uncover and chronicle specific people's actions and thoughts that represent or signify them in richly descriptive written forms. Qualitative research allows researchers to describe how and why people might feel, think, act, or react in a specific setting such as time, place, or circumstance that the individual may or may not appear apparent or be aware of.

Ravitch and Carl (2021) declared how qualitative research uncovers these descriptions through epistemology, stating that epistemology is a philosophical assumption of qualitative research that expresses how one sees, identifies, and learns information: "How you view and gain knowledge as well as know what you know" (Ravitch & Carl, 2021, p. 5). Thus, this qualitative research provided details regarding how the participants' perceptions of self-efficacy about their dual classifications influenced their beliefs about learning and their ability to make decisions that they perceived to impact their engagement and behaviors in the specific math class in ways

that the students themselves might not comprehend or acknowledge. I chose to explore how this group understands and views their dual classification status, which informed the use of a qualitative design.

My view of qualitative research pertaining to this study corresponded with the researcher, Hamersley (2006), who noted methodology is “finding the most illuminating language with which to describe people’s experiences and actions often requires the kind of close investigation of what they say and do that is characteristic of qualitative research” (p. 396). Maxwell (2005) cautioned to recognize that the goal of research means “to include motives, desires, and purposes—anything that leads you to do the study or that you want to accomplish by doing it” (p. 15). This section offered the opportunity to discuss my rationale and decisions for the qualitative research methodology and epistemology, which aligned with my interests and manner to explore this topic of choice.

Rationale for the Chosen Qualitative Methodology

Researchers must state definitive reasons why they choose to conduct qualitative research which positively resonates with me. Glesne (2006) shared that “qualitative research methods are used to understand some social phenomena from the perspectives of those involved, to contextualize issues in their particular socio-cultural-political milieu, and sometimes to transform or change social conditions” (p. 4). This quote resonated with me when I thought of my study. I believed that my exploration of this student groups’ perspectives revealed connections between how their beliefs of their dual

classification were partial manifestations of the past and current socio-cultural-political climate in the school system and society at large.

I considered four qualitative research methodologies for my dissertation research: ethnography, phenomenology, grounded theory, and general qualitative methodology. For qualitative research methodology decisions, Patton (2002) suggested to take into consideration “a qualitative approach fits our research questions: questions about people’s experiences; inquiry into the meanings people make of their experiences...” (p. 33). The research methodologies mentioned have different features that appealed to me to address and explore my topic. This paper allowed me to narrow which methodologies to contemplate to meet the research objectives.

Ethnography Consideration

I considered the first of four qualitative research approaches--ethnography. Patton (2015) described this method as a way that produces a form of gauging a “central and guiding assumption that any human group of people interacting together for a period of time will evolve a culture” (p. 81). This notion sparked my interest because I am interested in examining perspectives of English learners with disabilities as my group of choice. My professional experiences lead me to believe that this subgroup of students has distinct political and social premises for making certain decisions in their school environments. Glesne (2006) deemed ethnographic research as “practices that seek to interpret people’s constructions of reality and identify patterns in their perspectives and behaviors” (p. 9). Feeling that this positively resonated with some of my goals, I contemplated using this method to explore one aspect of my dissertation topic. This

method initially appealed to me as it could allow me to discuss how select English learners with disabilities groups or cultures in various regions or districts interpret their perspectives about their dual classifications to rationalize their differentiated reasons (political and academic) to consider and guide certain academic behaviors or actions. Schram (2006) succinctly defined ethnography as the “description and interpretation of cultural behaviors” (p. 95). Although it rendered a familiar account like the others, this definition of ethnographic research seemed the most meaningful to relay why I would consider this mode of depicting thoughts of actions for English learners with disabilities in specific settings.

Phenomenology Consideration

Phenomenology was the second type of qualitative methodology I considered using. Willis (2007) generally characterized this method as “the study of people’s perception of the world” (p. 107). Patton (2015) reiterated a slightly broad definition by narrating phenomenology as a method that focuses “on lived experiences” (p. 124). Schram’s (2006) interpretation is like Patton’s by depicting that this method aids to “investigate the meaning of the lived experience of a small group of people from the standpoint of a concept or phenomenon” (p. 98). This meaning piqued my curiosity because I liked the idea of studying how the experiences of English learners with disabilities might stem from select points of supposition within a political or social context. The theorist Patton (2015) provided a more comprehensive account of phenomenology. He expressed it as research geared towards “thoroughly capturing and describing how people experience some phenomenon---how they perceive it, describe it,

feel about it, judge it, remember it, make sense of it, and talk about it with others” (p. 104). This methodological strategy enticed me because it thematically examines how the study members prescriptively reflect on their past actions or encounters.

Grounded Theory Consideration

Grounded theory was the third qualitative method I considered using for my dissertation planning. Patton (2015) distinguished grounded theory as focusing “on the process of generating theory rather than a particular theoretical content” (p. 125). He also outlined grounded theory to “build theory rather than test theory” (p. 127). As I reflected on this definition, I found this method to be an exciting type of methodology. It can allow the researcher to see what theories come to the surface during the investigations versus deciding what theory might fit. Schram (2006) interpreted grounded theory as “a methodological stance and set of tools designed to lead to theory, based on the study of social situations, rather than being an actual theory itself” (p. 101). I appreciated the idea of developing a theory as to why something is or has happened based on or grounded in the data that I get the opportunity to analyze. Willis portrayed this form of research as an approach that “uses successive waves of data to develop theory” (p. 306). This method appeared attractive, as it could allow one to see what theories can resurrect from the data. Not for now, but for future studies, I believe that it could aid my ability to resist temptations to forcefully make data fit into my novice, preconceived lines of potential theories. As themes inductively emerged, I discovered what fundamental social implications lie within the data. I considered developing and communicating through bipartisan or unbiased language to establish a potential theoretical framework that could

give meaning to the specific reasons, circumstances, and ramifications of an issue I selected to research. This description reinforced my sentiment that grounded theory is an exciting methodology that I might elect to use for future studies.

General Qualitative Methodology Consideration

I used a general qualitative methodology to conduct my dissertation study. Maxwell (2013) defined qualitative research as “the meanings and perspectives of the people you study—seeing the world from their point of view, rather than simply from your own” (p. viii). Maxwell (2013) also stated that qualitative research is also impacted by “physical, social, and cultural contexts” (p. viii), which ultimately affect perspectives. Lastly, Maxwell (2013) defined qualitative research as “the specific processes that are involved in maintaining or altering these phenomena and relationships” (p. viii). Most importantly, Springer (2019) recognized qualitative research as a meaningful methodology to research with English learners with disabilities. It can supply knowledge to inform students’ perspectives, impressions, and ways their experiences influenced specific contexts. This type of research design is the most appropriate means to inform and thoroughly analyze the questions for exploration within my phenomenon of interest. Furthermore, instead of quantitative questions, I utilized narrative questions that probed to understand student perspectives about their dual classification of English Learner and special education. I also believe that this study provided fascinating data about English learners with disabilities’ perspectives about their histories of academic challenges as they relate to both classifications. These student participants shared select information about their understanding of their dual classification status. Intentionally, this study

imparted data for future studies that aim to improve the implementation of both services for this population. Therefore, this study contributed data to future studies to enhance positive academic outcomes such as completing high school requirements at alternative high school programs. By examining the perspectives of these participants, I gave in-depth information on their perceptions regarding their dual classification status as it related to their perceived abilities to learn and make decisions in their courses to meet Algebra 1 requirements.

For the data collection procedure selection, I conducted interviews with the study participants. Maxwell (2013) described interviewing as a credible, informative method for collecting qualitative data. “Interviewing can also be a valuable way of gaining a description of actions and events—often the only way, for events that took place in the past or for situations to which you can’t gain observational access” (Maxwell, 2013, p. 103). I conducted interviews for my data collection method because I had a unique population with interesting perspectives that I wanted to explore. Ravitch and Carl (2021) stated “interviews are the center of many qualitative studies since they provide deep, rich, individualized, and contextualized data that are centrally important” (p. 126). This study contributes meaningful information to special education, English Learner, alternative education, and math education. For this reason, I selected to conduct interviews to collect data on the participants’ perceptions of their dual classification status about their perceived abilities to make decisions and learn as it relates to the classifications. Maxwell (2013) also explained how the researcher could be precautionous when collecting interview data on past events or actions to reduce opportunities for participants to minimize

information or experience difficulties recalling experiences. Therefore, Maxwell (2013) advised that the use of interview questions about past activities or events aids in gathering robust data and proactively avoids generalizations, abstract opinions, or placing the participants in positions to disclose information that might be awkward. Maxwell (2013) further stated that the interview method for data collection is proper when researchers need data related to specific conditions, events, performances, or behaviors. The participants and I agreed on times and locations to hold the interviews pending availability. The interviews for the adult English learners with disabilities took place either before or after instructional minutes. To prepare for the interviews, I reviewed each student's English Learner levels, math levels, English Learner and IEP accommodations, and other pertinent information related to their dual classification as an English learners with disabilities. Lastly, I conducted the individual interviews in the location that the participants indicated was preferable. I used a predetermined interview protocol to gather data from participants. I elected to use additional interview questions that asked the participants to describe how or why they held specific perceptions about their dual classification status about their abilities to make decisions and learn. I hoped and anticipated that the interview questions provided desirable, robust data.

I considered two types of interview formats for this qualitative inquiry approach because I had a specific purpose and focus. The first form of qualitative inquiry interviewing approach I considered is narrative inquiry interviewing. Patton (2015) depicted narrative inquiry interviewing as interviews that focus on descriptions of life experiences told by the people who lived them. Patton (2015) clarified that narrative

inquiry allows participants to give their story in their own voice. Patton (2015) stressed how the data from this format lies contingent on the relationship between the researcher and participant, to reveal societal and historical circumstances. This interview format was interesting, but I thought I could limit my capacity to gather thick, rich descriptive data. Another type of qualitative inquiry interviewing approach includes postmodern interviewing. Patton (2015) stated that postmodern interviewing follows the format of using preselected interview questions, less defined interview roles that support participants to gain understandings of the scope and progression of people as individuals and their histories. Patton (2015) explained how researchers institute this interview format because it uses questions which move from descriptions of participants' contexts, movements, and organic essences of their experiences to interpretations of societal and academic perceptions that reveal objective or subjective perceptions. Postmodern interview inquiry appealed to me because I believed that this format would help me to explore how my participants understand their beliefs about how and why their perceptions of their special education and English Learner classification took shape and their experiences informed their perceptions of their abilities.

I chose a specific format to conduct the individual interviews. Opdenakker (2006) defined synchronous communication as an interview technique that occurs in real time. The synchronous communication format I used was interviews. There are different types of interviews. Additionally, Opdenakker (2006) stated that face-to-face interviews are the most frequently used format for interviews. I used in-person interviews which were held face-to-face in time and place with most of the participants.

I did not want to conduct focus groups or observational data collection. I was fearful about utilizing those data collection techniques with my chosen sample. Ravitch and Carl (2021) defined reactivity as a difference from the genuine, open manner the participants might show or state in an interview. Ravitch and Carl (2021) noted this change or shift in the participants' behaviors as different from their regular or average ways to speak or behave. Reactivity can impact small group samples because the participants might alter their actions or statements based on others' statements, body language, or actions instead of sharing organic, unaltered, genuine non-verbal and verbal language or actions (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Focus groups and observational data collection are more susceptible to reactivity which is why I chose not to use them for my study.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher brings many meanings to a research project. Ravitch and Carl (2021) stated how a researcher acts as the fundamental authority to design and provide insight into their research endeavor's relevance, meaning, and goals. Zhang and Liu (2018) discussed how the researcher is the "instrument" in a research study. As far as data collection was concerned, I was an observer. My sole interaction with the participants was to administer the interview protocol. As the interviewer, I needed to have an awareness of how my beliefs, identity, employment position, engagement, biases, ethnicity, gender, age, values, or assumptions can come into play during the data collection and data analysis phases of the research project (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Zhang & Liu, 2018). I needed to acknowledge ways my role as a researcher informed

relationships with the participants to generate rapport and trust. There were students in the study who were recurrent students and who therefore were knowledgeable of my position as a teacher in the location. The participants could see the social manner that I interacted with other students at the site. As a minority female, these students tended to be comfortable in my presence and with engagement at the location because there are not many faculty members classified as minorities at this alternative high school program location. The students did not appear to show aggression or lack of tolerance because I am African American or female. The students also tended not to be repulsed or bothered by me being a middle-aged woman.

At the time of this study, all school district employees had to participate in specific coursework and workshops approved by the U.S. Department of Justice as part of a settlement agreement aimed to reduce racial and cultural discrimination against English learners and English learners with disabilities. I took several classes towards EL teacher certification. These courses and workshops provided insight into the socio-political, cultural, and academic barriers English learners with disabilities face concerning their English Learner classification status across many content areas and settings locally and nationally. My training and certification as a special education teacher informed my awareness of socio-political and academic barriers associated with the students' classifications of special education. A primary goal and responsibility I have felt throughout my teaching career has been to support and uplift students with this specific classification to become viable, independent adults. I believe that most English learners with disabilities have the motivation, will, and ability to achieve a standard high

school diploma and want to be American citizens. I think promoting culturally responsive classrooms bolsters learning and community among students.

Researcher Biases

I had to be careful not to interject any personal biases during data collection. I have always felt significant levels of connection, empathy, and endearment toward this classification of students. I realized that certain bias may be uncovered as I collected and analyzed my data, but I had to be careful not to make any assumptions about what I perceived the students think the students could have said or inferred. In addition, I planned to be cautious and not prompt them to give select responses. I also had to stay objective, yet receptive to any information that the students offered regarding their perceptions of their dual classification regardless of what they said about their perceptions of their dual classification status. I worked to remain impartial, even if the participants shared adverse opinions about their beliefs or value in their dual educational classifications or services that I believed did have value.

Disclosure of Relationships with Participants

I conducted the study with participants enrolled at an alternative high school program, which also happened to be my previous place of employment. I chose James CPS as the site for my dissertation research as it has been my place of employment since 2002. This form of “backyard research” (Glesne, 2006) is appealing to researchers because it provides relatively easy access to research participants, yields “the groundwork for rapport is already established,” ensures “the research [will] be useful for their professional or personal life” and reduces “the amount of time needed for various

research steps” (p. 31). Although I planned to conduct this study at my previous place of employment, there were specific reasons why I selected this site. Specifically, many adult English learners with disabilities enrolled at this location because it is the only high school program in the school district that has specific recruitment procedures and allowances to meet the needs of adult students entitled to educational services delegated under the special education and English Learner classifications. I was a special education teacher at the specified alternative high school program. However, none of the adult students who participated in the study were part of my special education caseload nor was I an inclusive special education or English Learner teacher in any of the students’ classes to meet the Algebra 1 course requirements. I did not have any power or influence over the participants’ grades or IEP goals. I was a completely neutral party that did not offer any educational services to the students.

Methodology

This section of Chapter three provided information regarding participant selection, instrumentation, recruitment procedures for participation and data collection, and data analysis plan. The participation selection identified the population, sampling strategies, techniques to contact and recruit participants, and sample size estimation. The instrumentation section discussed the data collection instrument, the sufficiency of data collection, content validity, where data was collected, frequency of data collection, data recording procedures, participant exit strategies, and reasons for follow-up interviews. The data analysis section included data connections to the research question, type and techniques for coding, and declaration of treatment of discrepant cases.

I used purposeful selection criteria to determine which students in the LEAs would best meet my study goals and inform the research question. Maxwell (2013) recommended purposeful selection for qualitative research participant selection. Glesne (2006) justified how purposeful selection facilitates participant selection criteria through “the logic and power of purposeful sampling... leads to selecting information-rich cases for study in depth” (Glesne, 2006, p. 34). Maxwell (2013) stated that “purposeful selection can be used to establish particular comparisons to illuminate the reasons for differences between settings or individuals” (p. 98). I used purposeful selection because it was my goal to explore why there might be variations of perspectives related to their dual classifications with learning and decision-making while they worked to meet Algebra 1 requirements at an alternative high school program.

Participant Selection

I decided to search the SEA website of a northeastern school district to identify the graduation rates for English learners with disabilities who attend alternative high school programs in the potential LEA, for the purpose of this research the district will be known as James County Public Schools (JCPS) to maintain anonymity. Upon viewing the “Graduates and Completers Report” of the LEA, I found that the data only delineated graduation rates for students registered at comprehensive high schools. It did not offer any information about graduation rates for students that completed their standard diploma requirements at any alternative high school programs.

My next phase of participant selection involved the selection of criteria to decide on a specific LEA for my dissertation study. The first factor I considered in examining a

potential LEA site to conduct my research was to choose locations that supported English learners with disabilities to meet the requirements of a standard diploma. The second factor included sites with variance in their high school graduation rates for English learners with disabilities. Third, I wanted sites with English learners with disabilities who strive to meet high school course requirements that have them minimally eligible for on-time and extended high school standard graduation rates. Lastly, I sought an LEA location that supports the attendance of English learners with disabilities at alternative high school program sites that also supported their enrolled students to meet high school standard diploma requirements. Desirable student participants attended at least one of the alternative high school programs in the proposed LEA.

I considered the proposed LEA because it had a reasonable rate of English learners with disabilities, as noted in the school district's quick facts webpage. James CPS is in the suburbs of a large metropolitan area on the East coast. Per information viewed on the county's website, the median 2019 household income for James County was \$120,071 in comparison to the United States median of \$71,841. James CPS compiled all statistics from their alternative high school programs and integrates them into the comprehensive high school statistics. The county reported that in 2019, 96% of all students graduated on time; this number included applied studies, certificate of completion, standard diploma, and advanced studies diploma. The county special education briefing report stated that 15% of its total student population received special education services (James County Public School, 2019). For the past five years, the county special education briefing report displayed the previous numbers for students with

disabilities will remain consistently between 14% - 15% (James County Public School, 2019). The county English Learner briefing report stated that 26% of its student population received English Learner education services (James County Public School, 2019). The school district does not aggregate the statistics to delineate the dually classified students who receive special education and English Learner services. I requested information on the number of English learners with disabilities from the individual alternative high school programs that support students to work towards at minimum a standard diploma. The alternative high school programs have many adult English learners with disabilities between the ages of eighteen and twenty-two.

The 2019 JCPS English Learner Briefing Report stipulated a settlement agreement was in place to remediate discriminatory activities against English Learner, including adult English learners with disabilities, throughout the school district (James English Learner Briefing report, 2019). Collected evidence supported discrimination by violations of ESSA, IDEA, and WIOA against English Learner throughout JCPS. The consequences of the findings resulted in a consent decree between the U.S. Department of Justice and JCPS. Part of the mandatory conditions included provisions to train the entire system to offer more culturally responsive, comprehensive educational services to all student groups, most pointedly English Learner populations, including English learners with disabilities (James EL Briefing report, 2019). As published on its website, the current JCPS strategic goals include a commitment to provide optimal and challenging learning environments for all students. JCPS aimed to provide English learners, including English learners with disabilities, access to needed resources and

strategies across core content areas to improve the academic performance rates for all students. The level of enforcement that occurred in the compliance organization was unusual. This circumstance made JCPS an attractive school district to use in a study of this nature.

James CPS has four high schools and six alternative high school programs. One of the alternative high school program sites focuses on career exploration. The career exploration alternative high school site also houses an online alternative high school program and virtual learning alternative high school program. The next alternative high school program provides educational services for students with severe and multiple disabilities. Another alternative high school program remits educational services to students who do not have permission to attend their neighborhood school because of legal violations and are under juvenile court supervision. The sixth alternative high school program, Rebecca Alternative High School Program (Rebecca AHSP), operates as an accelerated education program that primarily provides credit recovery and select career exploration courses. I worked at Rebecca AHSP, the alternative high school program mentioned in this section.

I did not find data that indicated the standard diploma graduation rates for students who attended the LEA's alternative high school programs. I decided to try other options. So, I viewed the James CPS website to identify the alternative high school programs in the county. I considered the individual websites for the alternative high school programs to find out what type of educational services they offer and their populations. I then viewed course listings provided at the alternative high school program

site locations. Lastly, I placed requests to the central educational office and individual alternative high school programs to determine how many adult English learners with disabilities attend each of the alternative high school programs in James CPS.

Selection of the participants in the study occurred using specific inclusionary criteria. Inclusionary criteria included students dually classified as English learners with disabilities, enrolled in an initial or remediation math course to meet Algebra 1 requirements, classified as an adult, and enrolled at one of the potential alternative high school programs in James CPS. I did not use students in this study who did not fit into all elements listed in the inclusionary criteria.

Establishment of Participants Meeting Inclusion Criteria

I obtained permission from the school district to review potential students' profiles in the James CPS educational database, Synergy. James CPS uses Synergy as a database to store student academic information, including educational classifications. First, I conducted an initial search to determine the number of English learners with disabilities enrolled at Rebecca AHSP. Synergy has specific icons delineated for Special Education status and English Learner status. Each student needed these two icons, for Special Education and English Learner respectively, on their profile in the Synergy database. Next, I narrowed the search to view only English learners with disabilities between the ages of eighteen and twenty-three. Students sustain their eligibility for special education and English Learner services if they turn twenty-two during the school year as they continue to work towards meeting their high school graduation requirements. Once English learners with disabilities reach the age of twenty-two, they no longer

sustain the right to use educational services or graduation options associated with special education or English Learner classifications but can still work towards meeting requirements for a standard diploma. Third, I recorded these student numbers to check their course and test histories to determine if they met Algebra 1 requirements, consisting of the satisfactory grade in the course and state criterion Algebra 1 assessment score. Possible participants who might meet the stipulated inclusionary criteria at Rebecca AHSP are adult English learners with disabilities.

Number of and Rationale for Participants

I used fields in the Synergy database that aligned with my inclusionary participant criteria to create a list of potential students for my study. The Synergy course history field showed fourteen adult English learners with disabilities who need to pass either the Algebra 1 or Algebra 1 Part II courses to meet the high school graduation math course requirements. The Synergy course assessment field displayed eight adult English learners with disabilities who need to pass the Algebra 1 state criterion benchmark. The Algebra 1 state assessment is the state criterion assessment to meet the high school graduation math assessment requirement. I deduced that at least ten adult English learners with disabilities fit the desirable criteria for my study at Rebecca AHSP. Additionally, I met with the guidance counselor, special education teacher, and English Learner teacher at Rebecca alternative high school program. These school personnel had the authority to confirm the students' eligibility to meet my study criteria which includes their age, educational classifications of special education and English Learner, math course enrollment or need,

and math assessment needs to meet the high school standard diploma requirements.

These students were desirable candidates who could answer my research question.

I used specific procedures to identify the potential study participants. As part of the first phase of participant selection and identification procedures, I confirmed each potential candidate's special education classification, English Learner classification, and math course status to confirm specific courses taken to support Algebra 1 instruction or remediation. The special education and English Learner teachers accessed information to confirm the students' dual classification status, age, and enrolled courses that meet the inclusive criteria desired for participation in the study.

As part of the second phase of the participant selection identification procedures for the study, I sorted all inclusionary criteria data at the alternative high school program to determine which students might be eligible for the study. I created codes of anonymity for each participant so the study data cannot be overly connected with any individual participant. This information helped me sustain participant anonymity and identify which collected data items correlated with each participant.

My investigation was with students classified as adults. Although they reached the "age of majority" (Virginia Department of Education, 2015a), these students continued to receive special education services because they remain under the "age of eligibility" (Virginia Department of Education, 2015b). These regulations stipulated that the students were eligible to execute their rights to make decisions about their eligibility for dual classified status in special education meetings. These two regulations stated how students must sign documents to confirm their acknowledgment and acceptance of the receipt of

special education services. ESSA and IDEIA mandates stipulate that under the English learners with disabilities classification, students must receive educational services for their dual classifications (Kangas, 2018). These circumstances substantiated student awareness of both classifications. Therefore, I did not feel conflicted to hold this examination because the discussions of disability and English-language proficiency occurred previously with these students and local school district personnel representatives in special education and English Learner education.

Since the participants were students classified as adults, I asked questions that I might not feel comfortable asking younger students. Kangas (2020) considered but refrained from posing interview questions about their perspectives regarding their disability status to middle school aged English learners with disabilities. She stated how she observed that several of the selected participants appeared surprisingly incognizant of their disability status. She conclusively surmised that a potential probe about perspectives related to their disability status might be harmful to the students (Kangas, 2020). Therefore, she decided not to explore perspectives about this topic overtly. I, however, chose to directly investigate perspectives about perceived sentiments about the English learners with disabilities' dual classification status. I asked these adult students questions that addressed personal sentiment about their dual classification status because I did not think the sessions would incur potential risks of mental anguish or physical discomfort.

I clarified the number of participants I used for this research study. Maxwell (2013) discussed how qualitative researchers should “frame” their questions to be definitive to a particular type of setting or people. Maxwell (2013) stated how framing a

question insulates a researcher from inaccurate generalizations about their study.

Maxwell (2013) stated how framing a question can target select beliefs, activities, or lengths that the researcher may detect or inquire about along with the circumstances where the phenomenon occurred is located.

I decided to interview no more than ten adult English learners with disabilities who took a math course for initial or remediation instruction to satisfy the Algebra 1 requirement of passing the course and state assessment benchmark. Marshall and Rossman (2016) defined theoretical saturation as the point where a researcher hears or observes the same information repetitively and feels there is not much more to achieve from continued data collection. Guest et al. (2006) noted the occurrence of theoretical saturation in qualitative research in between the seventh and twelfth interviews. An additional study confirmed the presence of theoretical saturation in qualitative research between the eighth and sixteenth interview (Namey et al., 2016). This information confirmed I made an appropriate decision to plan to interview 10 adult English learners with disabilities. Marshall and Rossman (2016) suggested using the term “theoretical sufficiency” to describe the actions of creating categories from the data that consistently conform to the research questions. Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) cited a standard from Kuzel (1992) which offered the minimum recommendation of “six to eight interviews for a homogenous sample... trying to achieve maximum variation” relational to data collection with qualitative research design (p. 61). I hoped to achieve theoretical sufficiency between the fifth and seventh interviews.

I conducted specific procedures to recruit participants for the study. I scheduled introductory appointments at Rebecca AHSP with the identified potential student candidates to introduce and recruit them for the study. As a courtesy, I invited the site principal, special education case carrier, and English Learner case carrier of the students to garner support, remit transparency, and establish/confirm rapport with the identified potential student candidates.

Rebecca Alternative High School Program (AHSP) was one of five alternative high school programs in an east coast school district. There was an enrollment of 125 students in the 2019-2020 school year. The population decreased to 82 in the 2020-2021 school year. Rebecca AHSP reinstated the English Learner program in 2015 after approximately 25 years of not having such program.

At the individual in-person meetings with the participants, I explained how there would be two ways to offer consent to participate in the study. I discussed the purpose of the study, how the data would appear non-identifiable in all written formats, and that they could, orally or in written form, rescind their participation in the study through the timeframe before submission of chapter four. With the first option, I shared how completing the demographic questionnaire at their individual interview would be their consent to the study. I offered them the option of meeting with me a moment before the scheduled interview if they considered giving their consent at a different time.

I executed an alternative plan to discuss the study with the students if they did not attend the in-person recruitment meeting. I made two attempts to meet with the students individually to recruit them for the study. When I did not meet with the students in

person, I contacted them via phone call. When I connected with them via phone conversation, I provided details about the study. I made two attempts to contact the students via cell phone. When I reached the students via cell phone call, I shared that I emailed them the consent forms or arranged a meeting at the school location to get them to sign the document. When I did not reach the students in person or via phone in two-week of starting the individual interviews, I did not pursue further communication about the study.

I accepted the consent letters in two different ways. The students had the option to return the signed consent forms to me in person. The students could also email me a picture of the signed consent form. If the students emailed a picture of the signed consent form, I printed out the form so that I had a hard copy of their consent.

During the recruitment meeting, I conveyed my preferences about the time and setting of data collection. I let the potential candidates know that I preferred to conduct face-to-face interviews at the school located in a room that was preferable to the potential participant. I planned to conduct the interviews over three weeks. I shared that I anticipated the scheduled individual interviews to last for about one hour each. I discussed how I planned to offer participants the option to hold the individual interviews in an office space at the study site or a popular coffeehouse near the site. I shared how I anticipated the potential need to rephrase some interview questions in real-time if the immediate responses from the interview questions seemed short, strayed from the topic, or appeared less detailed. I disclosed that I might also need to hold an additional interview session with some participants pending any scheduling issues or the interview

scope. I stated that after three failed attempts to meet with the potential participant, I would attempt to use Google Duo as a virtual method to interview the remaining participants. The research interviews were audiotaped and transcribed by me. I disclosed my intention to record the interviews using a voice recording application on my Android tablet and iPhone. I saved the interviews to my personal Google Drive and Apple iCloud accounts. Lastly, I planned to disclose how I intended to offer each potential participant a \$25 gift card after completing the individual interviews.

I initially met with the participants individually for the initial information session; however, I also scheduled other individual sessions pending their availability to read and sign the consent forms. I shared my purpose for the meeting with the participants: to ask them to participate in my dissertation research. I stated how the dissertation research was my final project to meet my degree requirements. Additionally, I provided a short PowerPoint presentation which summarized the purpose, summary, participation information they needed to know about the parameters of their involvement in my dissertation research. Furthermore, I discussed how at that time I planned to collect, report, and store the information to Walden University faculty. I also disclosed how my research may be published in professional, educational journals. The consent forms reiterated that participation in the study is voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time or reason from the study. At that time, I provided an additional copy of the dissertation study introduction letter and consent documents for them to sign if they feel comfortable doing so at that moment. If they wish, I emailed them a copy of the signed consent documents for the study. I discussed the study with them in person, answered any

questions the participants had, and collected any signed consent forms I gathered at that time. I offered a timeframe of ten days for them to give in-person consent or sign electronically. The candidates remitted the signed consent form in-person or emailed the signed consent form back to me.

Additionally, I shared specific information about the study. I stressed to the participants that all information transmitted in the interview sessions was confidential and encourage them to be forthright and as detailed as they feel comfortable with whatever information they share. I also highlighted the topic of anonymity with the study to the participants at the introductory meeting. Regarding anonymity, I maintained the confidentiality of the school district, alternative high school program, and student information used in the dissertation study by changing the names of all entities included in the study. If I needed to display any student information in the study, I redacted any identifiers to maintain anonymity for all parties.

Furthermore, at the introductory meeting, I explained that they can use less or more time for each interview pending their response rates. At the introductory meeting, I discussed disclaimers and participation gift cards. If deemed acceptable by the school district IRB committee, I will destroy any English Learner or IEP data, formal or informal notes/documents given to me by any participants or school district personnel after the successful defense of the dissertation research. Any other information or records created or gathered for the study from the school district were maintained in a locked cabinet in my office for five years. After five years, I will shred the documents at my work location within the school district. Additionally, I stressed that student participation

in the study would not influence their grades or evaluation of IEP goals. Furthermore, I shared that each participant will receive a \$25 gift card after participating in the study. The adult student participants had the option to rescind their decision to discontinue participation in the study at any time prior to final submission to the university. I told the participants they could have their information recanted at any time if they felt uncomfortable or elected to not be a part of the study.

Instrumentation

I had several procedures for my literature-driven interview protocol and data collection intervals with participants. The beginning part of this section explained how I used my literature review materials to develop my researcher-developed interview protocol. The secondary part of this section discussed my selected data collection procedures with the participants.

The interview questions were in-depth, semi-structured with the specified adult English learners with disabilities. The interview questions elicited knowledge and details regarding the participants' perspectives about their dual classifications, views about how they learn, and how they made decisions to gauge their beliefs about whether they perceived they could learn and made decisions with the specific dual classification. The questions were intentionally probing and open-ended. The original questions from the interview guide protocol offered the latitude to elicit follow-up or future-oriented questions.

The goal of the interviews was to see what the participants might share about their self-efficacy perceptions regarding their dual classification of being an English Learner

and student with high-incidence disability needs (learning disability or emotional/behavioral disability). The protocol aimed to gather information about how their self-efficacy perceptions about their dual classification status informed their a) beliefs about their capabilities to learn and b) perceived capabilities related to their decision-making processes and choices they make about their learning. I presented the interview questions to adult English learners with disabilities working to meet a specific math graduation requirement. The potential candidates included those recently completed or presently working to meet a math course requirement at an alternative high school program. The exploration investigated ways their self-efficacy perceptions of their dual classification affected their feelings of being able to learn and made decisions take shape. The potential candidates had to be students who needed to satisfy Algebra 1 requirements by either passing the class for course credit or state-criterion Algebra 1 assessment. I used a color-coded system with the protocol to ensure that I included these critical elements in the protocol.

Additionally, my goal was to explore the perceptions for why there may have been variations in the students' efficacies. The study investigated the rationale for their beliefs in decision-making relational to use with the dual classifications. The study uncovered data related to their perceptions of the dual classifications to learn in the selected math courses of Algebra 1 and AFDA. Lastly, I examined their perspectives to better understand if their self-efficacy perspectives impacted decision-making strategies during math instruction; and ways students' perceptions might have identified as efficacious.

I selected to use an interview guide approach as my interview instrumentation. Patton (2015) explained how a researcher uses an interview guide to develop questions in advance of the interview session which sets the tone through the terms used and order of the questions. I used specific words in the interview protocol derived from the literature review to drive data collection. Patton (2015) noted a strength of using an interview guide is that it boosts options to gather robust data in a sequential manner. The interview guide gave me the chance to flesh out the participants perspectives in a methodical manner where the latter questions built on the former. Patton (2015) mentioned that a drawback to using an interview guide is that the wording and order of questions can minimize the depth and context of data one can obtain from interviewing. This information from Patton (2015) led me to believe that an interview guide would keep me focused on my chosen topic while simultaneously reducing the potential for silence gaps to occur during the interviews.

I developed the interview protocol as a researcher-developed instrument. I used several sources to create the instrument. I also made two different documents to support assurances of design alignment between the selected theoretical framework, literature review, research questions and interview questions. The document I made I called the color-coded research question and interview protocol list (Appendix A). This list displayed how I matched the different color-coded items in my research question to my interview protocol items. The rationale for these activities centered around a specific goal. For this goal, I wanted to make sure that I addressed each itemized term of my research question in the interview protocol. If I did not see a color-coded match of the

itemized term from the research question in the interview protocol, I revised the interview question or added probing questions to ensure I had an interview question for each itemized term. I also realized I could use this document to possibly facilitate a potential precoding procedure in the data analysis process, a priori code development.

Furthermore, these documents intended to show design alignment between the problem statement, purpose, significance, selected methodology design, participant selection.

I wrote and continuously reviewed my researcher notes as I conducted the interviews. Glesne (2006) stated that researchers could use field notes to “write down feelings, work out problems, jot down ideas and impressions, clarify earlier interpretations, speculate about what is going on, and make flexible short- and long-term plan for the days to come” (p.59). I anticipated writing some notes to record thoughts during data collection or data analysis. I predicted that the notes would be relevant and valuable but not extensive or complex. I generated notes during the individual interviews and data analysis intervals because they allowed me to note nonverbal body language and ideas that came to me. My qualitative notes allowed me to use this information to reflect on what I did and made sure that I gathered data that aligned with the interview protocol and research question. These notes ensured that I accurately recalled statements made in the interviews, not interject biases, or misinterpreted the meanings of what I heard or saw in the interview sessions.

I used evidence-based strategies to analyze the data collected in this study. Ravitch and Carl (2020) defined the unit of analysis in qualitative research as the people, enterprises, perspectives, locations, actions, or timeframes in a study. The unit of analysis

was the individual adult English learners with disabilities' perspective responses to my specific interview questions who took either initial Algebra 1 or remediation courses to meet Algebra 1 requirements.

I planned to use a reputable transcription service to transcribe the audio/video recordings of my data collection. However, once I listened to the voice recordings, I typed the transcriptions on my own. I listened to the voice recordings to check for text accuracy with the transcriptions and took notes as deemed necessary. If I noticed any inaccuracies during the playback, I vocally or typed corrections of any errors or unidentified text. I printed these transcriptions at my home and secured them in a locked storage container I own at my residence.

I planned to take specific procedures upon completion of the interviews. After the individual interviews, I explained to the participants that I would use the information for a university study. I reminded them that if they felt any distress from this investigation, they could seek support from the school counselors and university professionals identified in the IRB application. I stated how they could revoke their permission to use the data before the chapter four submission timeframe. The exit discussion also stipulated how their identities and other identifiable information would remain anonymous and confidential. I stated that I would only share the data in an unidentifiable fashion to select university personnel for data analysis supervision. I also shared how the study data should remain in a locked cabinet at my home and then shredded after five years. I explained how I may need to conduct follow-up interviews to gain clarifying information

about the topic if deemed necessary. I then asked if they had any other questions or comments. If they did not, then I dismissed them from the interview sessions.

Data Analysis Plan

I conducted a general qualitative analysis to analyze my interview data. My chosen anticipated format for my data analysis is known as cross-sectional analysis. Patton (2015) depicted cross-sectional analysis as using analysis procedures where the researcher analyzes the participants' responses to their inquiry. Patton (2015) reiterated that cross-sectional analysis means that the researcher will report their findings from the associated responses with each interview question. My use of an interview guide for my data collection corresponded well with the utilization of a cross-sectional analysis. The cross-sectional analysis helped me execute specific steps to examine the data. Patton (2015) shared how using a cross-sectional analysis aid with the favorable alignment of research questions, interview questions, and data analysis. Patton (2015) confirmed that when a researcher poses specific questions in a predetermined sequence, it supports thorough data analysis because you examine the data question after question. I used the cross-sectional analysis format to engage in the open coding phase. My initial coding phase involved several open coding processes. Next, I moved to my next coding phase, which entailed transitioning from open coding to axial coding processes. Then, I shifted from axial coding to theme development. I predicted that the meanings of codes might change, get deleted, or have multiple connotations over the analytic processes. With part of my analysis, I observed if the participants perceived that their self-efficacy perceptions

related to their dual classification affect the following factors, academic mindsets, academic perseverance, academic behaviors, social skills, and academic performance.

For this study, I used these select factors from Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1994, 1997) to support one of the coding processes for my data analysis with the participants. I chose these factors because evidence confirmed that these factors evidenced self-efficacy. Plus, no studies examined these factors with this classification or age group of students even though evidence stated that they are a fast-growing population with poor performance outcomes nationwide. This study aimed to explore students' self-efficacy, related to their dual classification, about their feelings or beliefs of their capabilities about their academics. The study examined under the context of the dual classification if English learners with disabilities' beliefs may influence their confidence to accomplish tasks. The study investigated if the beliefs of English learners with disabilities influence their decision-making related to their academic classifications.

I predicted that certain educational terms might emerge in context with the factors associated with Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1994). Studies rendered definitions for the following educational terms - academic mindsets, academic behaviors, academic perseverance, social skills, and academic performance (Farrington et al., 2012; Frank, 2020; Han et al., 2020; Wanzer et al., 2019). Academic mindsets are mental outlooks or points of view that students have about their schooling. Academic behaviors are measurable actions or routines linked to students' interests and educational outcomes. Some academic behaviors include attending classes or school, studying for quizzes or tests, doing classwork or homework, creating, and storing notes, being prepared with

equipment and materials to work, attentively listening during direct instruction.

Academic perseverance is persistence or firmness in students to stick to their tasks through completion and stay in class or school for the entire duration of designated time even amid challenges. Given examples of academic perseverance are self-control, self-discipline, and delayed gratification. For this study, social skills are ways students act as individuals, and with students and their teachers. Social skills encompass students' choices of interactions with others, ways they manage themselves, and their social activity in educational settings. Academic performance is a measurable result or outcome of skill, behavior, or activity. Many of these terms helped me recognize the occurrences of Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1994) in my data.

I began with open coding processes to analyze my interview data. Maxwell (2013) stated how the election of the researcher to listen to an interview before transcription is the first occurrence of analysis. After I administered the interview protocol, my first analytic step was to listen to each interview within twenty-four hours after completing the interview. The second planned step was to transcribe each interview, preferably within twenty-four hours after I held the interview. Maxwell (2013) recommended creating notes as you listen to and read your transcription to generate potential categories or connections within the data. I wrote any possible notes in a notebook. I stored the notebook with the other dissertation-related materials in a locked container.

I used precoding as a step to analyze my data. Ravitch and Carl (2021) defined precoding as a procedure to read, examine, and start the open coding process by circling,

highlighting, color-coding, underlining a word or group of terms you deem significant, or creating notes or initial thoughts in the margins. The third coding step was to read the interview transcription simultaneously, listen to the interview auditorily, and conduct precoding of my data. I also wrote more notes to record my thoughts and ideas or generate codes whenever I had a revelation to consider in later analytic procedures.

With the last stage of my third coding step, I analyzed my data with a set of researcher-generated pre-codes. The initial set of the researcher-generated pre-codes stemmed from my choices to frame the study. The pre-code terms came from my selected theoretical framework, associated terms from the inclusionary criteria for the participants, and delimitations mentioned earlier in chapter 1. My data analysis included the use of a hypothesized model of Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1994) that anticipated the circulation of the free-flowing cycle of the students' perceptions of their self-efficacy amid their dual learning challenges.

The fourth step involved using two analytical options to open code the data. Maxwell (2013) suggested using two different types of categorizing analysis to look at linkages amongst the data, which he labeled as similarity and contiguity. The initial part of the fourth step of my qualitative data analysis included the identification of similarity relationships. A popular analytic procedure, similarity relationships, examines how one label and groups identified data items by their likeness and differences within and across categories, known as coding (Maxwell, 2013). This step, similarity relationship coding, was my second coding strategy. Saldana (2016) defined a code as a word or phrase that represents the "summative, salient, essence-capturing, and/or evocative attribute of the

verbal or pictorial data” (p. 4). One type of categorizing analysis entails the process of coding procedures where the researcher will identify and break apart the data into to then reconstruct it into small categories that will later facilitate the evolution of theories (Maxwell, 2013). Next, I moved into my third coding strategy, contiguity relationship coding. The second type of categorizing analysis that I used as the secondary part of my fourth qualitative data analysis step involves identifying contiguity relationships. Contiguity relationships, also known as connecting strategies, explore ways one issue might influence the other or note connections between the issue based on a select context (Maxwell, 2013; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). As I coded and wrote notes, I used colored post-it tabs, colored pencils, and colored highlighters to set up abbreviation and numerical systems. The color-coding systems denoted the correspondence of specific codes to words in the margins of the paginated transcripts and electronic documents saved on my private laptop. I created a legend for the generated codes.

From there, I shifted from open coding to axial coding. Ravitch and Carl (2021) described axial coding as a method to code patterns to see how the codes fuse into groupings to establish connections to concepts that will result in assertions and the evolution of findings. As Maxwell (2013) recommended, I included organizational, substantive, and theoretical categories as part of my categorizing analysis. Organizational categories can be helpful for more analysis and serve as sorting bins to discern topic categories that emerge from the data and facilitate the creation of section headings for when you report results (Maxwell, 2013; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). The uniqueness of organizational category analysis is that it offers a categorial placeholder for what they say

or association of importance (Maxwell, 2013). Next, I created substantive categories to engage in an inductive, open coding process. I developed substantive categories to offer descriptive information, which can include the participants' meanings or words, known as emic, or could be their beliefs (Maxwell, 2013; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Substantive categories can be descriptive but continue to reflect the researcher's recognition of content versus participants (Maxwell, 2013; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). Then, I transitioned to the creation of theoretical categories. Theoretical categories configure the coded data and connect it with a theoretical framework (Maxwell, 2013; Ravitch & Carl, 2021). I arranged my coded data and connected the coded data to Bandura's self-efficacy framework that I identified in my literature review. Throughout this analytic phase, I took notes. These notes represented the systematic and critical reflection on what I uncovered and what was essential to discover and determine the relationships between the coding processes (Ravitch & Carl, 2021). I continued to update the legend for the generated codes.

Next, I shifted from axial coding to thematic development. I followed steps in Ravitch and Carl's (2021) suggested general qualitative analysis process for theme development. For the initial stage, I methodically read my coded data. Secondly, I sorted, merged, or deleted codes. The codes included concepts, events, examples, names, places, dates, and themes (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). This process enabled me to examine the coded data to look for overlaps, disjunctures, patterns (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). With this second step, the researcher might notice that the emerging themes could have the same or different labels as the coding processes (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin &

Rubin, 2012). The third step of my thematic development involved documenting my themes as I perceived they materialized from my coded data. Ravitch and Carl (2021) recommended this step to comparatively review your research questions to look for connections with the codes to emergent themes. Another additional suggestion included the review of the selected theoretical framework to analyze your data for the presence of themes. Fourth, I again reviewed and recoded my data with the latest list of themes. This step helped me determine if there were any missing themes and supported the production of supportive subgroups of themes (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Fifth, I narratively wrote a description of my themes. In this step, I pulled data examples into my writings to uphold my thematic deductions (Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012). Ravitch and Carl (2021) suggested that the writings clarify how the themes have context with the knowledge and awareness of the issue(s) outlined with the research data, providing a design alignment measure. Ravitch and Carl (2021) recommend that researchers describe how they connect their generated themes to their research. I explained how I connected my generated themes to my research question during this step. Lastly, I wrote a narrative description of how my selected theoretical framework informed my developed themes (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). I reviewed the researcher-developed research question, interview protocol matrix, and researcher-developed color-coded research question & interview protocol list. This review ensured that my narrative theme writings reflected the relationship between my themes and my research question. Several researchers recommend writing memos throughout the analytic phases (Maxwell, 2013; Ravitch & Carl, 2021; Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Saldana, 2016). As another analytical

support measure, I wrote memos as deemed necessary when pointed thoughts or questions emerge. The steps in this analytic phase reflected the potential systematic processes I chose to use to uncover themes in my interview data.

As I underwent the data analysis phases, I notated the progression from coding to theme development. I kept a hard copy and electronic version of my coding analysis systems and thematic analysis. This step ensured that I had backup plans for two reasons. The first reason was that I needed to keep a version that I could read since my handwriting is sometimes illegible. Secondly, I needed a version that sustained updated understandings of coded and theme creations and meanings. The electronic version of the codes and themes were placed in an Excel spreadsheet. I will store this documentation in hard copies in a locked container once I complete my dissertation research for five years at my home. After that point I will shred the documents with my own paper shredder.

I wrote and continuously reviewed my notes as I analyzed the interview data. Maxwell (2013) recommended that a researcher should not let “your unanalyzed field notes and transcripts pile up, making the task of final analysis much more difficult and discouraging” (p. 104). These strategies documented the nuances, trends, and any other thoughts I noticed or considered as I conducted and analyzed the interviews. These notes allowed me to use this information to reflect on what I did and made sure that I continued to analyze the data accurately, not interject biases or misinterpret any understanding of what I believed the data shows.

Data Display

Once I wrote up the results of my data analysis, I created a visual display of the data analysis. Data displays can serve several purposes. Ravitch and Carl (2021) stated how data displays might aid a researcher in arranging and understanding their data. Ravitch and Carl (2021) also said how data displays support a researcher to show decision-making paths throughout the data collection and data analysis processes and depict the results of data analysis. I created a pictorial or visual display of my final data analysis. I anticipated that the design visually aligned the problem statement, purpose, research questions, instrumentation, and data analysis. I made the visual display specifically to show how the deduction of themes aligned with the problem statement, purpose, and research question.

Issues of Trustworthiness

This section discussed measures I used to ensure credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. There were a few verification procedures that I instituted so that I could uphold what Ravitch and Carl (2021) referred to as “trustworthiness” (p. 167). Maxwell (2013) stated how validity is part of the research design and acts as the way that the researcher can handle “conceptualization of these threats and the strategies [I]use to discover if they are plausible in [my] actual research situation, and to deal with them if they are plausible” (p. 123). The explanations and activities of trustworthiness that I disclosed did substantiate how I used evidence-based procedures in my study to investigate my topic without interference from unanticipated external or internal issues.

Credibility

I executed an activity to support the first element of trustworthiness, also referred to as credibility. Ravitch and Carl (2021) define credibility in qualitative research as the researcher's recognition of and actions to resolve potential complications which could impact the study. I noted the point in my analysis where the collected interview data appeared to offer similar results persistently. I explained this term earlier in this chapter as theoretical sufficiency (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). The activity supported credibility, also known as internal validity.

Transferability

My study also sustained the second element of trustworthiness, transferability. Ravitch and Carl (2021) explained transferability as a point where a qualitative researcher provides concentrated, descriptive accounts that maintain distinct, characteristic robustness while applying it to other contexts. I remitted thick, detailed narrative information which focused on the quality of the English learners with disabilities' experiences. I offered the rendition of a completed, robust analysis of a unique dual classified group of adult students enrolled in a particular setting. This activity supported the execution of transferability, also known as external validity.

Dependability

The study reflected balance amongst its parts as the third element of trustworthiness, also referred to as dependability. Ravitch and Carl (2021) stated that dependability means administering specific formats to achieve alignment with collected data and an evidence-based assertion. I used distinct procedures affiliated with rationale

and use of the qualitative design of general qualitative methodology. I executed the proper techniques of a general qualitative study with my procedures pre-approved and fully supervised by a designated university committee. I used the knowledge from my doctoral courses and recommendations from my dissertation committee to appropriately carry out a general qualitative methodology. These steps supported the execution of dependability, also comparable to reliability.

Confirmability

The study also showed objectivity through the fourth element of trustworthiness, confirmability. Ravitch and Carl (2021) denoted confirmability as neutrality, where the researcher explains ways in which biases or preferences could taint interpretations of data but puts reflective, systematic activities in place to guard against misinterpretation of data collection and analysis. I completed a Researcher Identity Memo to identify my potential biases, personal views, and perceptions from years of professional experience with this population that could affect my dissertation data collection or analysis procedures. This activity supported my intentions to assert confirmability.

Ethical Procedures

This study had a few ethical issues and limitations. First, I explained how I submitted Internal Review Board (IRB) applications to the prospective school district IRB committee and Walden University IRB committee to conduct my dissertation research. Secondly, I needed to address my issues with researcher bias. Thirdly, I described the limitations of the study.

School District IRB and University IRB application Submissions

As stated earlier, the study participants needed to meet the predetermined criteria to receive an offer to participate in the study. I submitted a school district Internal Review Board (IRB) application to get permission to conduct my dissertation research. Upon receipt of the application, a JCPS IRB committee member stated that upon IRB approval to conduct the study, they would email the Rebecca alternative high school program principal to confirm the dissertation phase status. The email included a summary of the proposed dissertation study and a consent letter to conduct the examination on behalf of the school district.

There were a few concerns related to the recruitment of the sample participants. I offered the opportunity to join the study throughout a specific timeframe. I conducted the exploration with participants enrolled at the alternative high school program, which also happened to be my previous place of employment. None of the adult students who participated in the study were part of my special education caseload. I did not have the roles of English Learner teacher or inclusive special education teacher in any of the candidates' classes to meet the Algebra 1 course requirements. I was a special education teacher at the specified alternative high school program, but I supported Geometry and Algebra 2 instruction. I did not have any power or influence over the participants' grades or IEP goals. I was a completely neutral party that solely offered educational support.

There was a possibility that I might know some of the participants who were in the study. The students might have recognized me as a person who worked in the building but not as their classroom teacher or case carrier. Additionally, I had a personal

affinity for this population of students. I needed to be conscientious not to let my feelings influence or bias my data collection or analysis procedures. Despite any potential to exert bias into the data collection or analysis processes because of my experiences with this population, I believed that being a familiar face and having a positive rapport with the students could work to my advantage of the receipt of honest, forthright discourse during the interviews. I periodically reminded myself throughout both procedures, especially before each data collection and analysis interval, to remain objective and open to whatever the data revealed. Thus, I believe the responses of the English learners with disabilities participants and my interpretations of their responses were valid and legitimate.

Next, I completed the Walden University Research Reviewer (URR) application requirements to approve my research with Walden University and the targeted public school district, JCPS. I submitted a request for a Walden URR member. After being granted a Walden URR member, I remitted a copy of my dissertation chapters 1-3, school district IRB application, and Walden URR application to the designated Walden URR member. Upon receipt of approval of my URR application to conduct my dissertation research and dissertation proposal defense with my Walden University dissertation committee, I began recruitment procedures for study participants.

Researcher Insights

It is vital for a researcher to not allow past interactions with participants in the research settings to create climates or sentiments throughout the dissertation study that might restrict effective data collection or analysis (Glesne, 2006). I have worked for over

twenty-nine years professionally with many English learners with disabilities across various age groups as a special educator. For seven years in a state, I taught English learners with disabilities in elementary self-contained and inclusive classes across all content areas. Next, I taught middle school science and math classes in the northern area of another state with English learners with disabilities for two years in self-contained and inclusive classes. For the last nineteen years, I provided Algebra 1 and Geometry instruction in self-contained and inclusive high school settings, including comprehensive high schools and alternative high school programs. I took seven courses towards becoming certified as an English Learner teacher while in high school settings over the last five years. Additionally, I received training to administer WIDA assessments. Furthermore, I remitted assessment accommodations to English learners with disabilities in formal and informal test administrations. I did my best not to allow my past experiences with English learners with disabilities in the past and present high school educational settings to create feelings within the dissertation research that could hamper my data collection or analysis.

My experiences led me to believe that English learners with disabilities could make informed decisions and learn when provided appropriate educational support. I believed that English learners with disabilities could understand how their dual classification status can support them to learn in any educational environment. I think that English learners with disabilities can make decisions to learn how to make decisions that involve the effective use of their dual classifications.

There are several beliefs that I disclosed as potential biases or personal points of view. First, many of these students were aware that they have challenges with learning but never stated to me how these challenges align with their dual classification status. Secondly, most students held negative dispositions about one or both educational classifications. Third, my professional experiences led me to suspect that the students' perceptions of their learning challenges and dual classification status impacted their learning abilities. Fourth, I believed that the students' perceptions of their challenges and dual classification status affected their decision-making to perform in classes, such as Algebra 1 requirements. Fifth, I believed that English Learner and special education teachers did not adequately train English learners with disabilities to understand how their dual classification status affects their learning ability. Sixth, I felt that the special education and English Learner teachers did not appropriately instruct English learners with disabilities to make decisions nor provided opportunities to practice decision-making that aligned with specific course needs and interests.

Anderson (2010) defined reliability as “the reproducibility and stability of the data” (p. 2). My goal was to display reliability in my study, reflecting actions that my data collection and analysis were consistent. Glesne (2006) referred to the use of “external audit – writing that allows the reader to enter the research content, ‘auditing’ your field notes, research journal, analytic coding scheme, etc.” (p. 38). After the initial analysis with all participants, I reviewed my research notes to ensure that my transcripts and analysis aligned with my research question.

Limitations

There were a few limitations to this study. Due to the possibility of not having access to many school districts in the state with alternative high school programs, there were restrictions on the amount of data collected. Additionally, due to the rise in the area with the contagious COVID-19 Omicron Variant, the school district requested that I limit the study to one alternative high school program site that I used for my research. Therefore, I did not see significant or relevant variation in the adult student responses related to their perspectives of their self-efficacy and perceived decision-making strategies associated with their dual classification. The participants and I held the interviews at agreed times and locations pending their availability. Another limitation was the potential for the adult student participants to give responses that they believed the researcher wanted to hear versus renditions that stipulated what they felt. A third limitation involved generalizability. Another factor was that the generalizability may only apply to regions or school districts with high concentrations of minority students with disabilities in their schools. The generalizability issue could also apply to schools with problems of misidentification related to their English Learner status or eligibility for special education classification.

Summary

In this section, I discussed the decisions I made relating to the selection of research design, methodology, and trustworthiness. I generated research and interview questions from Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory which focused on how people's perceived capabilities to learn inform their beliefs, decisions, and actions towards

performance outcomes. I recorded audio/visual individual interviews as my method for data collection with the use of an interview protocol to ensure that I touched on desired points concerning student perceptions about potential relationships of their self-efficacy and dual learning challenges. During the interviews and data analysis phases, I took notes that reflected thoughts or insights about the data. My data analysis consisted of open coding, axial coding, and thematic development. My data analysis also included the usage of a hypothesized model that framed the potential free-flowing patterns of the students' perceptions of their self-efficacy in the context of their dual learning challenges.

Each section of chapter three outlined the preplanned procedures to gather and analyze the data for this study. In chapter four, I discussed the methods used to collect and analyze the participant data. Chapter Four information discusses all planned and unplanned procedures to collect the data. Lastly, chapter four mentioned data results, findings, and recommendations.

Chapter 4: Results and Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this general qualitative analysis study was to explore how English learners with disabilities perceived self-efficacy related to their dual classifications of English learner and special education influence their beliefs as learners and their decision-making, and how these beliefs influence their school performance, specifically to satisfy Algebra 1 graduation requirements. The research question explored their self-efficacy perceptions of adult high school students with the dual classification of English learner with disabilities as they complete Algebra 1 requirements in an alternative high school setting. This chapter will include the setting, participant demographics, data collection procedures, data analysis processes, evidence of trustworthiness, data analysis results, and data summary.

Bandura (1994) espoused that a person's ideology about their self-efficacy stems from their performance accomplishments, vicarious experiences, verbal persuasions, or physiological/emotional states. Bandura described people's perceptions of how their capabilities can evolve from periods of continuous failure or their abilities to achieve success even through hardship as performance accomplishments (Bandura, 1994). Additionally, Bandura explained how people's beliefs in their capabilities to be successful often come from their observations or reactions to the perceptions of others with perceived similarities in different scenarios or situations, noted as vicarious experiences (Bandura, 1994). Furthermore, Bandura stated that people's perceptions of their capabilities to be successful may be formed from other's verbalization about the

person's capacity to succeed, which is known as verbal persuasion (Bandura, 1994). Lastly, Bandura stated that people's perceived interpretations of their physiological/emotional states, such as their feelings or physical responses to situations, can affect perceptions of their capabilities (Bandura, 1994). Using Bandura's theoretical model, data analysis indicated that there was evidence of each of these self-efficacy elements throughout the collected data, which are discussed throughout this chapter.

Setting

The study took place at a SEA located in a northeastern suburban school district with a significant population of middle to upper middle-income residents. I labeled the LEA for this study with the alias James County Public Schools (James CPS). Per information viewed on the county's website, the median 2019 household income for James County was \$120,071, in comparison to the United States median of \$71,841. James CPS compiles all statistics from their alternative high school programs and integrates them into the comprehensive high school statistics. The LEA noted that in 2019, 96% of students graduated on time for students who completed requirements for the diploma options of applied studies, certificate of completion, standard diploma, and advanced studies diploma. The LEA special education briefing report stated that 15% of its total student population received special education services (James County Public School, 2019). For the past five years, the school district special education briefing report displayed the previous numbers for students with disabilities will remain consistently between 14%-15% (James County Public School, 2019). The LEA English learner briefing report stated that 26% of its student population received English learner

education services (James County Public School, 2019). This LEA did not aggregate the statistics to delineate the dually classified students who received special education and English Learner services.

The adult high school participants in the study attended one of the alternative high school programs in James CPS. I listed the specific alternative high school program in James CPS used in this study as Rebecca Alternative High School Program (Rebecca AHSP). At Rebecca AHSP, students can take core content and elective courses to meet general or advanced studies high school diploma requirements. Rebecca AHSP offers several features not offered at other high school programs or comprehensive high schools in the school district. One of these features at Rebecca AHSP is a minimum age requirement of sixteen and, more importantly, no upper age maximum requirement to attend. These two factors make Rebecca AHSP unique in comparison to other high schools in this school district.

Additionally, this alternative high school program offers classes on a semester enrollment cycle of fall and spring versus the traditional school calendar year of August through June. Students can take up to four in-person classes as well as one online or independent study course per semester. Students at Rebecca AHSP can retake classes as credit recovery for remediation in a shorter timeframe than at a traditional high school setting. These students can also take advantage of the shorter semester school year to progress more expediently through their required high school course of studies. Rebecca AHSP students have a mandate to take a full day of classes if they are underage of majority, 18 years old, unless it is appropriately documented in an educational plan such

as an IEP or 504 Plan. Students at least 18 years of age can register for a reduced school day for as long as they choose through the cycles it takes them to complete their high school graduation requirements. Rebecca AHSP registration data reflected that more than 80% of the student population are over the age of 18, a significantly higher statistic than the other high schools or high school programs in the school district. Consequently, most of the adult students at Rebecca AHSP take less than a full day of academic courses. The participants of this study stated that they attend classes at this educational location because of its flexible age registration and course registration options.

There was an organizational condition that influenced the experiences of participants at time of the study that may have influenced the data collected under this study. The selected school system was under an enforced consent decree with the U.S. Department of Justice to remedy instances of discrimination, cultural bias, and effective instruction to all students, with an emphasis on the Latino/a student population (James English Learner Briefing report, 2019). This decree came to fruition due to the federal agency's collected evidence which reported discrimination by violations of ESSA, IDEA, and WIOA against English Learner throughout James CPS. The consequences of the findings resulted in a consent decree between the U.S. Department of Justice and James CPS. This enforcement action targets special populations, including English learners, which respectively, encompasses adult English learners with disabilities throughout the school district. Part of the mandatory conditions include provisions to train the entire LEA to offer culturally responsive, comprehensive educational services to all student groups, most pointedly English learner populations, including those with disabilities

(James EL Briefing report, 2019). James CPS strategic goals included a commitment to provide effective resources and strategies across core content areas to improve academic performance rates and increase high school graduation rates for these students. This strategic goal involves the identification of potential barriers that may impact student attendance, learning, and performance.

Demographics

I supplied information deemed helpful for audiences to gain insight into the participants' demographic data and characteristics in this study. The first set of information provided individual participant profile information associated with their enrollment history, registration status, diploma status, classification history, and educational data related to their dual identification at Rebecca AHSP. I supplied information deemed helpful for audiences to gain insight into the 10 participants' demographic data and characteristics of this study.

The first set provided individual participant profile information associated with their enrollment history, registration status, diploma status, classification history, and educational data related to their dual identification at Rebecca AHSP. At the time of the interview, the participants were between 18 and 22, with three participants at 19, three at 20, and two at the age of 21. Six of the participants identified as male, and four participants as female. Seven participants had Latin American heritage and fluently spoke Spanish. Two participants had African heritage and spoke Tigrinya and Arabic. One participant had Indian origin but spoke Bengalis and Spanish fluently. While four participants enrolled at Rebecca AHSP for 3 years or more, four enrolled for 2 years, and

two enrolled for 1 year. Eight participants experienced attendance issues throughout the school year of the study. Four participants had part-time school registration status, while the rest were full-time. Three participants worked two part-time jobs while the rest worked one. Six participants lived with family members, while the remainder lived independently. One participant was a caregiver for his parent, while another had an infant child. Six participants received educational services under the English learner classification over 10 years, while four received these under 4 years. Two participants scored at the WIDA 2 level, four at the WIDA 3 level, two at the WIDA 4 level, and two did not have WIDA scores at the time of the study. Six participants received special education services over 5 years, and four received these services for under 2 years. Four participants had a Learning Disability diagnosis for math, writing, and reading comprehension, while three had the diagnosis for math and writing, and three had the diagnosis for writing.

The certified accommodations used by the participants included extended time, dictionary use, graphic organizers for notes, scaffolded notes, reduced assignments without compromising academic skills, read-aloud on tests, clarified directions, and designated adults to support students during times of stress. Two participants had the potential diploma status of standard diploma, while the other eight participants qualified for the standard with accommodations diploma because they needed locally verified credit for at least one state content assessment. This collection of data about the participants gave select socio-economic and historical educational context to understand

ways the participants' educational history might impact their perspectives and frames of reference.

The second set of information showed identified participants' academic information about their dually identified classification and educational history relative to their efforts to meet the Algebra 1 and math graduation requirements. Regarding single courses repeated due to grade failures, five participants failed four classes at least twice; two failed three courses on two occasions; and three failed two classes. All participants had special education personnel who co-taught with general education math teachers in their respective math courses. They received English learner consultation and monitoring services for the math classes. Four participants failed the Algebra 1 state assessment at least five times; two failed it four times; two failed it three times; and two failed it two times. None of the participants passed the Algebra 1 state assessment before this study.

Three participants failed the Algebra 1 course requirement four times, two failed it three times, four failed it two times, and one failed it one time. Six participants passed the Algebra 1 course as a single-credit math course before this study. Four participants took Algebra 1, while the rest took the Algebra Functions & Data Analysis math course during the initial data collection for this study. Six participants achieved a passing score on the Algebra 1 state assessment during data collection for this study. At the same time, four participants met the minimum state-verified credit score to fulfill the locally-verified state Algebra 1 assessment requirement during the initial data collection for this study. While all students passed their math course during the data collection for this study, the final math course grades included: one participant earned a D, five earned a C, three

earned a B, and one got an A. The information in this paragraph highlighted details about classification supports in their math courses, plus past attempts to pass Algebra 1 requirements before and at the end of the school year that the study took place.

The information showcased how most of the participants experienced years of eligibility for both classifications. It also displayed some historic academic adversity related to their dual classification that the students encountered, specifically in their attempts to satisfy the Algebra 1 requirements. Lastly, it displayed that each participant met the Algebra 1 graduation requirement by the end of their respective courses. During the allocated data collection period, the study captured data about their perceived self-efficacy perspectives before and at the end of their specified math course during the timeframe of the study to meet the Algebra 1 graduation requirements.

Data Collection

I began preparations to collect approvals to conduct my dissertation research once I successfully defended my dissertation proposal. I received LEA IRB approval to conduct my dissertation research on May 25, 2022. Subsequently, I received the university IRB approval on June 14, 2023, and received the approval # 06-21-22-1041548. The participant sample included 10 adult students classified as English learners with disabilities who attend an alternative high school program in James CPS.

I administered the interview protocol to my participants from the third week of June through the first week of July. This data collection cycle occurred after the students' spring academic semester concluded. I successfully administered the interview protocol to the ten adult student participants I solicited to be a part of my study. I met with 7

participants in-person at a reserved, private conference room in the neighborhood community center attached to Rebecca AHSP. I interviewed 3 participants on Google Meet as I described in Chapter three because these participants had schedule conflicts which did not allow for them to meet with me via an in-person setting option. I used the Voice Memos application on my iPhone as one of the voice-recording applications to store my dissertation data. Additionally, I simultaneously recorded the interviews with Audacity, a voice recording software program on my laptop. I copied the interview data from Audacity onto an external USB drive which I keep in a locked storage container in my home office. At that time, I believed that I had sufficient data to conduct an effective analysis when I finished my data collection session that summer since I completed the interviews with the interview guide.

I instituted my selected data analysis procedures during the fall semester of 2022. I followed the analysis steps outlined in Chapter three. My initial step in the open coding process comprised of listening to the interviews. I listened to the iPhone audio recordings to familiarize myself again with the data and then manually transcribed each interview. A month later, I finished transcribing each interview. I then reviewed transcripts for participants #6 – 10. I read and simultaneously listened to each interview after the initial transcription to ensure accuracy of the documents.

I shared these transcripts with my chair so that I could receive feedback from her and confirm options on how to proceed. With our collective review, I admitted that some sections in several of the transcripts displayed answers that I obviously should have prompted participants to give more detailed, expanded answers. I conveyed how I

believed that the wording I used in the protocol, researcher nervousness and rush to complete the interviews, and my lack of insight to dig deeper limited the scope of data I could have collected. In consultation with my chair, I determined that my collected summer data was too sparse to analyze accurately. Therefore, in conjunction with my chair we determined that I needed to conduct follow up interviews. During the meeting, she inquired if it would be possible for me to conduct follow-up interviews with the participants. When I relayed that I could, she suggested that I decide upon the material that I want to focus on for the follow-up interview session. Additionally, she recommended that I assess the transcripts against the protocol used for the initial interviews to identify which areas had the most unclear or limited responses. The intention of the follow-up interviews was to gather more substantial, robust data that I could effectively collect prior to the expiration of my IRB approvals. I attempted to delve deeper to gather information about participants' perceptions about perceived levels of self-efficacy and how it affected their perceived capabilities to develop and succeed academically.

To determine what additional information could be obtained from follow up interviews, my chair and I conducted a line-by-line discussion of the first two interviews. I enhanced the interview protocol with follow up open ended questions to obtain more in-depth information. I then reviewed the transcripts for participants #7 – 10 with considerations of what we discussed in relation to the first two transcripts and refined some of the questions to support my aim to glean more robust data with a follow-up round of interviews. After reviewing the interview protocol and transcripts, I created a

supplemental set of questions to use for one additional meeting with each participant to conduct the final round of individual interviews. I typed the follow-up questions in red on the original interview protocol. The individual follow-up interview sessions included simple prompts that requested each participant to elaborate more on their past responses to the original interview questions while giving examples to further enhance the discussion. Then a second interview was conducted with each participant.

I completed the second interview session with all participants using the revised, follow-up questions to gather more detailed data. Within the first two weeks of October, I completed an additional interview session with all participants using the revised, follow-up questions to gather more detailed data. I then followed the open coding processes previously listed to include information from the second round of interviewing each participant. I listened to the iPhone audio recording of each initial and follow-up interview. Then I added the follow-up interview data to the original transcriptions. I integrated the follow-up interview data with red font to differentiate it from the original data which I labeled in black font on the individual transcripts. At this point, I believed that I had sufficient data to conduct a thorough analysis of the collected data.

After I conducted the follow-up interviews, I moved forward with my data analysis steps. I used two of my large screen home monitors that I connected with an electronic port to my laptop for multi-screen use to analyze the data. I used one monitor to review each updated transcript along with the simultaneous use of another monitor to review the updated interview protocol to add the updated information to the transcription documents as I listened to the interviews in my home office. After I completed the update

of my transcripts, I concluded that I had substantial data to move forward with the subsequent data analysis phases.

Precoding Analysis Step

As I read through each interview, I used the four components of Bandura's self-efficacy theory as a priori codes to continue open coding analysis the data. I combed through each transcribed interview to identify excerpts from the transcripts which represented an example of each code and highlighted them using a different color for the four a priori codes. I color-coded each analyzed representation of Performance Accomplishments in a blue highlight. Respectively, I colored each identified representation of Vicarious Experiences in grey highlights. I colored the recognized samples of Verbal Persuasion in yellow highlights. Furthermore, I color-coded the perceived Physiological/Emotional Experiences in green. This color-coding step enabled me to distinguish the presence of priori codes in the transcripts.

Next, I compiled the color-coded participant data and respective notes from the individual transcripts into my first excel spreadsheet. The first excel spreadsheet contained a tab for each respective participant's interview data. As I inserted the data onto the excel spreadsheet, I also made additional notes when deemed appropriate. Some notes paraphrased the entire color-coded statements.

Then, I put in the information from the initial spreadsheet broken down by participant into the second Excel spreadsheet, but this time, I delineated the tabs by a priori code. So, each a priori coded tab contained the respective, compiled coded statements of all participant data in each appropriate tab by a priori code. As I initially

transferred data from the original participant data spreadsheet to the second a priori code spreadsheet, I observed instances where many statements highlighted the representation of a single a priori code. However, I also highlighted throughout the data many observant analyses of instances where I saw the representation of two, three, or all four a priori codes in some participants' statements.

Upon seeing many occurrences of multiple a priori codes in statements of participants one and two, I elected to create a fifth tab that I labeled initially as "Other" and then as "Multiple" on the second Excel spreadsheet. I originally named it Other because I thought I might come across evidence that might indicate a different element type could emerge from the data that was different from those identified in Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1994). As I compiled the data through the fifth participant into the five tabs, I realized that there was no evidence of a different element that informed the participants' self-efficacy perceptions. The Multiple Tab in the second Excel spreadsheet only reflected statements where I analytically noted how the multiple a priori codes, either in the simultaneously formatted or in the cause-then-effect formatted manners (in different variations), informed the participants' perceptions of self-efficacy. The analysis results showcased that all five tabs contained the same subcategories that situated the context for me to determine which a priori code informed the participants' positive or negative perceptions of self-efficacy. Lastly, I placed all participant data into the five tabs on the second Excel spreadsheet.

I realized I was ready to shift to my next analysis steps. After I completed this second Excel spreadsheet compilation, I printed out a copy of each a priori code tab. To

reiterate, I locked the printed Excel spreadsheets in the same storage container as the USB drive with the audio recordings after I completed each interval of data analysis. I did not print out the data associated with the fifth tab labeled Multiple. Although the tab labeled Multiple contained the most statements relative to the four a priori tabs, I elected not to print out this tab because I did not deem it needed further analysis. I made this decision because this study aimed to explore how adult English learners with disabilities perceived their self-efficacy as it related to their dual classification and influenced their perceptions of being capable of meeting the Algebra 1 requirement.

Since I determined I did not have a new code that influenced the participants' self-efficacy perspectives, I concentrated the rest of the analysis on how each of these a priori codes influenced the participants' perceptions of negative or positive self-efficacy. I determined that, for this study, the value was to delineate how the participants evidenced that they held self-efficacy perceptions that might align with the chosen theoretical framework. Furthermore, I determined that it did not bring more or take away from the value of the study if I delineated their self-efficacy perceptions formed simultaneously or cause-and-effect formatted with the notation of the multiple a priori codes. I decided to table that type of analysis for a potential future study. At this point, I continued to follow my chapter three analytic steps.

Similarity and Contiguity Relationship Coding

The next analytical step included sorting statements into categories within the four a priori tabs on the second Excel spreadsheet. After I placed all the data into the respective a priori tab of the second Excel spreadsheet, I reviewed the number of line

items I had of narrative text. I realized that the Physiological/Emotional States a priori tab contained the most narrative texts. Verbal Persuasion a priori tab included the second largest narrative text. The Performance Accomplishments a priori tab totaled the third most prominent chunk of narrative text. These three tabs had nearly the same length as narrative texts in their respective tabs. The last a priori tab, Vicarious Experiences, held the least narrative text across all participants. This preparatory step set me up for the next analytic step. I decided to examine the data tabs from the greatest to the least narrative texts.

Physiological/Emotional States Analysis

As part of the transition to identify similarity and contiguity relationships, I reread the participants' data in the largest a priori tab, Physiological/Emotional States, from the second Excel data. I made notations next to select statements in the tab representing emerging categories. I initially believed I would conduct the similarity relationship analysis and follow shortly after with the contiguity relationship analysis. As I continued reading the participants' statements, I noticed that the latter statements began to relate to each other in particular ways. I quickly recognized that I could see similarities and differences across the participant data. This observation aided me to deduce that it was more beneficial to conduct both forms of analysis simultaneously, identifying similarity and contiguity relationships throughout the analysis of this tab. I printed out the Physiological/Emotional States a priori Excel tab as part of the simultaneous similarity and contiguity relationship analysis. I cut out each line item of color-coded statements with their respective notes from a single Excel tab. I read each cut-out statement and then

looked for similarity relationships within the data to identify ways the statements may have similar contexts across the respective element.

As I identified similar contexts in the statements, I put them into groups and labeled each group into categorical labels. However, I deduced that these categorical groups aligned more as contiguity relationships. The contiguity relationships represented the overarching subheadings, which discussed the connections between the significant categorical issues within this tab. Through the analysis, I concluded the emergence of four contiguity relationship groups. These groups included physiological/emotional states associated with their perceptions about their various student statuses within the educational settings, past academic performances, views about their educational high school settings, and perceptions about their math capabilities. With these contiguity relationships, I noticed the emergence of topics I could group under these contiguity subcategories.

Under these defined contiguity relationship subgroups, I recognized that I was ready to migrate to the next level of sorting into subcategory label associations. I concluded that some of the participants' comments within these subcodes were similar in context, while others were the opposite. At this point, I recognized that I had shifted to the next analytic stage, similarity relationship analysis. I compared how the groupings contained similar and opposite data within the subcategories. Within each contiguity relationship subheading, I labeled the similarity relationships and wrote about the likeness and differences across participant data in the Physiological/Emotional States a priori tab. Throughout this step, I created different sub-coded categories and continued to

place most participant statements into similar and opposing groupings. The similarity subcategories I made in the Physiological/Emotional States tab included the participants' perceptions about their adult dual classification statuses, past poor academic performances, perceived participant underachievement, inability to ask for help, unworthiness to receive help, high school settings, their past absenteeism, past dropout experiences, teacher interactions, family support, and Algebra 1 capabilities (past and present). After I grouped the contiguity and similarity relationship subcategories associated with the Physiological/Emotional States, I took pictures of how I converged and divided the data into subheadings as evidence of this analytical process. Next, I wrote the chapter narrative text about the analysis associated with the Physiological/Emotional States.

Performance Accomplishment Analysis

From there, I decided to conduct the subsequent analysis phase on data in the Performance Accomplishment a priori tab. Again, I reread all statements in this a priori tab. Next, I wrote notes next to the line items in this tab to support the development of contiguity relationship subcodes. Once I completed the note creation, I printed and cut out each statement and placed them in groups by topic. I identified several contiguity relationships in the Performance Accomplishment a priori tab. I labeled the Performance Accomplishment contiguity relationship subcategories in the section as learning challenges, historic failures vs. recent successes, work habits and classification/General Educational Accommodation Usage, absenteeism, self-advocacy, and influence over perceived math capabilities. Then, I reviewed and placed statements within these

contiguity relationship subcategories into groupings. These groupings formulated the identification of similarity relationship subcodes. The similarity relationship subcodes I generated consisted of the following terms: historical failures, recent successes, negative work habits, positive work habits, and accommodation usage. After sorting the data and creating subcategories and subcodes, I wrote the chapter narrative to explain the results of my analysis for this third section. Although it was the third most extensive section, I decided to complete it next because it might be more involved to analyze than the second largest section.

Verbal Persuasion Analysis

Next, I elected to conduct the next analysis phase on data in the Verbal Persuasion a priori tab. As the second most extensive section, I decided to complete it next because I knew it was significantly less involved to analyze than the last a priori code section. Again, I reread all statements in this a priori tab. Next, I wrote notes next to the line items in this tab to support contiguity relationship subcode development. After I completed the note creation, I cut out each printed statement and placed them in groups by topic. I identified several contiguity relationships in the Verbal Persuasion a priori tab. I labeled the Verbal Persuasion contiguity relationship subcategories in the section as self-talk, teacher interactions and relationships, and proximal relationships. Then, I reviewed and placed statements within these contiguity relationship subcategories into groupings. These groupings formulated the identification of similarity relationship subcodes. The similarity relationship subcodes I generated consisted of the following terms: self: present and future, participants' abilities, actions necessary to succeed/avoid, academic

perseverance while struggling, proximal - family and friend relationships. Within each of these subsections I generated identified the contiguity relationships of all data meeting analytic indicators of either direct verbal persuasions or indirect verbal persuasions. After sorting the data and creating subcategories and subcodes, I wrote the chapter narrative to explain the results of my analysis for this third section.

Vicarious Experiences Analysis

Lastly, I elected to conduct the final analysis phase on the Vicarious Experiences a priori tab data. As the least extensive section, I decided to complete it last because it appeared to be significantly less involved to analyze than all the other a priori code sections. Again, I reread all statements in this a priori tab. Next, I wrote notes next to the line items in this tab to support contiguity relationship subcode development. After I completed the note creation, I cut out each printed statement and placed them in groups by topic. I identified some contiguity relationships in the Vicarious Experiences a priori tab. I labeled the Vicarious Experiences contiguity relationship subcategories in the section as student similarities with vicarious experiences, student differences with vicarious experiences, and vicarious self-advocacy experiences. Then, I reviewed and placed statements within these contiguity relationship subcategories into groupings. These groupings formulated the identification of similarity relationship subcodes. The similarity relationship subcodes I generated consisted of the following terms: maturity comparisons, immaturity comparisons, pain and struggling while learning, and differences/similarities in life experiences. After sorting the data and creating

subcategories and subcodes, I wrote the chapter narrative to explain the results of my analysis for this fourth section.

Data Analysis

The following section included a summary of how I identified ways the perceived participant statements reflected the manifestation of Bandura's self-efficacy elements. As stated in the previous section, I wrote the a priori code analyses in a particular order. The order for the written analysis went sequentially from Physiological/Emotional Influences, Performance Accomplishments, Verbal Persuasion, and Vicarious Experiences. This section discussed the results of a priori code analyses relative to the summary of contiguity and similarity relationships of the participants' self-efficacy perceptions associated with Bandura's self-efficacy theory categories.

Influences of Physiological/Emotional States on Self-Efficacy Perceptions

This section provided examples of how the students' statements aligned with physiological or emotional states of self-efficacy and indicated if the self-efficacy perception was positive or negative. Physiological/emotional states can influence people's beliefs in their perceptions of self-efficacy through the person's reaction in a somatic (physical) sense or passionate (type of excitement) expression. Bandura (1994) explained how the self-efficacy perception of physiological/emotional states when discussing the physiological component referred to how people's beliefs in their capabilities stem from how they physically react and behave throughout stressful situations. Bandura (1994) specifically focused on how this physiological state centers on people's perceptions of their abilities to sustain themselves during activities amidst stress

relative to “vulnerability to poor performance...strength and stamina, people judge their fatigue, aches and pains”. Additionally, Bandura (1994) clarified that the self-efficacy perception of physiological/emotional state related to how people’s beliefs in their capabilities derive from ways the person makes sense of their frame of mind or feelings and let that affect their reasoning and reactions as it informs their perceived capability to maneuver through the adversity. People with a high sense of self-efficacy can push through their feelings of tiredness, depression, loneliness, lack of self-confidence, sense of failure, sadness, anger, madness, or other adverse physical or emotional states to achieve some measure of success. Conversely, those with a low sense of self-efficacy believe it is tough to bounce back or have trouble moving past their arduous situation and determine that they are not doing or feeling physically well or emotionally adverse. These negative sentiments tend to be the precursor or result of being unable to complete or perceptions of doing poorly with the given activity.

Perceptions about their Student Status and Past Performances

All participants discussed negative and positive self-efficacy perspectives related to their physiological and emotional states about past high school student statuses and academic performance experiences. The participants mainly shared low self-efficacious statements about their perceptions of being an adult high school student and their dual classification statuses. Additionally, their expressed statements represented predominantly low self-efficacy connected to the source of physiological and emotional states about their past poor performances, perceived underachievement, recognized unworthiness to receive professional instructional assistance, and perceived inability to

ask for help. Most statements in these areas conveyed expressed words that highlighted great depths of anger, sadness, depression, frustration, tiredness, or confusion – representing low self-efficaciousness.

Perceptions of Being an Adult High School Student. All participants described intense negative self-efficacy feelings about being an adult high school student. Most of the students felt they should have graduated by their eighteenth birthday. Participant 1 shared her frustration and disappointment concerning her perceived limited learning capabilities. The limited capability perceptions made her believe her unmet graduation timelines should align with her underage peers. Further, Participant 1 stated: “other students, they graduating when they are 18 years... so now I am 20 I feel mad because I haven’t graduated yet.” Participant 3 shared his negative self-efficaciousness through wording that resonated dislike and lack of confidence about his capabilities to learn by stating:

Being an adult student, you feel bad because you are behind, and you see your friends going to college, and you wonder when are you going to get there and if you are going to get there. You want to be with them but can’t, it’s so demotivating.

Participant 4 unconsciously shared her perceptions of lacking capabilities to learn, self-disappointment, and lack of self-confidence by saying “I don’t feel too good about being adult student because I wish I could have done something different to get out earlier.” Participant 6 related “I’m depressed with how long this has gone on,” which showed her exacerbation relative to her perceived incapacibilities to learn when asked

about how she felt about still being in high school as an adult. Participant 7 revealed significant disappointment over not feeling capable of meeting graduation requirements with the declaration:

Like I tell myself I'm a loser cause I still haven't graduated... and it all just starts to close in around me... just all of it. I'm sick of being in school! I I don't like being here! I wish I could just you know work and stay home and get away from all of this. I hate this! I hate being in school this long, I just want to be someplace else besides here!

Participant 8's perceptions of how not being able to reach her desirable potential graduation timeline benchmark occurred because of her perceived low capabilities to learning. Her sentiments included shame, inferiority relative to others, and perceived negative academic performance difference as her comparison to peers when she said:

I left school for a few years, but I realize I'm not the oldest student here, but I still feel so embarrassed and behind everyone else. I still feel weird, like I'm behind. I feel like I can't relax. I always feel worried, and because I feel like I have more pressure to get out.

Participant 9 expressed emotions of frustration with her high school graduation timeline and anger with how these emotions informed her perceptions of incapacities to learn at a rate more commensurate with her peers. She showcased the formation of low self-efficacy about her capabilities to learn with the admission:

It's really hard to be an adult still because everyone else has graduated and I'm still in high school so that really sucks especially when you are kind of comparing like if I compare myself to them (meaning the underage senior students).

Statements by Participant 10 highlighted his low self-efficaciousness which centered around negative, emotional feelings about himself relative to his mature age versus teenagers in the same high school settings and perceived limited capabilities to learn academic content by sharing:

I felt stupid, dumb! I felt dumb cause I was 20 years old and still in high school! I felt like I went to school all those years for nothing. And I was so stupid and I I'm an adult...I shouldn't be here! I don't know why I didn't graduate out at younger age. I should have been out of high school.

The above participants provided feelings of anger, embarrassment, frustration, or inferiority at their inability to meet high school graduation requirements before reaching the age of majority. Many were disappointed in themselves because they believed the perception that they should have completed their graduation requirements earlier.

Several participants discussed their struggles with unrestful, undesirable lifestyles, which included living as adults who worked and simultaneously attended high school. Participant 1 described her struggles of enduring negative emotions about feeling upset because she did not feel capable of being emotionally and physically available to learn by sharing:

I was so tired and stressed out, especially in the morning, that I can't leave my house. I think I'm mad and depressed, very depressed because I miss my family.

I'm always working or in school. I never have time to me or to see anybody. I even have trouble sleeping... and I can't wake up in the morning. It's why I will skip school ...or just miss classes.

Participant 2 described his physical and mental exhaustion that negatively impacted his perceived feelings to learn through his story of:

I work two part time jobs. I asked for some time off of one of the jobs cause I'm tired and need to come to school. It's rough sometimes because I barely see my mom and I never see my friends. All I do is work and come to school. The only time I see my friends is when I'm at school. I feel lonely a lot because of this.

Participant 6 described her exhausting circumstances which negatively influenced her perceptions of incapacities to learn through the words:

I have too much in my life. I have many problems. School is stressful cause it's like a barrier because it's more work for me while I go to work and raise my son. I'm overwhelmed. I'm alone. I gotta raise him by myself and go to work and go to school. I work too much and the baby, at night he keeps me up, so it's hard. I can't focus on schoolwork.

Participant 7 described his perceptions of his life difficulties which shaped undertones of negative self-efficacy about being capable to learn by saying:

I'm too old to be here. Plus, I got personal stuff happenin at home... an I work every day, that's all I do. I kinda go through things, life starts to get rough, challenging... and it changes my mood the I start getting into these situations.

To clarify his life struggles, Participant 8 highlighted how he perceived physical and mental exhaustion infringed on his capabilities to learn with his statement “I go straight from school to one of my jobs every day. I feel like I can’t relax and get a break. I never get a chance to sleep. Or see my friends. It’s stressful.” Participant 9 discussed how her clashes with lifestyles difficulties hampered her capability to be available for learning through the statement:

I have a lot of responsibilities, I work in a restaurant and babysit my younger sister, and that makes it harder for me to wanna ... want to go to school because I’m tired. My mind is always running like to the things that I have to do after school even when I’m in school.

Participant 10 expressed his beliefs that his lifestyle negatively impacted his capabilities to learn through the words, “this year I have been working the most So, I was definitely the most exhausted. I was extremely tired. I would fall asleep. I couldn’t concentrate... couldn’t work in school most of the time.” These statements confirm that most of these participants believed that their responsibilities outside of school significantly negatively impacted their academic capabilities.

Perceptions about their Dual Classifications. The English Learner status was the initial diagnosed educational classification to address learning challenges for all participants. Although the participants legally accepted the status as part of their educational services, most did not appreciate or understand the impact of how their learning challenges related to the perceptions of the classification. All participants received their second academic classification as a student with a disability later in their

school experiences to focus on additional learning challenges that affected their capabilities to succeed in school. Most participants rendered negative self-efficacy statements about their English learner classification. The participants also generated neutral or accepting comments about their special education classification.

Each participant received the English learner classification as their first individualized academic support to reduce learning barriers associated with academic language. Interestingly, most of the participants described how they loathed this classification. Participant 1 described how this classification built up negative perceptions about her capabilities as a learner. She referenced her dislike for the classification with the words “I don’t think it affects grades but my motivation and perseverance levels they go down because I feel down when they talk about this, and I don’t want to keep going when they do that.” Participant 3 expressed ways the classification triggered emotionally charged dislike for the English learner classification. He felt that it did not accurately depict his capabilities as a learner with his reference to feeling alienated from peers with the scheduled classes associated with the classification by saying “I was embarrassed sometimes because I had to leave my friends after lunch and go to special classes to learn English even though I spoke it really well.” Participant 6 shared how she felt insulted, disliked, and felt confusion regarding how she did not understand why educators still sustained the English learner classification as part of the demographic record with the words:

I don't get it. I've been speaking English for years. People know what I'm saying. They shouldn't call me that. I don't like it at all! My English is good! They got me in those classes ...with the kids learning English for nothing. It sucks.

Her statements indicated that she felt capable of learning in a more inclusive setting than the setting associated with this undesirable classification. Participant 7 strongly and angrily voiced:

I did not! I would probably been like ugh... I knew the disability part but the English learner, ummm that part I didn't know. That part would have made me more madder if I had realized that.

This quote captured his negative sentiment about perceptions that the classification throughout his high school career continued to be wrongfully applied and being an insulting downgrade about his capabilities. It also indicated how Participant 7 felt that he was smarter than he perceived this classification depicted and that he believed this classification pigeon-holed him in a subpar educational bracket. Due to the participants' perceptions that their English proficiency was at a level that they could effectively function in their academic settings, conclusively, these students developed and described a disdain for the English learner classification.

Most participants perceived the English learner educational classification inaccurate, insulting, and unfounded because they felt that their English language proficiency level was acceptable and did not interfere with their capability to communicate and learn. Participant 2 explained how he felt capable of learning but that the classification hindered his ability to access higher level classes when he said:

I don't understand how I had to go to a class for people learning English when my English is good. They said I even passed the English reading and writing tests. So, if I passed the tests then why they said I need to go to that class and learn English. It doesn't make sense.

Participant 4's stated:

An English learner is like... somebody learning the language. It doesn't affect me because I'm not an English learner. I don't know why I'm still like told that I'm learning English when I have always gone to school here in this place.

This quote highlighted how she disliked and denied being an English learner. Her statement reflected how she disregarded this classification because she felt it signified a less literate learner when she felt more than capable to learn in her school setting. In Participant 5's statement "I never liked or got what they called me. I know I was afraid of what people thought of me," he responded about his dislike for his dual classification for a long time. When I asked Participant 6 her feelings about being an English learner she replied with strong emotion "I don't know why they say that! My English is good." Participant 7 disagreed with the English learner classification because he associated his perspective of perceived good diction with his perceived English proficiency with the statement "I don't get why they say that about me in some classes. I don't get it. My English is real good. I sound like I was born here. Everybody says that about me." The data analysis revealed that the participants felt the English learner classification was an inaccurate learning challenge because they believed their English proficiency levels were sufficient to learn academic language and communicate in their educational settings. The

statements indicated that the participants felt denial about the English learner classification.

Most students held adverse and inaccurate perspectives about their capabilities to learn, particularly regarding their special education classification. Participant 1 discussed her fears about her capabilities when she stated “I’m scared sometimes I won’t understand... to take notes... learn stuff. I feel like I should know how to do the work, but I sometimes can’t.” Participant 3 declared “It feels as if I have the weights on me when another person doesn’t have it and the material and class was made for them, but it isn’t made particularly for a person like me.” Participant 4 discussed her negative perceptions about her capabilities to learn when she said “I’m a slow learner. That gets in the way of me doing my work. Like I think why other people can do things fast and I can’t so... it’s so frustrating. I just need to work harder.” Participant 5 told how he knew he had learning issues related to a learning disability but did not proactively attempt to learn in his educational settings. He described this circumstance by saying:

I thought that people would make fun of my disability... like I can’t, how to read or write. So, I just kind of hid away from everybody when I went to school. I didn’t want anybody to see anything, see me look stupid.

When asked to describe her disability classification Participant 6 stated “Learning is hard for me. I think that it’s frustrating. I’m slower than others and they speak to me loud like ...like I’m stupid.” Participant 8 attested to other reasons for his learning challenges versus his special education classification with the statement:

Sometimes I get confused. I get distracted a lot. I need to move around. I can't sit still. I try to focus but it's hard. I do bad in school because I'm tired. I feel bad but I have to work.

Participant 9 explained her perspectives about her learning challenges when she stated:

I don't like school because it's hard for me to keep up... I really don't get a lot of stuff and I'm a lot slower than the rest of my friends, and when I get a lot of things given to me all at once it seems overwhelming for me.

Participant 10 spoke negatively of his perceived capabilities by saying:

It's a big challenge for an English learner who has a learning disability because you are trying to learn and at times it is hard to learn and you don't get it, so you have to work harder than other students.

Each participant shared information that illuminated that they misunderstood the context and identification of their learning challenges. Most of them attributed their learning challenges to processing speed versus a definitive educational barrier found to impact their capability to learn in a concentrated area. These statements indicated that the participants felt some levels of denial about their special education classification.

A few students shared how they felt stressed, frustrated, and confused with their learning challenges and perceived capabilities to learn academic language. Participant 1 illustrated her negative self-efficacy with the statement "I'm scared because it's my second language and I can tell people think I'm dumb. I don't keep up with all the words in class... but I'm not dumb." Participant 2 relayed his frustrations about the use of academic language when he said:

I know what the words mean. Yeah, I know what they're talking about... just cause I don't say that word doesn't mean I don't know... don't know it. But when I don't use the words on the test or quizzes then I get marked wrong, but I know what they mean. I can tell you what they mean. I just don't always remember the word... how they say it.

Participant 4 explained the embarrassment about her poor learning capabilities when she stated, "I don't wanna feel stupid. I feel like I didn't want to embarrass myself saying anything in class because I didn't know certain questions or certain things." The statements of dislike by Participant 5 about his capabilities to learn showed in wise words:

School's been hard since middle school... I get uncomfortable and frustrated... when I had to read more and more. I wanted to read and I know how to read but it takes me longer to understand some things.

Participant 6 expressed feelings of being overwhelmed with school with her statement, "I try to keep calm and push through the challenges, but school is hard, the work is real hard, I'm confused all the time. I don't know how to do all the work they give me."

Participant 10 disclosed, "when teachers spoke, I didn't know what they were telling me because I didn't know much English. I knew nothing. So, I felt lost," to describe his frustrations of his capabilities to learn academic language. The participants understand that they have learning challenges with words or directions but do not necessarily identify academic language as a barrier affecting their learning capabilities.

Although most participants discussed negative sentiments about their past learning challenges and capabilities in the previous section, most also rendered contradictory statements, either not as negative, positive, or neutral, about being adults with select learning challenges associated with one or both classifications. The response from Participant 7, “It makes it easier. I know that these are tools to help me and so it doesn’t feel like I have nothing. Actually, knowing I have them makes me feel a little less stressed,” represented that he seemed fairly positive regarding how he felt regarding his dual classification. Participant 9 gave neutral sentiments about the dual classification by saying, “I don’t feel anything because most of the students in my class use some type of accommodation like dictionaries, things read out loud and I think that’s it.” A few participants provided statements that they felt neutral or comfortable with the English learner classification. Participant 1 responded “It’s good. I get help I need with it.” when asked how she felt about the English learner classification. Participant 3 explained, “I was good with my HILT classes. I got to be with my friends all day. And I could do the work in those classes. I was good there.” Participant 10 said, “I am proud of where I am, where I am right now with my English. I worked hard to get all this help in all those meetings with the teachers (referring to his dual classification services). I worked hard to get where I am now. They told me how I learn. It makes sense. It makes sense now to me.”

Additionally, some participants shared a neutral or not as negative position as adult students about their special education classification. Participant 1 shared how “here in this school some teachers teach me about the dis-il-lity... now I feel better because I

understand why it takes me longer. I still don't like it, but I feel better knowing more about it." Participant 2 disclosed "I found out this year that I have a learning disability. Now I know why I can't learn some things like the other students kinda makes sense. I'm glad they figured it out." When asked how he felt about his special education classification Participant 5 declared "Now I'm ok with it. I don't really mind. It's part of who I am (the disability)." Participant 8 provided statements that inferred he believed the special education classification gave him the perceived propensity to succeed when he stated "I just got a IEP and I think that will help a lot. It gave me hope that I could actually graduate from high school." These statements showed how the students additionally held positive or neutral perceptions about their capabilities to learn with one or both educational classifications.

Perceptions about Past Poor Performances and Underachievement. Most participants held emotional or physiological self-efficacy perceptions about their past poor academic performances and underachievement episodes. Participant 1 declared "Sometimes I feel bad when I look at my grades because I want them to be better, but it sometimes makes me wanna give up cause they're mostly bad". Participant 3 stated how his poor performances made him feel constantly behind by sharing,

"I am holding back or like I'm behind then everyone else, and it feels like there is always something on my shoulders. Like you are always late to the party kind of thing. You are not you... you are not I feel like I'm you're not the first in the race because you are too far back."

Participant 5 explained his feelings about struggling in school when he stated, “For a long time like I kept failing all my classes...and I wasn’t learning anything. I didn’t really want to go to school, I felt like it was pointless.” When prompted to discuss her thoughts about her grades and performances Participant 6 replied, “I’m a bad student... I can’t focus on schoolwork ...when I go to school, I feel lost because many things are hard.” In reference to his poor math performances Participant 7 recounted,

“I could be doing better now, but because I didn’t learn some things earlier in my math classes, it makes things way more difficult now... and that’s frustrating... it makes me mad that I wasted so much time not learning, not being able to be more knowledgeable.”

Additionally, to describe his perceptions of underachievement Participant 7 stated:

“I know I’m not working to the level I should, that I can, I don’t know why I do that... why I feel this way... where I stop working... Like I can’t feel bad about my grades because it’s my fault. But, when, just I start like not trying, I just.. they plummet. Then, I don’t come to school. I been doing this for most of my high school career. I know it makes me have bad grades, an I look like a loser, sometimes I care, sometimes I don’t.”

Through the description “I just know a lot of times my work doesn’t feel right. Like I know I’m doing stuff wrong, but I can’t describe it. I just feel like I’m not doing it the right way. It’s frustrating,” Participant 8 shared his feelings of incapability to successfully perform in classes but didn’t attribute it to either of his learning challenges associated

with his dual classification. Participant 9 expounded on her negative sentiments about her past performances and capabilities with the words, “I hated my grades because I go every day and complete hundreds of worksheets, well not hundreds and do all the other work and I still don’t have Bs or Cs. It’s demoralizing. It’s frustrating.” The participants relayed low emotional or physiological self-efficacy perceptions about their past poor performances and underachievement affected their perceived capabilities to learn in school.

Perceptions of the Participants’ Inability to Ask for Help. Several participants gave reasons indicating low self-efficacy about why they felt unable to ask for help in their academic settings. Participant 1 discussed her feeling about instructional assistance when she said “I am slower in some classes like math, but I want to be left alone to think by myself. If people keep asking me, do you need help or next to me watching me, I get nervous and I don’t want to do anything”. Participant 4 spoke of her difficulty to publicly ask questions in school by saying,

“if I’m not getting something I get frustrated and uh and just completely shut down and I don’t really ask for help when I get frustrated. I try to do things on my own. Also, I’m ... a sort of shy, so it’s hard for me to ask questions.”

Participant 5 recounted his inability to seek assistance when he said “Sometimes I get nervous... asking them for help. I feel like some people can judge you and think that I don’t know how to do anything. That’s when I shut down and don’t have any motivation to do anything.” Participant 7 revealed “sometimes I don’t get it cause I haven’t been in school for a while. I don’t want to bug the teachers you know, sometimes when I don’t

know how to do the problems... because it's my fault ...cause I was out." Participant 8 shared his perceived level of discomfort to ask questions with the statements:

"I was hesitant a long time to ask questions cause because I'm very shy and don't talk much in school. People think I don't know things because I don't talk much but I do. But sometimes I don't say anything because I don't feel comfortable, because it feels like she's judging me. It's hard to ask for help because the teacher gets annoyed fast. She gets mad and says 'I already teach this' then I feel mad ... and embarrassed and say nothing."

Participant 10 expounded on his incapability to seek academic assistance in saying, "I was scared that it was going to be a repeat from my other school. I was like I don't know if this is going to help me. So, I didn't have motivation because I thought I wasn't going to make it. It took me a long time to see that when I didn't ask, I struggled." The participants' statements of not seeking academic help indicated that emotionally, they understood that these activities negatively impacted their perceived capabilities to learn but that their emotions inclined them to take that risk regardless of the outcomes.

Perceptions of Perceived Unworthiness to Receive Help. Several participants provided statements with low self-efficacy undertones about their unworthiness to receive academic assistance in classroom settings. Participant 4 explained her rationale about feeling undeserving of help by stating, "When I been absent for a couple of days, I just feel nervous. I feel like I'll look dumb in front of people for not understanding." Participant 5 detailed his perceived unworthiness to get instructional help during his earlier high school years in the following comment, "I used to skip a whole bunch of

classes cause I couldn't do the work. I felt guilty, well, bad that I skipped, so I didn't ask for help later when I did go to class cause I knew I was wrong. So, I just failed more classes." Participant 6 shared her feelings of unworthiness to receive assistance with the statement:

"I wanna to ask for help. I need to do it more than I do ... but I don't do it... at least as much as I could ...cause, because, you know... I'm out a lot so I miss a lot of stuff, and it takes the teacher a long time to explain things to me... it takes up a lot of her time that she can use to help the others... and they, the other kids roll their eyes and whisper comments to their friends when I ask questions when I do finally come. I hate that. It takes too long to help me. It's a waste of her time."

To explain his unworthy perceptions to receive instructional assistance, Participant 7 said, "It makes me feel like a failure. Like sometimes I don't feel like I deserve the help, especially when I'm out for a few weeks. A part of me wants to ask but I sometimes feel like it's unfair to put more work on them to help me. Plus, I hate it when the other students have to wait on the teacher to finish helping me. It's like they can see that I'm struggling. I don't like that. It's like, they can see I'm dumb. I don't like that, it's embarrassing sometimes." The participants' negative statements about not feeling worth receiving academic assistance exhibited how these emotional actions contributed to low self-efficacy learning perceptions.

Perceptions about Settings and Select Identified Circumstances

The participants discussed positive and negative physiological and emotional states related to their self-efficacy related to select past high school experiences. Their

statements provided context regarding how the experiences in settings and absenteeism affected their perceptions of the capability to excel in their classes. These experiences included their attendance at the neighborhood comprehensive high school and selected alternative high schools. The participants also explained how their excessive absenteeism and periods of dropping out of school impacted their perceptions of feeling capable of learning and retaining content-related skills over time.

Perceptions about Comprehensive High School Experiences. Most participants discussed low self-efficacy statements, representing how they felt different adverse emotional and physiological conditions while attending the large comprehensive high schools. Participant 1 stated,

“Nobody cared about how I was in school, like if I ate, how I sleep... or why I did or didn’t come to school. I didn’t have anyone who believed in me before. I think if someone believed in me, they never told me.” to describe her negative sentiments about her neighborhood high school.

Participant 2 shared, “I feel they didn’t accept me like a person and where I come from and the problems I have” to depict the negative imagery he felt about the comprehensive high school environment and his perceptions of not feeling he could learn or thrive in this setting. Participant 3 relayed how this setting felt impersonal and hindered his abilities to connect with the community intended to support his capabilities with learning by saying,

“Too many people in the hallways. It was a lot more people in high school and... the classes and floors and schedule and timing. They didn’t see me. There was too

many people that needed help I was just another person, a number there. It was easy to just get lost in with everybody else.”

Statements from Participant 4, “I’ve never felt comfortable there, it’s big, like a big classroom... it really wasn’t a one-on-one” showed she held negative beliefs about her neighborhood high school. Participant 7 shared his negative sentiments about this setting by saying:

“I don’t know, I don’t know if I can say this, a lot of the time I hated it... it was stressful – all the people pushing, getting in the way, people acting crazy and crowding up the hallways... then it was all that homework... I was always failing their tests... and them calling my parents about every little thing...just harassment, it was too much pressure!

The statements of Participant 8, “I never liked it at that school. Although it’s nothing like schools I’ve been at in other places I feel I like the work there was either too easy or too hard, like there was no in between. I never got the help I wanted, what I needed” represented his perspectives of low self-efficacy to learn at this location.

Participant 10 exclaimed,

“In the other school, I felt like nobody cared... also like they didn’t give me what I needed to do good in the classes, I shouldn’t have had to leave just to get the help they wanted to give me at Rebecca AHSP.”

This statement captured how he felt that his neighborhood high school did not make him as if he were capable of learning, especially to the desired degree or believed he should.

Most of the statements from these participants represented sentiments of impersonal

academic experiences that lacked attentiveness or did not meet their instructional needs that they perceived they deserved to facilitate desirable learning outcomes.

Perceptions about AHSP Experiences. Interestingly, most of the participants shared low self-efficacy sentiments when they recalled how they felt uncomfortable or disliked their initial enrollment at the selected ahsp. Participant 1 shared “I wanted to go to Rebecca AHSP but...I was really scared cause I didn’t know nobody.” At first Participant 2 shared his pressured sentiments to attend the ahsp through the statement “I think that many of us or most of us know that this is our last chance to make it”. This statement reflected his perspective of having restrictive educational setting options that could help him achieve his educational goals. Prior to registering at the ahsp, the statements of Participant 3 relayed “the reputation it has, like dangerous students go there, not being with your friends, it was degrading, it’s kind of embarrassing being in a school like this” to express how he felt the location would hinder his character and learning abilities. “At first I didn’t like it because it was no way to get back home... and it was so small, I couldn’t hide away from classes” reflected the hated perceptions of Participant 5 about the new ahsp placement. Participant 6 declared, “I was mad cause I didn’t wanna go. I was scared and lost. I felt like I was forced here or pushed to come here” to state her initial dislike about the school transfer. Participant 7 stated when he initially enrolled at the ahsp by saying,

“just disliking being here at school... I missed my friends at the other school, not feeling I could do it, like do well here. I felt forced to come here by, I didn’t feel like I came here by my own choice” his uncomfortable feelings about the transfer.

Participant 8 declared, “I only came here because my mom said she would kick me out if I didn’t go. So, I had to try it, well register, even though I didn’t want to” to reflect his intentions of how he never wanted to go to the ahsp. In this section, most participants’ statements echoed common thoughts that they did not initially believe that Rebecca AHSP could meet their learning needs or desired academic outcomes.

However, over time, the participants explained how they came to different beliefs about Rebecca AHSP. Participant 1 admitted “I feel good. I stopped being afraid...there are special people here that actually care about students and know how to teach students with problems ... and the small classes are good and help me a lot” to describe how her sentiments about the ahsp changed. Participant 2’s words “I don’t feel like I am in school with them, I feel like I am at home with my family... they do what they can to help” represented positive sentiments of feeling capable of learning he felt later after getting acclimated to this setting. Participant 3 expressed his positive feelings about this setting by mentioning “I like seeing the new people, learning new things, and I can speak to people and I also feel safe here”. Participant 4 noted:

“I didn’t have the pressure of waking up so early in the morning for classes and turning in work every day... it was a new environment. I argued with my old teachers to go here. I feel like it was a better option for me” to highlight how this setting supported her academic needs and routine preferences.

Participant 5 shared, “I got used to it. I’m comfortable. I feel I can achieve a lot of things, can get good grades” to show his positive beliefs in his capabilities to succeed there.

Participant 7 discussed how his perspectives about the ahsp changed through the

statement “it’s a lot smaller - like the classes, I can sit where I want, most of the people, even the students are nicer, it’s not as bad as I thought it would be, I mean they don’t give homework, that’s less pressure.” Participant 8 exclaimed, “I feel like here I’m catching up on my work cause I have less classes here each semester.... I ...like I’m learning some stuff, and my grades are getting better here, which makes me feel better” as examples of positive self-efficacious statements about his ahsp experiences feeling more productive than the neighborhood high school experiences.

“My high school made me realize that I’ll never go back to a big school, I like it a lot more here, it’s a lot smaller. It’s like people see me here. They wanted to know stuff about me, they really wanna help me graduate” were positive statements of feeling capable of success provided by Participant 9.

Most of these participants shared how they appreciated or believed that the Rebecca AHSP setting was an educational environment that made them feel more capable of learning compared to their neighborhood high schools.

Perceptions about Absenteeism. Under the previously given backdrop of low self-efficacious statements, many participants expressed their rationale for engaging in the negative behaviors of absenteeism versus attending school regularly as needed to sustain learning. Participant 1 shared “I could come to school more than do, than I used to. I didn’t come to school before because of work I was really tired and stressed out.” Participant 2 discussed, “I didn’t know how I had to go to a class with someone that hurt me. I was threatened and bullied at school, but they still wanted me to go. I didn’t go because I was afraid. I didn’t feel safe” his rationale for an extended episode of

absenteeism as an adult student. He felt that the teachers did not support him and therefore justified his absenteeism despite knowing that it could affect his learning. Participant 4 stated, “I wasn’t learning anything before, so I didn’t care about missing, ugh, I mean skipping school. It was frustrating being there” to explain how her disgruntled state with her perceived inability to learn justified her rationale for extended absences. When posed the follow-up question about absenteeism, Participant 5 stated his sadness, guilt, and internalized anger about this matter through his admittance:

“I know I miss a lot ...but I don’t have a life. I can’t go nowhere outside of school. When I’m not here, my dad makes me work with him at the construction sites. Or my mom makes me stay home sometimes with her to help her with the kids she babysits all the time.”

These spinoff statements came just before he made negative self-efficacy statements about the association of absenteeism and negative feelings about his capabilities to learn. Participant 6 shared her poor self-efficacy opinions about how absenteeism affected her learning capabilities with the statement that highlighted her frustration and negativity about not retaining academic skills through her words “it’s hard to go to school... I’m not doing good...when I go to school, I feel lost because I lost a lot of the classes.”

Participant 7 defended his reasons for his frequent absenteeism with the declaration “I know it messes with my grades when I don’t come, but I feel burnt out from school.”

This negative declaration signified that although he realized his absenteeism negated his capabilities to learn, he felt justified in continuing to execute these adverse intervals.

Participant 9 depicted low self-efficacy through her defeatist exclamation that she felt

like she was not capable of learning enough content to position herself to graduate when she shared “It was hard for me when I dropped out of school. I felt like I had no choice but to drop out because I felt like I was never going to graduate because I didn’t understand my classes.” “We are just tired. We are exhausted. It’s good that we are working but I feel like it’s something that is stopping us from being there” explained how Participant 10 perceived the extensive work obligations caused an exhaustive toll on his capabilities to be at school and learn. Each participant recognized that although they chose to attend school inconsistently, their bouts of absenteeism jeopardized and reduced their capabilities to learn and excel in school.

Perceptions about Past Dropout Experiences. Upon reflecting on their dropout experiences, these participants offered various reasons for dropping out of school at least once during their high school career. Participant 1 relayed how she felt despondently compelled but also inconspicuously coerced to drop out of school when she recounted “it’s difficult cause I’m depressed with many things in my life. Some teachers told me to leave school for a semester to ‘get my life together’ since I was missing a lot. I didn’t want to... but I did”. Participant 5 unconsciously made correlations about her self-efficacy capabilities and dropout experiences with her words,

“I felt like I had to leave school for a minute... to get my life together, at least that’s what my counselor said I should do. I felt sad leaving school, but it was too much happening with work and all...but then, it was weird, I was scared to go back. I even stayed out longer than planned cause I knew it was gonna be hard.”

The following statements by Participant 6 highlighted how she perceived her dropout cycles negatively affected her learning capabilities:

“I don’t like my grades. I’m not doing good in school. I hated missing school, I mean, leaving last spring I know I need to be here, but I had to because of my baby. Before I dropped out... cause I had to, I went back to my country for a year. Then I had to work. Now I work for me and my baby.”

Participant 7 described his reasons for his intermittent seasonal dropout cycles from school when he shared “it gets real hard in the winter for me to come every day. I don’t know why but it’s like I always start fallin off after Christmas or January. Then it’s hard to just get back into it.” In this statement Participant 7 informally explained how he frequently dropped out of school at about the same time for a few years. Participant 8 explained his rationale for dropping out with his heart-wrenching, depressive statement,

“When I realized I couldn’t take it anymore I just dropped out. I dropped out for a year and then again for two years, and then another time for a few months.

When I was sad in the past a lot, I left school for a few years.”

Participant 10 mentioned “This year I have been working the most... to not think about me... and my family. I miss my mom who is in my country and my mind is on how do I help my family... I had some substance-abuse issues last year. I had to drop out when I got help. I was definitely the most exhausted. It was hard” as his levels of emotional and physical challenges which he perceived compromised his capabilities to be available for learning.

The participants discussed how sadness, tiredness, and other issues obligated them to feel that they were not in a mental space to learn and, therefore, dropped out of school. These statements are clear examples of how physiological states influenced the participants' perceptions of self-efficacy.

Perceptions of Teachers. The participants expressed certain self-efficacy perceptions grounded from their perceived physical or emotional reactions or interactions with teachers in the educational settings. If the participants perceived they experienced positive/negative interactions or received positive/negative academic consequences from their teachers, they then perceived themselves to hold a specific positive or negative perspective about their self-efficacy. In these instances, their interactions or consequential effects lead the participants to feel either high or low levels of self-efficacy.

The data highlighted that the participants perceived to have some degree of negative perspective about their self-efficacy when they experienced negative interactions or received negative academic consequences amid academic challenges from their teachers at the comprehensive high schools. Participant 1 relayed different statements when she attended the comprehensive high school,

“I’m scared sometimes cause I don’t understand... to take notes... or learn stuff. Some teachers can’t help me well because they speak too fast. Nobody cared about how I was in school... I didn’t have anyone who believed in me before, I think” which aligned with low self-efficaciousness.

The low self-efficacy statements of Participant 1 conveyed her lack of motivation and encouragement as well as fear of inability to understand and learn academic content.

Participant 2 shared his low self-efficacy perceptions about many comprehensive high school teachers with his words “They made my negativity more strong. When I ask questions, they get upset and I don’t feel comfortable in those classes. I feel they didn’t accept me like a person and where I come from and the problems I have.” His statement described how the classroom climate influenced his negative motivational perspectives about his abilities to learn from his neighborhood teachers. Participant 3 gave examples relative to breaches of confidentiality and climates of disrespect that caused him to feel low self-efficacy to learn with several comprehensive high school teachers with the statements,

“Some teachers don’t have patience. I get triggered to get made more at little stuff that normally wouldn’t bother me...they shouldn’t be speaking about our problems where everybody can hear. They can speak to me separately, but not with everyone listening. That’s not professional. It’s disrespectful. It was like they didn’t really care or want to help us.”

Participant 4 expressed:

“I’ve never been comfortable there. It’s big, like a big classroom, and the teachers wouldn’t really explain things right to you. They had so much other kids that they were worrying about, and they wouldn’t explain things right. And when I asked for help, it would be like almost like a burden to them because they just had so many kids, they like wanted to attend to.”

Her perceptions of levels of discomfort with the academic settings, ineffective instruction, and inability of teachers to address and support her academic needs shaped

her low self-efficacy perspectives. Participant 5 indicated the participant felt her capabilities to learn were compromised in this environment, an example of low self-efficacy with her statement “I think that some teachers think that... because they look at me and speak to me like I don’t know English, I felt like I was dumb... like I was stupid.” Participant 6 shared her negative self-efficacy sentiments about how past teachers made her feel incapable of feeling comfortable to learn with her words “I know that teachers talked about me and my attendance because when I come, they would treat me badly and different than other students.” Participant 7 explained how he felt he was not in a safe space to proactively respond to teachers’ academic prompting through the statement,

“I used to volunteer to answer questions. But then some of the teachers said I don’t give other students the chance to answer. They didn’t want to answer the questions. They never raised their hands or spoke in class. I didn’t mind. When they said that, I stopped answering questions in those classes.”

His statements represented how he perceived he did not have the capability to receive positive reinforcement, clarification, or opportunities for redirection from his teachers, which reinforced low self-efficacy to learn in those classes. Participants 8, 9, and 10 also provided similar statements about their experiences in their comprehensive high schools. Essentially, each participant held low self-efficacious perspectives about their abilities to learn at their neighborhood high schools. The participants highlighted how they felt lower levels of self-efficacy because of the negative interactions with various teachers at their comprehensive high school locations.

Conversely, the participants usually perceived positive self-efficacy when they experienced positive interactions or received positive academic consequences from their ahsp teachers. To describe the ahsp teachers, Participant 1 exclaimed feeling like she was in a nurturing environment which supported her capabilities to learn with the words, “there are special people here that actually care about students. I feel, I just know that I will get help somehow... some type of help.” Participant 2 expressed high self-efficacious sentiments to learn in the ahsp when he stated how “Some of my teachers, they worked with me, and they gained my trust... they really care about us. I don’t feel like I am in school with them, I feel like I am at home with my family” to describe his collaborative interactions with the ahsp faculty where they cultivated meaningful relationships. Positive perspectives about ahsp teachers making him feel like he could be in a progressive mindset to learn showed in a statement from Participant 3 when he said, “I can speak to people and I also feel safe here...Some teachers make us feel so good about who we are and make us feel welcomed.” “I feel encouraged. I want to come to school. It’s easier to come to school when you know that there are people that care for you” conveyed the affirmative perspective from Participant 4 about her beliefs in being able to attend and learn with the ahsp teachers.

When Participant 5 summarized his ahsp teacher interaction experiences, he stated “I feel comfortable because the teachers, it’s different. They care and give me a lot of opportunities to be a good student.” This statement indicated that Participant 5 felt positively self-efficacious about his capabilities to learn in this environment. Participant 6 stated how certain ahsp faculty improved her perceptions of feeling capable of learning

by sharing “They make me feel better. My *** (mentioned special education case carrier) who actually cares. The other place didn’t know me or help me like *** (mentioned special education and English learner case carrier).” Participant 7 described how he recognized higher levels of self-efficacy to learn in himself at the ahsp through the statement “I felt optimistic. I really loved the vibe here. I had the same routine every day. And the teachers seemed like they were nice, real friendly. So, I like it felt kinda new and different every single day.” Participant 8 shared, “I feel like they believe in us. I know that I can trust them. I tell them how some things are hard for me. They are always encouraging me, so they give me hope...” which reflected his perspectives of feeling in a content and relaxed state where he could be receptive to learning.

Participant 9 stated her beliefs about one reason she now feels positive about school when she said “I don’t think I will go back to a comprehensive school or at a big school ever again. I really like school because I like my teachers, I mean, I like a lot of my teachers... I like it a lot more.” Her statement indicated that Participant 9 perceived levels of positive self-efficacy at the ahsp versus the comprehensive high school.

Participant 10 recalled how his emotional state shifted partially because of his interactions with ahsp teachers through the recollection of “the people were different and most of them cared, so I was determined to, so I didn’t feel so lost like before. So, I was more determined to do what I had to do. So, I began to, I stopped drinking.” Participant 10 identified how his involvement with these teachers reduced his feelings of anguish and felt encouragement that he could adjust his behaviors to be physically and mentally available to learning. The participants’ statements highlighted how they felt higher levels

of self-efficacy as it related to learning and being educated at their ahsp because of their positive interactions with the teachers at this location.

Perceptions of Family Being Able to Support Them Learn. Most students held low self-efficacy perceptions because they felt they had little or no family support throughout their high school experiences. Participant 1 shared “sometimes miserable, it is difficult because I don’t have the support that other students have. Family is important to me and not having them with me is hard. It makes me sad and depressed not having them here” to describe not having family support while in high school. Participant 2 discussed “I have two jobs. My mom, she has two jobs too. Plus, she only did school in our country til she was eleven. So, she can’t help me with school” to depict his perceived lack of academic support that his family member could not offer at this stage of his education. Participant 4 described, “I don’t live with my dad now. I live on my own...well, I mean, with my sister and her boyfriend. I’m on my own. Nobody helps me, especially with school” to explain her present position of unsupported independence relational to her current educational enrollment status.

During a follow-up question response about familial support prompt, Participant 6 exclaimed in a frustrating tone, “I been living on my own since I was pregnant. My family doesn’t talk to me. They won’t help me at all. My mother forbids everybody from talking to me.” This statement indicated she felt low levels of self-efficacy related to perceptions of not getting support from her family such as aid her with childcare so that she could appropriately attend school. She also alluded to not having aid for her childcare needs in the evenings so she could attempt to independently attend to her academic

responsibilities outside of school. Participant 7's statement, "my mom doesn't know how to do any of this work. She only went to primary school in our country" reiterates how he knew he didn't have parental assistance to capably help him with his high school homework. Participant 8 explained how he knew he didn't have parental support with anything associated with school when he said:

"She stayed mad at me cause she thought I wasn't trying, which, that also made me mad and sad. She told the school that I had to do things myself cause I am grown, that she didn't want them to bother her anymore about me. I knew things weren't all my fault and there's wasn't nothing wrong with me. I had to get help for myself, by myself. I had no other choice."

His statements confirmed that he felt low self-efficaciousness about having family assistance to help him with his academic needs and struggles. Participant 10 spoke of his low self-efficacy as it related to parental academic support with the words "It's just me and my dad. But he doesn't help me, he can't, he doesn't know how to do this work. Plus, he works a lot. I'm left to do school stuff by myself." These words provide clarity of the dire circumstance of Participant 10 as it related to him not having family assistance to aid him with his academic needs or interests. Unfortunately, these participants held an adverse, common thread that they did not have assistance from their parents, either by choice or circumstance, to support their academic needs regardless of their learning barriers being initial or remedial in nature.

Influences of Verbal Persuasion Types on Self-Efficacy Perceptions

This section presented data related to how the participants' responses evidenced positive and negative self-efficacy perceptions that emerged from variations of verbal persuasion. Verbal persuasion can influence people's ideologies about their perceptions of self-efficacy from different opportunities where they convinced themselves or convinced by others that they are or are not capable of learning. Bandura (1994) described how verbal persuasion can inform one's self-efficacy through people telling others despite challenges that they do or do not have the capability to complete given activities. Bandura (1994) also explained how some variations of verbal persuasion incline people to develop sentiments of skepticism, disbelief, and negativity about their skills and potential inability to accomplish desired tasks or milestones, which can result in negative self-efficacy perceptions. Hence, pending the perceived frequency and scope of comments from people or convincing discussions with themselves, their negative self-efficacy feelings of incapability of learning might become more intense and expand.

Conversely, Bandura (1994) discussed how some forms of verbal persuasion stimulate people to foster feelings such as hope, optimism, positivity, or the capability to complete tasks or reach desired benchmarks. Therefore, their perceived frequency and depth of comments from others or what people say to themselves, then their positive self-efficacy feelings of capability of learning or success may become more robust and broaden. The analysis evidenced that participants formed their self-efficacy perceptions from their responses to direct and indirect verbal persuasion. The participants described instances where people straightforwardly made statements about their perceptions of the

participants' abilities to be successful in school, which the participants then stated influenced their perceptions about their capabilities to learn or achieve success. I determined that these descriptions evidenced direct verbal persuasion.

Contrarily, based on some of the participants' responses, I analytically deduced two different types of indirect verbal persuasion described in the data. In one rendition of indirect verbal persuasion, the participants described instances where they heard people make statements in their hearing range about their abilities that they perceived to influence their perceptions about their capabilities to learn or be successful. With the second rendition of indirect verbal persuasion frequently observed in the data, the participants described how they came to conclusions that people provided information about their abilities, which the participants interpreted these statements to be about their capabilities and, as a result, formulated an idea that they felt they could or could not be capable of learning or succeeding in school.

These statements to the participants included their relay of people sharing stories about how these people related their perceptions about the causality of one issue to another to influence or convince the participants that they perceived them as able to or unable to reach an academic goal. Therefore, I conclusively determined that the descriptions of these renditions evidenced indirect verbal persuasion. In summation, the participants described instances where their perceptions of direct and indirect verbal persuasions led to positive and negative self-efficacy perceptions about their capabilities to learn and be successful in school.

Perceptions Influenced from Self-Talk

The participants shared responses indicating that specific self-efficacy perceptions stemmed from verbal persuasions that they told themselves, which I labeled “Self-Talk.” Each participant responded to how they felt the self-talk influenced their perceptions about their capabilities as high school students classified as adult English learners with disabilities. Relational to how self-talk influenced their perceptions of their ability to learn, several participants discussed necessary considerations or decisions they perceived supported them to be available to learn or avoid because they perceived it could detract from their learning capabilities. Lastly, the responses indicated that they considered their verbal self-talk to either positively or negatively affect their perceived capabilities to be available to learn or be successful in school.

In most cases, the participants’ self-talk served a triple purpose. The initial indicator of the participants’ engagement in self-talk usually consisted of them providing a statement that unconsciously or incidentally alluded to or acknowledged their awareness of a perceived external barrier or learning challenge. The second indicator of the participant using self-talk included their relay of a set of words or thoughts they repeat to themselves, which acted as some mental reinforcement of what they perceived their capabilities to be. The third indicator of self-talk involved the participant identifying how the set of words or thoughts also acted as a reminder of how to stay academically accountable and be receptive to doing what they perceived it took to reach their goal of learning or academic success. Positive self-talk involved the participant identifying how the set of words or thoughts also reminded them how to stay academically accountable

and be receptive to doing what they perceived it took to reach their goal of learning or academic success. Negative self-talk focused on the participant identifying how the set of words or thoughts also acted as a reminder of how the person perceived themselves to be unintelligent or academically inferior and perceived it difficult to avoid the challenges, effects, or consequences of their intellectual deficit. Additionally, they usually discussed their perception of how their perceived learning deficit obstructed their options or ability to reach their goal of learning or academic success.

Perceptions about Self: Present and Future. Responding to select prompts, participants identified instances of self-talk where they reflected on statements about their latest perceived challenges and comments, they made to themselves about two potential future options associated with their self-efficacy perceptions. One variation of self-talk included affirmation statements, where the participants connected their perceived positive self-efficacy perceptions to their desired future goals or outcomes. The other variation of self-talk involved connective comments linking their perceived negative self-efficacy perceptions to a potentially perceived undesirable fate or outcomes.

Five participants offered self-talk declarations where they identified connections with their present capability perceptions and future goals. These declarations confirmed that direct verbal persuasion influenced their self-efficacy perspectives positively. Participant 2 asserted, “I have to go through high school and maybe college, and then I will have a better future. I mean, I hope for a better future compared to now,” as one of his self-proclamations that if he positions himself to graduate from high school, these skills may progressively prepare him for the future. Participant 3 explained:

“I have to keep telling myself why I come to school. Why I’m here because I have to remember why I come to school, which is to have a better life... I need to graduate, so I can either go to (named a state junior college) or another college or go to work to make money to go to school”.

This direct verbal persuasion statement affirmed his perceived challenge of not dropping out, his identified academic goal he wanted to work towards, and his conviction that he believed he could achieve the goal.

Participant 6 shared, “It’s more about responsibility; I think of my son, I think that I don’t give up,” her form of self-talk where she self-identified her informal strategy of perseverance to complete high school. She identified academic irresponsibility as her challenge and her instructional goal to finish high school to bolster her ability to secure a job to improve her ability to provide for her son. Participant 7 expressed, “It’s hard for me to come. I just want to leave high school. I’m trying to do it by graduating instead of dropping out. I can’t drop out,” which situated as positive self-talk about how he strives to leave high school from constructive versus adverse circumstances. His statement depicted his challenge not to drop out and how he believed he was academically situated to sustain his high school placement. Participant 8 asserted, “I want to get my high school diploma so I can work less for the same amount of money. I’m gonna go to college. I wanna go to college,” as his verbal persuasive self-talk about how he connected his capability to learn to his potential future employment endeavors. He recognized himself as an underpaid employee who made the connection that higher education equates to

more money for him. Each of these examples highlighted how the participants felt their self-talk led to high or positive self-efficacy.

Six participants gave self-talk accounts, which also affirmed connections with their present capability perceptions and future goals. However, these declarations confirmed that indirect verbal persuasion influenced their self-efficacy perspectives negatively. Under the subcategory of self-talk, Participant 1 provided an example of indirect verbal persuasion that she felt unable to learn when she interpreted that the teachers initiated repetitive verbal prompts for her to restate content. She shared, “I’m scared because I can tell people think I’m dumb, like when teachers ask me questions, they look at me mad ...they make me say stuff over and over a lot”. Her statement indicated she felt unintelligent, at times fearful of people judging her, and experienced the unwanted directive to repeat words to someone who could not understand what she tried to communicate to them in the academic setting.

Participant 2 discussed an indirect verbal persuasion about his inconsistent beliefs in his abilities to learn when he said, “Sometimes a lack of motivation, because I know I can do it, but sometimes like I am not, I am not meant for this.” He acknowledged motivation to attend school as a learning acquisition barrier, the negative statement he repeated to himself about not wanting to be in high school, and the declaration that he is not always receptive to learning. Participant 3 expressed his disappointment about his perceptions of not feeling smart enough to secure a collegiate placement with the words, “I want to live in a dorm...not being able to do that, like my friends, kind of sucks. It’s embarrassing. I hate feeling this. It’s not fair, it’s not right.”

Participant 4 stated her negative indirect verbal persuasion which revealed her anguish and frustrations of being in high school as a adult with her statement, “I needed to get out, I’m just, just for my age you know I shouldn’t have been in school that long.” Participant 7 negatively conveyed, “sometimes I like get tired of coming to school and want to quit, I also kind of start doubting myself, like I tell myself I’m a loser cause I still haven’t graduated,” as his doubtful statements about his capabilities. His negative self-talk indicated he struggled with attendance, held an adverse perception of himself because of his continued challenges to meet his graduation requirements successfully, and regularly described himself as someone who fails at learning. Participant 8 shared, “kept thinking in my head that I was that dumb kid but didn’t wanna believe it. I know I’m not dumb but couldn’t do good in school,” as his negative verbal persuasion, he told himself about his perceived capabilities to learn in school. He acknowledged his academic difficulties, said to himself that he was not smart, and kept recalling examples of when he failed in school. These examples highlighted how these participants felt their self-talk led to low or negative self-efficacy.

Perceptions about Participants’ Abilities. The analysis in this subsection revealed that the participants’ self-talk disclosed information that identified as direct or indirect verbal persuasion about their perceptions to perform skills or meet academic benchmarks, which they perceived informed their sense of capability to or not to succeed or learn. In the case of responding to certain prompts, the analysis showcased participants’ moments when they recalled statements that I identified as direct verbal persuasions, which revealed positive perceptions about their academic capabilities to

learn. Other prompt responses featured statements I identified as indirect verbal persuasions that revealed negative perceptions held by the participants about their academic capabilities to learn or meet requirements.

This time, with the analysis, the six participants discussed the variation of how their perceived self-talk relayed that direct verbal persuasion positively influenced their perceptions about their academic capabilities for learning or excelling educationally. Participant 1 highlighted positive self-efficacy perceptions about her capabilities through direct verbal persuasion in her statement, “Being at this school makes me, I think I can I think do what I want in my life. I believe in myself now. I am passing more classes now.” Her statement informally disclosed she achieved some success at this location not experienced at her former high school, which boosted her self-esteem, and she conditioned herself to recall those moments to sustain her perceived positive momentum.

“First, when I started this year, one of the mindset I had was that school doesn’t help me with anything, but now I do think differently; you are going to use what you learned in school in the future,” substantiated recognition by Participant 2 of adapted self-talk during his final high school year. He recognized that he could learn in this environment and realized he could build upon the known material to impact his future positively. Participant 3 stated, “I can learn, but I learn like a bit slower and different,” to describe his positive perception of his capabilities to acquire academic skills despite his perceived learning challenges. Participant 4 shared how her variation of self-talk involved reminding herself about desired postgraduation goals through the description, “I have worked so hard to get this done. I also want to have a better job. I now work hard to hard

to make money, and I know that if I finish, it will open more opportunities for me.” She acknowledged that her struggles to learn had gone on for a long time. Still, she believed she could build on these to avail herself to meet her graduation goal. Participant 5 verbalized how he told himself he was capable of learning when he made himself available for differentiated instruction in classes by stating, “Like I understand stuff, I understand things a little bit more when they do it one by one, I keep telling myself I can get it.” Participant 8 conveyed, “There’s nothing wrong with me, and my learning problems are not my fault. They said that I just learn differently. It made me feel better. I can conquer, ahm, anything,” to point out one variation of his verbally-persuasive, positive self-talk of about his capabilities achieve academic success despite his identified learning challenges. These participants’ responses indicated that their direct verbal persuasions reinforced positive self-efficacy perceptions.

Conversely to the prior paragraph, this time, the data affirmed eight participants perceived self-talk exhibited indirect verbal persuasion which negatively influenced their self-efficacy perspectives about their academic capabilities for learning or achieving educationally. Participant 1, through indirect verbal persuasion, discussed her low self-efficacy perceptions about how she felt she should be capable of completing assignments. She said, “I feel like I should know how to do the work, but I sometimes can’t.” She acknowledged that she perceived she had the skills to do well on the task and recognized that she was inconsistently incapable of excelling, and which affected her perceptions to believe she could satisfactorily meet the benchmark. Participant 4 discussed her negative, indirect verbal persuasion about how she knows that she learns differently from

her peers, with the statement, “I don’t know what it is, but I know that there is just something not good with my brain. Like there is something that doesn’t allow me to learn fast like other people.” Participant 5 mentioned his indirect negative verbal persuasion about his abilities to learn by saying, “ahh, I felt dumb, not being able to read or write well. I just don’t like to read or write. I just don’t think I’m good at it.” As part of her adverse admission of self-talk about how she perceived her weakened capability to learn, Participant 6 admitted, “so it’s hard for me to go to school, because I don’t go to school, it is hard for me,” because she felt it exacerbated from her frequent absenteeism.

Participant 7 mentioned, “No, I do not (perform to the levels he could). I still, I guess have a long way to go. I know that I’m not working to the level I should, that I can. I don’t know why I do that,” which reflected his negative indirect verbal persuasions about believing he has positive learning capabilities but knowing he does not work to his capabilities. Participant 8 rendered a point of indirect, negative self-talk through the declaration, “I don’t like school because it’s hard for me to keep up. Sometimes I feel guilty and sad because I don’t think I’m doing good. Or it takes me a long time to learn.” Participant 9 shared, “I thought I was gonna be outted that I’m a terrible student, like basically, I thought they were going to think I was a really bad student, and I wasn’t smart,” which highlighted her indirect, negative self-talk she perceived about own capabilities that she admitted to repeating for years in her head privately.

Participant 10 described his variation of indirect, negative, self-talk about his capabilities with the statement, “I think that there are times that it is harder for me to learn. I have difficulty learning little things. Somebody can understand little things, and I

don't." These examples displayed how the participants verbalized negative statements about their abilities which resulted in low self-efficacy perceptions to succeed in the high school setting.

Perceptions about Actions Necessary to Succeed. In the analysis for this subsection, many participants discussed how they used self-talk to identify situations they perceived as barriers to meeting their high school requirements. As they acknowledged through self-talk their perceived obstacles, they discussed specific self-talk realizations utilized to support their goals and efforts to overcome adversity and sustain their high school placement so they might graduate. As adult working high school students, the participants also shared that through these later episodes of self-talk, they became aware that they needed to be receptive to learning and completing their requirements, even during periods of academic struggle, to reach graduation goals. This data segment accentuated how these self-talk discussions focused on awareness of actions they perceived necessary to succeed in high school.

This variation of self-talk met the earlier criteria for direct verbal persuasions, words they told themselves to maintain positive perspectives about learning. Six participants provided evidence of positive direct verbal persuasion they used to represent their descriptions of actions they perceived they needed to take to succeed in school despite their perceived learning challenges. When prompted about what she told herself to do academically amidst learning challenges, Participant 1 stated, "I let my mind be open so I can learn something different every day. I don't give up. I keep trying no matter what happens." Participant 2 identified, "Now I tell myself to stay calm when my teacher

tells me I'm doing something wrong so I can think about how to use what they are telling me and I can try to do better," as one variation of positive self-talk he used to convince himself to continue striving towards meeting his graduation requirements. Participant 3 relayed, "I make myself feel guilty," "I keep telling myself I can," or, "I say, don't be a dumb ass, I can do it. I have done all this, so I have just had to finish." as his direct verbal persuasive strategy to convince himself to refocus his emotions and actions when he feels stressed or discouraged from academic failures.

With this iteration of positive self-talk, Participant 8 shared, "I just keep telling myself go, go, go, because I need to graduate. I just keep telling myself that I am going to graduate, and if I want to graduate, I have to go to class," which exemplified how he verbally persuaded himself to bolster his learning opportunities. Participant 9 described, "As a student, it's a lot to juggle. It's hard... Because I have more responsibilities, I have to make sure that I do all my work in school," her scenario and positive, verbal persuasion she used to overcome her perceived academic, irresponsible temptation that could negatively impact her capabilities to succeed. Participant 10 shared his positive statements of self-talk that he used at perceived times of educational struggle, which included, "I keep telling me that I have been almost seven years of high school, so I can't give up. I only have a few more classes to graduate. I can't let that go to the trash." This section once again showed how the participants' self-talk truthfully admitted to mindset challenges but integrated the practice of telling themselves actions to take to support the execution of proactive measures that could increase learning.

Perceptions about Academic Perseverance While Struggling. The analysis in this subsection unveiled that this variation of the participants' self-talk informed self-efficacy perceptions that centered on their perceived instances of academic struggles and the purposeful usage of self-talk to reinforce academic perseverance or acknowledge the lack thereof. Through the self-talk, the participants verbalized connections with how they perceived it could either support or undermine their goals. These findings indicated that these participants' self-talk variations included positive direct verbal persuasions, positive indirect verbal persuasions, and negative indirect verbal persuasions, which informed their self-efficacy perceptions. The participants noted these direct and indirect self-talk persuasions also sparked either negative or positive self-efficacy perceptions.

In this section, seven participants highlighted how this perceived self-talk variation showed that direct verbal persuasion positively influenced their perceived levels of perseverance during that identified instance of academic struggle. Through an act of direct verbal persuasion, Participant 1 discussed her management of academic perseverance with an unconscious positive self-talk response. Participant 1 shared, "when things go wrong, I want to give up. I begin thinking about I can't give up because then I can't graduate, and I need to graduate. So, I tell me that I have to continue, I can't give up." When comparatively prompted to think about his perspectives of learning as an adult student, Participant 2 responded "I have to have an open mind that I'm going to make some mistakes when I'm learning new things. My mind has to be ok that I will make some errors while I'm learning cause I got more to learn in shorter time than them."

Participant 4, when she feels stressed about learning challenges, described, “ah, stressful, as I’m going through it, I’m trying to, it’s a learning process... everything is a learning process and I just tell myself that you’re just not gonna get it on the first day” as a routine that she tells herself to execute. As she reflected on moments that she felt discouragement about her struggles with academic challenges, Participant 6 stated that she many times told herself, “I just feel bad and tell myself to keep going. I have to keep going for my baby.” Participant 7 exclaimed how he positively persuades himself when faced with adversity, “I guess just thinking positive more than the negative, simply being positive seems to make it a lot, well a bit better.” Participant 9 stated, “I’m -m trying to be as successful as I can be, because I have no other choice. I just keep telling myself that I’m graduating this year and I’m done. That helps...” for her positive self-talk persuasion she used as a reminder to not give up because she believed she could successfully stay on the progressive path towards graduation. Participant 10 shared:

“I encourage myself. I say that I have to relax, and say, you know, I don’t want to be a loser. You are not stupid; you are not dumb. You can do it! You just have to focus and relax. Take your time,” as his statements of positive self-talk he repeated to himself when feeling academically challenged.

These participant responses demonstrated that these direct verbal persuasions also contributed to positive self-efficacy perceptions.

In this section, 4 participants stated how this perceived variation of self-talk revealed that indirect verbal persuasion positively influenced their perceived perseverance levels during the identified periods of academic struggle. Participant 1

discussed her capabilities to learn despite her learning challenges when she said, “I’m, can do it because I came here and didn’t know English, but now I do, so if I can learn a language, I can also learn anything else.” Participant 3 shared how he indirectly engaged in self-talk to push through arduous academic challenges with the words, “I can’t go anywhere without an education, so I just do what I have to do although it’s a lot, it’s real hard sometimes.” When prompted about how she handled adversity with learning, Participant 4 conveyed that she indirectly verbalized perseverance to herself, “yeah, I’ve had those times where like I wanted to give up, but the goal was always to finish to the end, I gotta push it to the end, to push through.” Participant 6 mentioned, “I have been in school so long, that I have to finish,” as her indirect verbalization about her persuasions related to perseverance for staying in school despite her long-term academic challenges to meet graduation requirements. These participant responses confirmed how these indirect verbal persuasions strengthened positive self-efficacy perception levels.

Contrarily to the preceding paragraph, the data showed how this perceived self-talk variation about academic perseverance from five participants resembled indirect verbal persuasion, which negatively influenced their self-efficacy perspectives.

Participant 3 spoke about how he indirectly convinced himself that he could not persevere through his learning challenges at his previous high school setting by saying:

“I didn’t really want to go to school. I didn’t really want to go to school when I was at my old school. I felt like it was pointless. Like I kept failing all the classes and I wasn’t learning nothing.”

Participant 5 spoke negatively about instances where he frequently gave up when he endured academic challenges “there are times that I feel like I’m not successful when I try to do my work, and I just shut down and watch Netflix or text on my phone.”

Participant 7 shared indirect self-talk, which resonated about how his perceived academic struggles shifted to adverse verbal persuasion about his perceived capabilities to succeed in school. He declared, “It’s still work that you got to do, so in that way, it’s still kinda hard. In my mind, I thought I was gonna try harder. I really thought I would, but it seems like it’s still hard for me to come to school. It’s hard for me to keep working to do what I gotta do to get through sometimes, you know, it’s just hard to even get through a day or even a week.” Participant 8 voiced, “It was hard for me when I dropped out of school. I felt like I had no choice but to drop out because I felt like I was never going to graduate because I didn’t understand my classes,” which depicted his variation of indirect, negative self-talk about how he felt incapable of learning and succeeding sometimes in school. Participant 10 mentioned an academically challenging moment that sparked his memories of not feeling capable of succeeding in any math class with the statement, “I didn’t do it (referenced a difficult math problem) last class. So, I’m always thinking about how I’m not a good student.” These representations showcased how these participants’ negative verbal persuasion comments related to their lack of academic perseverance culminated in negative or low self-efficacy perceptions.

Perceptions Influenced from Teacher Interactions

Select information from the participant data signaled their descriptions of certain self-efficacy perceptions were verbal persuasions derived from their perceived vantage

point about conversations, comments, or actions with or from their respective teachers. In this section, the participants stated how they perceived the teachers' statements or actions influenced their perceptions about their capabilities to learn or succeed as adult high school English learners with disabilities. In other instances, the participants shared how their thoughts about the teachers' comments or behaviors influenced their perceptions that they could not learn or reach desirable goals. Ultimately, these responses showed that the participants' perceptions of the teachers' words or actions either positively or negatively informed their perceptions about their capabilities to learn or succeed in their high school settings.

The scenarios discussed in this section showcased the analysis of how participant perceptions influenced by teacher interactions consisted of three levels of awareness. The initial indicator of this participant perception type consisted of their remittance of a statement that unconsciously or purposefully showed awareness of how a perceived external barrier or learning challenge formed from their interaction with a specified teacher. The second indicator of these participant perceptions entailed how they derived beliefs or sentiments influenced by their interpretations of teachers' words or behaviors. The third indicator of this participant perception type involved the participants identifying how the scenarios of teachers' words or actions acted as a reminder of how the participants perceived two possible self-efficacy perceptions, either positive or negative.

In the case of positive self-efficacy perceptions, the participants identified how the teachers' words or actions reminded them how to stay academically accountable and

be receptive to doing what they perceived it took to reach their goal of learning or academic success. Alternately, negative self-efficacy perceptions focused on the participant identifying how the set of teachers' words or actions also reminded them how the person perceived themselves to be unintelligent or academically inferior and perceived it difficult to avoid the challenges, effects, or consequences of their intellectual deficit. Additionally, they usually mentioned or inferred the perception of how their perceived teacher interaction complimented or obstructed their options or ability to reach their goal of learning or academic success. The participants indicated or stated these complementary or obstructive perceptions represented positive/high or negative/low self-efficacy perceptions.

Evidence from 6 participants featured how their perceptions of teacher interactions or words manifested as positive direct verbal persuasion influenced their perceived levels of self-efficacy during or immediately after an identified instance of encountering a perceived school-associated barrier or academic struggle. Participant 1 disclosed, "When I don't wanna go to school, my teachers, they call me and inspire me, they just tell me I can do it, then I feel enthusiastic to come to school," to describe how their positive actions informed her positive perceptions of feeling capable in school.

In this scenario identified by Participant 1, she recognized that her school attendance was her barrier to learning to the capacity she desired. Participant 1 interpreted that the teachers' behavior of placing calls to encourage her to come to school was a positive act that could support her to learn. Since Participant 1 determined that these teachers' actions could contribute to her learning, she concluded that their behavior

motivated her to believe that with their support, she could learn. She, therefore, explained how their actions incited her to feel positively efficacious.

The perceivable positive teachers' words and actions persuaded Participant 2 to believe that he can learn in the environment. He stated:

“They treat me like a normal student and believe that I can do the same work as everybody else despite my English and my my other problems, they focus on me and ask me how I'm doing and encourage me.”

Participant 6 explained, “They say that they believe in me and that that I can do it. They just tell me try it, you can do it. They say do a little every day, or when I can. We believe in you,” to show she perceived her teachers' statements were indirect verbal persuasions that informed her to cultivate positive perceptions of the capability to learn. Participant 7 shared that he engaged in self-talk with himself because of experiencing positive verbal persuasion from his teachers that led him to feel some measures of positive self-efficacy, which included “reminding me that I can do it, even when I'm gone for a while from school... and my teacher and my case carrier call me.” Participant 8 said:

“Some teachers tell me that I am brilliant because I speak more than one language and that many Americans don't speak another language, so they give me hope. They keep telling me that I am smart and smarter than some people at this school who wish they was smart like me,” to emphasize his positive direct and indirect verbal persuasion experiences from his teachers that he stated led him to verbalize

mentally positive self-talk and bolster perseverance when struggling academically.

Participant 10 remembered instances of words the teachers shared, which served as indirect verbal persuasion from the teachers, which he utilized to formulate helpful self-talk that also reinforced positive thoughts to stay in school. His remembrance included:

“I look at the positive and teachers that are like my second and third parent. They they call me, always checking on me and making sure that I ate and rested. And this helped a lot. They help me because I kind of feel obligated to continue but not really obligated because I know that it is for my own good.”

These examples exhibited how the participants’ beliefs of positive verbal persuasion from the teachers’ actions or words followed the identified indicators and conclusively resulted in positive self-efficacy perceptions.

In the following section, the data signified 7 participants perceived their teachers’ actions or words illustrated how indirect verbal persuasion negatively influenced their self-efficacy perspectives about their capabilities to learn or achieve educationally. Participant 6 expressed, “kept telling me that she knows that the work she gives is too hard for me makes me feel bad because she told me that, so I began thinking that I can’t do it,” as an example of how her teacher made select comments about her academic performances which over time, prompted her to believe she had did not have capabilities to pass the class successfully. In this recap identified by Participant 6, she recognized that her teacher discretely identified and publicly stated her academic failures in her math

class. Participant 6 viewed that the teachers' overtly mentioning her academic failure while in class caused her to feel bad and that the teacher might not support her to learn in that setting. Since Participant 6 concluded that this teacher's actions could not contribute to her gaining future knowledge, she concluded that her behavior unmotivated her to believe that with her support, she could learn. She, therefore, explained how the actions incited her to feel negatively efficacious.

Participant 1 explained her capability reflection, "some teachers, yes they think that I can't not learn, and they see me like I'm dumb and keep reminding me that it's not my fault I don't know things and keep saying that I can't do things," to justify how their indirect statements made her feel like her abilities positioned her to not be successful in the class. Participant 2 shared, "I felt like they think that someone like me can't be smart. They think, they say that because we don't go to all classes, that we don't care. People don't understand that, and many teachers think we are lazy and don't care about school." His words indicated how he felt the teachers' frequent reprimands over his unsatisfactory performances and attendance promoted negative self-talk perceptions about his capabilities.

Participant 3 revealed how his teachers' unfavorable commentary about his poor grades and adult age indirectly increased his negative self-talk perceptions about his capabilities to achieve his graduation requirements. Participant 3 pointed out, "They show me my grades. Then go back with all this stuff about how I'm not going to graduate if I don't do the work... like I don't already know that." Participant 5 asserted how the lack of teacher encouragement and supportive educational interaction indirectly and

adversely convinced him that he could not learn. He relayed, “I didn’t feel like I can succeed in the other school because nobody was there to encourage me or nobody believed in me, they probably thought that I couldn’t do anything, so I thought I wasn’t going to make it like I didn’t have potential.” Despite his acknowledgment of positive AHSP teacher verbal persuasion, Participant 7 admitted, “They tell me that I’m smart enough to graduate from high school and college. I just don’t believe it. Well... sometimes I do ... and sometimes I don’t,” which confirmed he frequently engaged in negative self-talk about his capabilities.

The statement, “She keeps telling us that she knows that we can’t do work because we are learning English,” emphasized how Participant 8 perceived that select teachers’ unfavorable statements ignited negative self-talk perceptions about his capabilities to pass some classes. These excerpts met the analytical qualifiers and exhibited how the participants’ beliefs of negative indirect verbal persuasion from the teachers’ actions or words made the participants perceive they held negative self-efficacy perceptions.

Conversely, in the following section, the data showed four participants perceived their teachers’ actions or words illustrated how indirect verbal persuasion positively influenced their self-efficacy perspectives about their capabilities to learn or achieve educationally. Participant 3 disclosed how he perceived his teachers indirectly persuaded him of being capable of learning through their words with the statement, “They let me know that I can do it and that I’m capable of it. They give me positive feedback of what I’m doing good or doing right.” In this rendition identified by Participant 3, he

recognized that his teacher discretely identified and publicly stated her acknowledgment of viewing his academic success on a few occasions in her math class. Participant 3 viewed that the teacher overtly mentioning his former academic accomplishments plus providing constructive criticism while in class resulted in him feeling confident and that the teacher might continue to offer him support in learning in that setting. Since Participant 3 concluded that this teacher's potential actions could contribute to him gaining future knowledge, he concluded that his behavior motivated him to believe that with her support, he could learn. He, therefore, explained how the actions incited him to feel positively efficacious.

Using indirect verbal persuasion, Participant 2 acknowledged, "I think that having a person that think that I can do it and not listening to other persons, I think that, having a person that motivates me and thinking that I can do it," how he felt teachers' supportive actions made him feel capable of learning. Participant 4 clarified how she indirectly perceived herself as capable of achieving academic success through her teachers' actions and chats at Rebecca AHSP. She rendered, "my case carrier encouraged me a lot, she would message me, try to work around my schedule, letting me come in pick up work then letting me leave back out so I could go to work when I need to," to spotlight how the teachers' actions aided her to feel capable of meeting course requirements through the provisions of flexible access to instructional materials plus navigation of lenient assignment submission options. Participant 7 recalled, "She (said special education case carrier's name) said that she believed in me often, yeah, they made me want to come to class as examples for ways AHSP teachers' words verbally persuaded and consequently,

sparked him to feel positive academic capability beliefs. These examples exhibited how the participants' beliefs of positive indirect verbal persuasion from the teachers' actions or words followed the identified indicators and conclusively resulted in positive self-efficacy perceptions.

Perceptions Influenced from Proximal (Family and Friend) Relationships

Select information from the data pinpointed that specific descriptions aligning with certain self-efficacy perceptions were verbal persuasions derived from their perceived perspectives about conversations, comments, or actions with or from their respective family members and friends. In this section, the participants stated how they perceived the family members' or friends' statements or actions influenced their adult high school English learners with disabilities' perceptions about their capabilities to learn or succeed. Ultimately, these responses showed how the participants' perceptions about the chosen peoples' words or actions positively informed their perceptions about their capabilities to learn or succeed in their identified high school settings.

The scenarios discussed in this section accentuated how participant perceptions influenced by family or friend interactions indicated three levels of awareness. The initial indicator of this participant perception type consisted of their remittance of a statement that unconsciously or purposefully showed awareness of how a perceived external barrier or learning challenge formed from their interaction with the person. The second indicator of these participant perceptions included how they derived particular beliefs or sentiments that influenced their interpretations of the peoples' words or behaviors. The third indicator of this participant perception type involved the participants identifying

how the scenarios of peoples' words or actions acted as a gauge for how the participants perceived their positive self-efficacy perceptions.

In the case of positive self-efficacy perceptions, the participants identified how the family members' or friends' words or actions supported them to try staying academically accountable and be receptive to doing what they perceived it took to reach their goal of learning or academic success. Additionally, they usually mentioned or inferred the perception of how their perceived family member or friend interaction complimented their options or ability to reach their goal of learning or academic success. The participants indicated or stated these complementary perceptions represented positive or high self-efficacy perceptions.

In this section, the data showed that 7 participants perceived their family members' actions or words, illustrating how indirect verbal persuasion influenced their self-efficacy perspectives about their capabilities to learn or achieve educationally. Participant 10 discussed, "Definitely my dad, he always tells me that he wants me to get an education because he wasn't able to get one. He says that he wants me to have a better life and that can be with education," which represented indirect verbal persuasion from his father. In this reflection identified by Participant 10, he recognized that his father spoke of his plight not to get a high school education. His father discreetly identified and privately stated that not getting an education limited his ability to make more money. The participant acknowledged that his father covertly admitted that he, as his son, could be academically successful in school. The statement of Participant 10 indicated that his father indirectly encouraged him to sustain positive academic momentum in school,

which resulted in him feeling confident that he might live up to his father's expectations. Participant 10 recognized that this verbal persuasion discretely reinforced that both thought he had the potential to meet graduation requirements and sparked him to engage in positive self-talk. Therefore, he explained how the father's actions made him feel positively efficacious.

Participant 1 shared how she perceived her family's indirect statements as positively persuasive. She recounted:

"They tell me to get my high school diploma here in America. My mom would be very mad at me if I quit or do bad in school. I want them to feel proud of me. That I'm going to be somebody. I go to school for them... so I can take care of me and them," to convey her perceptions that her family indirectly persuaded her, through multiple verbal conversations that she should remain in and do her best to excel in school.

Participant 2 divulged:

"My mom says that challenges are a part of life. She says it's a lot of lessons to learn in life and life lessons can be hard, but you can always learn something. I believe her, so I have to keep trying, not quit," to how his mom indirectly persuaded him that he can persevere to learn even through academic struggles.

Participant 3 explained how his family member's indirect verbal persuasion influenced his positive self-efficacy perceptions by saying, "I know that my mom wanted me to go to school and I know that she came here so so I can have a better life and I know that school is what will give me a better life." Participant 5 said:

“Yes, they want me to graduate from high school because they say education is important, but they want me to hurry and do it. I want them to be proud of me, so I do what they want me to do.”

His statement exemplified his perceptions that his family members’ positive, indirect verbal persuasions convinced him that he could strive to meet graduation requirements. Participant 8 discussed, “I think about my family and my mom because I’m school because of my mom. She wants me to finish school. I want to make her happy, so I come,” which highlighted how, through indirect verbal persuasion that led him to institute progressive self-talk, he perceived his mom’s expectations persuaded him to attend school. Participant 9 detailed, “Thinking about my family taking me to where they work and talking about their jobs, and their expectations for me to graduate, I just keep telling myself that I have to do this for my family” to explain how her interpretations of the parents’ indirect verbal persuasions spurred her to reiterate this positive, verbally persuasive self-talk. These selections met the analytical qualifiers and exhibited how the participants’ beliefs of positive indirect verbal persuasion from their family members’ actions or words made them perceive they held positive self-efficacy perceptions.

The data in this section showed that four participants perceived their friends’ actions or words depicted how indirect verbal persuasion influenced their self-efficacy perspectives about their capabilities to learn or achieve educationally. Participant 4 shared how she was indirectly verbally persuaded by her friends that she could succeed with the exclamation, “They told me to transfer, my friends that tell me that I can do it and that I have to finish high school. So, I can have a better paying job.” Participant 4

disclosed earlier in her interview that certain comprehensive high school counselors and teachers discouraged her from transferring to Rebecca AHSP. With that information in mind, the analysis reflected that Participant 4 was indirectly verbally persuaded by her friends that she could transfer from her comprehensive high school to Rebecca AHSP because her friends indirectly shared they believed she could transfer to the school without any issue and be academically successful there.

Participant 4 also recognized that her friends indirectly shared through the transfer suggestion that they believed she could successfully meet her graduation requirements at the alternative high school setting. The statement of Participant 4 evidenced that she believed her friends indirectly made her feel confident that she could meet their expectations. Participant 4 saw that this verbal persuasion discreetly inclined her to engage in positive self-talk.

Participant 1 shared, “My friends, they told me to come here (Rebecca AHSP) to get out of high school,” which highlighted how her friends indirectly persuaded her that she could feel capable of meeting graduation requirements at the AHSP. Participant 10 disclosed, “I have a lot of friends in school, and it was like they told me to keep going,” Participant 10 realized the words indicated that his friends indirectly verbally persuaded himself that they believed he could persevere through his struggles to succeed and deemed him academically able to pass his classes which indirectly motivated him to continue trying.

Participant 3 indirectly recognized that his friends believed, and from them influenced his self-perceptions, that the different location could aid him not only to learn

but also graduate with the admittance, “I got some friends who went there, who told me to come here.” Therefore, she explained how the friends’ actions made her feel positively efficacious. These examples met the analytical qualifiers and highlighted how the participants’ beliefs of positive indirect verbal persuasion from their friends’ actions or words made them perceive they held positive self-efficacy perceptions.

Influences of Performance Accomplishments on Self-Efficacy Perceptions

Performance accomplishments influence people’s beliefs in their perceptions of self-efficacy primarily in two ways. Bandura (1994) stated how people’s performance accomplishments inform their perceptions of self-efficacy, or perceived capabilities to achieve success, by how they experience success or the lack thereof amidst different hardships over time. Bandura (1994) further explained that when people recognize or believe in their capabilities to succeed, they tend to think that when they can push through any hardship while engaged in any given activity or situation but also succeed, they reinforce positive self-efficacy. Conversely, suppose people do not believe in their capabilities to succeed. In that case, they may not think they can advance past the situation or complete the activity and, therefore, may not succeed in completing the tasks or their desired goal. This circumstance will then reinforce harmful levels of self-efficacy.

The data evidenced student statements that displayed variations of high and low levels of self-efficacy relatable to historical accounts of performance accomplishments. Three sub-categories emerged from analyzing the a priori code of Performance Accomplishments within the data. I labeled 3 primary sub-categories as learning

challenges, absenteeism, and self-advocacy issues because these areas manifested in each participant's statements. I marked one secondary sub-category as active participation because I found evidence of this area in 4 participants' statements.

Each participant described historical and current learning challenges. The participants described how different learning challenges impacted their perceived performance capabilities in school. The lack of understanding and ineffective use of academic language affected their perceived capabilities to succeed in math classes. Most adult participants stated that they felt so incapable of overcoming their learning challenges at various times in their high school academic history that they engaged in the inappropriate behavior of avoiding schoolwork or shutting down because they felt some sense of inability to learn. Some students discussed awareness of their inability to focus and feelings of distractibility.

Perceptions of Ways Historic Failures vs. Recent Successes Affected Self-Efficacy Relational to Performance Accomplishments

Bandura (1994) explained that performance accomplishments could inform a person's self-efficacy capability through their history of academic failure and success despite any challenges to succeed. Many participants described their accounts of some historic academic failures they could recall, which they perceived affected their perceptions of capabilities to succeed in educational settings. A few participants also noted select timeframes where they achieved some measure of academic success that came after several intervals of failure when they attempted to reach the milestones in past

class sections. The participants denoted how the accounts of failure and success influenced their perceptions of self-efficacy.

Historic Failures. These adult students perceived some of their past failures to complete assignments and tests that affected their performances as learning challenges associated with perceptions of understanding and usage related to academic language—some of the perceived academic language challenges related to their failure with content vocabulary. For example, Participant 1 discussed this issue with her past math class when she stated, “we have to do these things... what she calls it, a chart with words of the day and some problems...and that’s too hard for me to do most days... I usually do real bad on them”. Participant 4 shared a similar sentiment: “Sometimes I don’t know what to do. The directions ... they sometimes don’t make sense... I don’t know what to do”. Participant 6 provided an example of her learning challenges with academic language when she said, “I try to read ...and... it’s hard to understand the things”. Participant 9 conveyed her past failures with academic language when she said, “it’s frustrating not to understand the teacher cause then I can’t do my work...then I fail or get low grades like failing”. Participant 10 described how academic language negatively impacted his perceived learning capabilities when he said, “Before I didn’t know many words in English. Once I began to learn more English it was more easier for me to understand and learn, but it can affect the ways I learn things, the way I understand things”. Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 6, Participant 7, Participant 8, Participant 9, and Participant 10 mentioned perceptions of how they attributed some of their past academic failures in school to issues related to their understanding of language,

particularly academic language. The participants' statements indicated beliefs that their poor historical deficits in academic language impacted their perceived capabilities to learn or complete assignments.

Several participants historically relayed how they perceived their lack of ability to focus, and distractibility contributed to years of poor performance accomplishments. Participant 1 stated that, amid learning challenges, she struggles to concentrate and learn when she shared, "I sometimes ... I get mad... I can't focus sometimes cause I don't get it... you know, how to do the ... the word problems". Participant 2 said there were times of inability to work when "I couldn't concentrate." Participant 4 discussed her learning challenges by saying, "I just sometimes can't like listen ... or focus when the teacher speaks". Upon describing a perceived barrier to learning, Participant 8 declared, "I can't focus in class." Participant 10 shared one of his learning challenges: "I couldn't concentrate in school". Their inability to focus in school also came from Participant 6, Participant 7, and Participant 9. This evidence highlighted that most adult dually identified participants experienced many instances throughout their educational career where they couldn't focus or concentrate in school and understood that it impacted their perceived capability to learn content in their present courses.

Most adult dually identified high school students declared that their learning challenges inclined them to engage in inappropriate behaviors related to the avoidance or refusal to work and shut down during class time. These academic behaviors negatively affected their capabilities to learn in school. Participant 1 said that when she attended the comprehensive high school, she would "shut down" and "I just sit there cause I didn't

know what to do.” Participant 2 admitted that he “sat in the back ... I didn’t do nothing... cause I didn’t know what they were saying for me to do” when he faced learning barriers in large classes at the comprehensive high school. Participant 3 shared his work avoidance by stating he would “play like I was working, but I was really watching games on my laptop.”

Participant 4 disclosed how when faced with learning challenges, she said, “I’d leave classes like least five or six times a day to go to the bathroom to avoid feeling bad that I didn’t know stuff”. Participant 5 confessed how he would “hide in the hallways to avoid going to classes cause I wasn’t learning nothin anyway.” Participant 7 admitted that he elected, when faced with learning challenges in school “I just give up and like don’t pay attention... and begin watching Netflix during class”. Participant 9 shared her inappropriate academic behavior including “I just stay there in my desk and stare or use my phone like text my friends” during past educational struggles to learn in school. Participant 10 explained his historically inappropriate behavior related to facing learning challenge scenarios by saying, “when I ask question they will not answer or seem to get impatient. When this happens, I shut down”. Eight out of the 10 participants rendered statements that referenced their work avoidance behaviors, which they admitted interfered with their capabilities to learn academic material.

All participants experienced a minimum of 5 years in high school because of failing one or more classes. Eight of the participants provided some accounts of academic failures experienced by them that they believed shaped their perceptions of negative self-efficacy. These negative performance rates contributed to their extended timeframes in

high school. Participant 4 discussed his past failing grades when he said, “In my other school, I was lost and failing all my classes.” When he recalled one year of high school, Participant 5 stated, “I was failing all my classes,” highlighting his acknowledgment of failure across several classes. Participant 6 admitted that she failed several classes last year when she said, “I did fail last year.” Additionally, Participant 6 revealed that her grades “are Es and Ds” during the current semester term. Participant 7 recounted, “in the middle I start failing then like the rest of the year is done... I f**** up cause I end up failing all my classes even after they drop some of my classes”. Participant 8 recalled his experiences with failure that exemplified his unconscious beliefs of negative self-efficacy through the statement, “I tried hard last time, but failed”. These participant examples illustrated how the participants’ statements represented cultivated sentiments of negative self-efficacy.

Seven participants gave accounts for their historical failures in math, which can understandably contribute to negative self-efficacy perspectives. For instance, Participant 1 shared thoughts of negative self-efficacy in math when she said, “I’ve always had bad grades in math”. Additionally, Participant 6 admitted, “I failed all my math classes in high school at least one time... ugh...like, I failed Geometry two times”. Her historical failing accounts in math certainly contributed to negative self-efficacy beliefs in her ability to pass her latest math course. Participant 8 exclaimed his historic academic failures, particularly in math, when he stated, “I failed all of them at least two times... to pass the SOLs... like in Reading, Algebra, and US History”. Their statements indicated

that the participants manifested negative math self-efficacy due to historical failures in this content area.

Recent Successes. Most participants, excluding Participant 6 and Participant 7, experienced some measure of academic success in the form of a passing math grade or successfully passing the state math benchmark of Algebra 1 during the initial data collection cycle. Participant 5 discussed how his changed intentional behavior to practice math skills resulted in recent achievements with the statement, “when I take tests, I have As and Bs.” Participant 8 experienced hesitancy to recognize that he began shifting from negative to positive math self-efficacy perspectives. He displayed this with the statement, “But wait, I did pass the SOL... my grades this time are better than it was before...I didn’t fail the test!” His phrases displayed newfound recognition of success and how he felt capable of doing well in his latest math course. Collected state math benchmark reports indicated that Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 9, and Participant 10 passed the Algebra 1 state math benchmark with the minimum required score needed to meet graduation requirements during the school year that I collected this data. Four of the participants (Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 6, and Participant 8) received a score below the passing rate. However, they fell within the locally verified state test performance score range, which still enabled them to meet the math state graduation requirement. Furthermore, 8 participants, excluding Participant 6 and Participant 7, passed either their Algebra 1 or Algebra Functions and Data Analysis course(s) needed to meet their state math graduation requirements. These successful participant math

experiences supported the students to finally build positive self-efficacy perspectives in their capability to succeed in a math content area.

Perceptions of How Work Habits and Classification/General Educational Accommodation Usage Affected Self-Efficacy Relational to Performance Accomplishments

Several participants formulated their perceptions of self-efficacy from their work habits and educational accommodation usage. Participants admitted to several negative work habits in the past or during the school year of the initial data collection interval, which contributed to them not feeling capable or confident in their pursuits to learn academic content. However, most also spoke of adjustments made in their academic work behaviors and efforts that influenced their confidence in their capacity to grasp or retain skills. Furthermore, most participants recognized that they felt increased confidence in their abilities to learn when they shifted their actions to integrate more frequent educational accommodations associated with at least one of their identified classifications. The participants shared information that indicated they understood that their perceptions of personal academic work habits and accommodation usage directly connected to their performance accomplishments related to acquiring good or bad grades.

Negative Work Habits. Many participants discussed negative academic work habits, which they perceived placed them in positions of not feeling as capable as they could have in learning academic skills. Apart from Participant 9, each participant admitted that before the given math course this semester, they did not regularly complete their classwork and homework in one or more classes. As evidence of this circumstance,

which adversely impacted his capability to learn, Participant 3 stated “that I don’t do my work or homework... and I know that I should.” Another negative work habit included the admissions from Participant 1, Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 7, and Participant 10 that they in many instances made it a priority to rush through their assignments to claim that they completed them but did not put emphasis into accuracy of their responses which also impacted their capabilities to display proficiency with the content. As an example of this negative work habit, Participant 5 admitted “I just do the work in class fast, so I can have free time, and I do ... when I do, I watch Netflix.” Except for Participant 3 and Participant 9, again, prior to the final grades of the last math course, the other participants engaged in the negative work habit of making but rarely successfully followed through with informal academic plans as deal options to make-up plus strengthen their skills to improve their grades. For instance, Participant 6 confirmed “I promise a lot to do my work. I do what I can ... when I can do it. I mess up a lot cause... I don’t do it most of the time... but I do try... I try real hard to not let them [teachers] down.” Additionally, Participant 7 explained,

“they let me.. they they they let me turn my stuff late um yeah and they let me um sometimes they they they do it where they a they don’t give me as much work like they all give me a little less like it’s not as much as I could get cause they just wanna see that I know how to do it. I don’t have to do everything because they know like I told them I’m gonna work... I feel bad like when I don’t even do that stuff.”

Another adverse work habit mentioned by most participants involved their lack

of decision-making and neglect to follow up with teachers to gather information related to missing instruction and classwork, even if the assignment list received modifications after short or long-term absenteeism. A detailed rendition of this statement came from Participant 7 when he stated:

My case carrier tracks me down when I been out for a few days. She tries to get me to call her when I'm out. Sometimes I do. Sometimes I don't. They make me sit in meetings that I don't want to to talk about my bad grades... and missing work. When I don't come for a while ... and don't turn in the work they they come up with another meeting... up with another plan... that they make me go to to try to get some work in. Most times, I don't do it, not on purpose. I just... I don't know... I just don't do it."

In these instances, the participants discussed detrimental decisions or actions that impeded their learning capacities and contributed to negative self-efficacy perceptions.

Positive Work Habits. Most participants indicated several work habits they integrated into their academic activities, most notably in their latest classes, that they perceived supported them to feel they could learn academic skills at different instructional intervals despite their learning challenges. One positive work habit that five of the participants discussed was the learning strategy of reviewing their notes to complete assignments or tests. For example, Participant 4 stated "I would just shut down my phone and try to use my notes." To increase her chances of skill retention Participant 1 stated "or look at my notes to see if there is a similar problem and I follow the steps in that problem." Participant 9 declared her intentional action to learn by saying "I also take

notes during class. They help me keep on track.” Participant 8 stipulated “I use notes in math if we have notes” to help him recall math concepts and their respective problems. These adult students correlated how their use of the class notes supported their beliefs in their abilities to learn math concepts.

Several participants also acknowledged using recommended educational resources to provide themselves with academic support to enhance their capabilities to feel successful in their quests to learn, especially in math courses, regardless of their learning challenges. Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 8, Participant 9, and Participant 10 mentioned their selected choice to use the educational math calculator resource of Desmos. Participant 9 described her comfort with using the math calculator resource when she said “I like using Desmos... I like to and I understand Desmos.” Desmos was significant because these students transitioned from regularly using a physical calculator to routinely using an electronic calculator for classwork and tests. Their renditions about the electronic calculator, Desmos, clarified that they felt this use made them capable of achieving higher accuracy rates with math equations than without it.

Selected participants also discussed their preferences to use YouTube, Google, or Delta Math as alternative or additional instructional technological tools for supplemental learning and practice support with algebraic equations. The participants received advisement from the school district math teachers to use Delta Math for either alternative initial instruction or additional remedial assistance. Participant 10 stated how he used Delta Math when he said “I look for an example in Delta Math... look for examples

from... from our homework, other work.... I take a look at my laptop, The-en, I would Google... or Delta Math.” Participant 4 discussed her admitted usage of the support by saying “and try to use Google... Google things... I would always use Google if I was too embarrassed to first ask for any help... I’d use Google and try to learn from there... watch YouTube videos.” Participant 7 also talked about his decisive use of at least two of these resources when he said “after I come back from been gone I use YouTube and Delta Math to help me learn the new math stuff that I missed while I was out cause I don’t wanna waste the teacher’s time asking her to teach me teach when I been out a long time and she already showed it to everybody else.” Participant 1 recalled her use of YouTube and Delta Math when she recalled “my teacher showed me to use Delta Math in class... sometimes she shows us YouTube videos with movies of the problems. I look at these at home, especially when I ... I’m out... cause of work.” These participants explained how they used the above-mentioned instructional resources to improve their capabilities to learn math skills.

Most participants mentioned how they executed changes in their behaviors because of intentional decision-making to simultaneously reduce instances of learning loss plus feel present and receptive to learning. Except for Participant 2, all the other participants made the choice to change their work schedules to attend school to improve their potential to learn. For instance, Participant 10 confirmed this situation with the statement “I didn’t want to be behind, I tried to change my [work] schedule twice... so I can have some time... more time.” Participant 3 shared his newer academic behaviors when he described “like checking my work. I take my time and think about things before

beginning solving the problem.” Although accepting of his learning challenges, Participant 5 stated his changed academic mindset to support potential growth through the statement “I still feel that they’re the same, but I learned how to deal with it... to deal with it... and to you know... get help when I need to and do what I need to do.”

The intentional behavior of Participant 8 included his admission “I noticed I get distracted... sometimes I don’t even notice it, but when I do I can get back on task.”

Participant 9 decided to make the conscientious decision to improve her academic skills through the reiteration “I just don’t waste time when I’m in school. I come to the class and do all the work, so I’m not behind.” Upon reflection of his past negative academic behaviors, Participant 10 said “I don’t get my phone to be distracted. I used to do that. I don’t get distracted watching other videos or doing other things. Now I try to work so I don’t fail ... and can hopefully graduate.” The cumulative statements from these participants indicated that each of these people figured out that they needed to make conscientious decisions to improve their potential to obtain or retain academic skills.

Accommodation Usage. Many participants disclosed their decisions to use select accommodations. Although not always identified specifically as an English learner accommodation, Participant 1, Participant 2, Participant 6, Participant 8, and Participant 10 acknowledged in their individual interviews that they elected to use the English dictionary in more recent than previous years to strengthen their deficiencies related to the use of American academic language. For instance, Participant 6 admitted “sometimes I try to read and it’s hard to understand the things... so I sometimes use the English dictionary, sometimes.” Additionally, Participant 8 shared that he used English learner

accommodations to help with academic language understanding with the statement “I missed a lot of school cause I was working...if I don’t [understand] I use Google translate or the dictionary. I use Google translate if the teacher lets me because sometimes, she doesn’t because she wants us to use the dictionary.” Furthermore, Participant 10 said “it doesn’t [the dictionary] help you when you don’t understand a word... if you don’t understand a word, then I use Google translate.” These participants acknowledged that their implementation of academic accommodations supported their learning capabilities amidst their learning challenges.

Participant 1, Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 6, Participant 8, Participant 9, and Participant 10 recalled that they unsuccessfully tried to use their native language dictionaries to facilitate academic language proficiency. For instance, Participant 3 has the native language of Tigrinya. Yet he disclosed “it never made sense to use any dictionary... because... I never got how to use either one.” As an example, Participant 6 shared “I used to try using the school’s Arabic dictionary cause my teacher told me to. But it didn’t help me cause I couldn’t find the words.” Bengali is the original language, English is the secondary language, and Spanish is the tertiary language learned during her elementary years for Participant 9. She discussed how, in the past, she attempted to use the Spanish dictionary to aid her with American academic language transitions but found it difficult to shift between the two languages in US schools. She admitted so with the statement “I tried using the Spanish dictionary and English dictionary when I first moved here [meaning the U.S] but it kept me confused ... jumpin between them... tryin to find the words... it just got too hard... I gave up a long time ago.”

Participant 10 recalled how he unsuccessfully tried to use the Spanish dictionary in his American school but realized it was not helpful because, in his words, “sometimes they [the teachers] tell me in Spanish but I didn’t know still what it meant because I never learned that in my country.” This statement clarified how the participant concluded that although he seemed receptive to the Spanish dictionary to bolster his use of the American academic language, with some usage, he understood that it did not support his capabilities to strengthen his academic language skills. Unfortunately, most of these students admitted that their respective native language dictionaries did not bolster their capabilities to learn American academic language across any subject area.

Perceptions of Ways Absenteeism Affected Self-Efficacy Relational to Performance Accomplishments

Many students negatively impacted their capabilities to learn because of high truancy rates. Several participants acknowledged that frequent absenteeism contributed to missed learning opportunities and poor performance in school. Participant 1 admitted with the statement, “last year was bad cause I missed school a lot” to the bad behavior of incurring a high truancy rate during her previous school year. Participant 2 verbalized how his poor attendance affected his learning capacity when he shared, “I know that when I don’t go to school, I will miss a lot of math class and will have problems.” “I lose skills when I am absent” and “I have missed so much” implicitly reflect the ramifications of her absenteeism negating her capabilities to learn shared by Participant 6. One student, Participant 7, affirmed that truancy was a long-term issue with the declaration, “where I stop working... don’t come to school. I’ve been doing this for most of my high school

career, not coming to school regularly”. The participants’ statements made known that over time, the participants concluded that absenteeism, especially long-term or frequent occurrences, usually negatively impacted their capabilities to attain and retain academic skills.

Many of the participants offered select reasons for their flagrant absenteeism. Most of the participants, with the exclusion of Participant 3 and Participant 9, confirmed that they elected not to attend school daily because regular attendance conflicted with their perceived necessity to work. For example, Participant 1 firmly declared, “Some of us don’t come to school because we can’t... because we gotta work”. Participant 4 stated it wasn’t a frivolous decision to miss school, but for an important reason when she said, “I’m barely going to school because of the job.” Interestingly, Participant 4 discussed how although she participated in inconsistent attendance, she also tried to remain productive with her comment of “coming in, picking up work then letting me leave back out so I could go to work when I needed to.” As for Participant 5, the student felt like he had no other choice for his absence when he said, “I am having problems coming to school because I have to work with my dad in construction and when there is work, I just don’t go to school”. The statement “couldn’t go to school...I had to work fulltime” highlighted the urgency of needing to work as expressed by Participant 6, who additionally felt compelled to skip school for work.

Work was a priority for Participant 7, who stated “I haven’t been around because I been working two jobs – Domino’s and Giant (a grocery store).” “I missed a lot of school cause I was working. I had to work two jobs... to take care of me ... no one takes

care of me”, represented the beliefs of urgency from Participant 8 that he needed, versus wanted, to be employed. Late night work hours obstructed Participant 10 from feeling capable of attending school regularly. He expressed his difficulties to attend with the statement, “I was absent because I would leave work at 1am or later in the morning... I didn’t want to come because I was too tired.” Their statements indicate they did not avoid school for pleasure but for serious reasons. Each of these students’ statements inferred that they felt mandated to work.

Conversely, participants confirmed their beliefs that regular attendance supports their capabilities to learn and preserve academic skills. Furthermore, the students conveyed that attending classes made them feel capable of obtaining some level of success. For instance, Participant 1 stated, “sometimes I go to the classes that... I feel like I can do good”. Participant 5 finally understood the association with poor attendance and missed learning opportunities when she proclaimed, “When I miss school, I miss class and miss the opportunity to learn and do the work in class”. Another captured understanding of this negative linkage showed when Participant 6 said “because I don’t go to school it is hard for me.”

Like the previous statement, Participant 7 rendered how he knew his poor attendance affected his gaps of knowledge by sharing “sometimes I don’t get it cause I haven’t been in school.” Comparable to his adult peers, Participant 8 felt that truancy impaired his capabilities to learn “because I ... I was gone from school for a while twice, I lost a lot of learning.” When he thought about his extended periods of absenteeism, Participant 10 disclosed that it negatively impacted his learning opportunities “because I

have to juggle work and school... and I... I miss a lot of it ... and sometimes I thin think that school is what suffers.” As adults who have spent more than four years attempting to meet diploma requirements, these students realized later in their high school experiences that attendance matters in learning and retaining academic skills.

Perceptions of Ways Self-Advocacy Affected Self-Efficacy Relational to Performance Accomplishments

Each student recalled how their self-advocacy activity, or lack thereof, affected their perceptions of self-efficacy concerning perceived learning capabilities. Many students referenced how they recognized that they did not self-advocate for themselves in the educational settings. While many students recalled that there were instances where they advocated for themselves, it was strictly for the specific purpose of securing minimal academic assistance. Most students admitted that they did not engage in positive self-advocacy behavior until their later high school versus former high school experiences.

The participants stated that some decisions to self-advocate or not to self-advocate depended on their comfort level with the teachers or students in the class. For instance, Participant 1 stressed how she wanted support when dealing with learning difficulties but only when not pressured to accept it. Participant 1 expressed her sentiments when she declared “I ask for help when I ready. They can’t tell me when I do need help. I tell myself when I need help.” Participant 4 discussed her preferences with self-advocacy activities when she stated, “I try to ask somebody that I’m more comfortable with talking.” Participant 5 rendered his sentiments about self-advocacy actions and comfort

levels when he shared “No I never did it before [ask questions]. I do it now because I feel more comfortable at this school... asking for help and knowing that they believe in me.”

“If the teacher is one that I am comfortable with, I ask questions and that helps” exemplified the preferential mindset of Participant 8 about his elective parameter for soliciting assistance from a teacher in school. Participant 9 stated her decision to self-advocate at Rebecca AHSP because of her beliefs that the teachers assure her that she is capable of learning. She highlighted this mindset by sharing “I ask a lot of questions... because when I ask questions, the teachers will help me.” Participant 2 shared that he felt inclined to self-advocate for help, especially in his respective math class, only with teachers and sometimes peers he felt relaxed and protected with. These students know when they do or do not want assistance as adults. Furthermore, they have a sense of when they are receptive to the receipt of aid from a given party. The participants’ responses indicated that their self-advocacy actions of asking for help inclined them to feel positive about their learning capabilities.

Another reason that participants stated they made decisions to self-advocate included the determination to ask short, specific content-related questions to secure academic remediation assistance. Participant 1 discussed her reasons for seeking self-advocacy help when she shared “I tell people ... like my friends and teachers when I do and don’t understand things.” In the statement, “I ask for help when I don’t understand something or to clear up what I’m supposed to do” Participant 5 exclaimed how he used self-advocacy assistance for explanatory or remediation purposes. Participant 8 discussed his rationale to self-advocate is only in the context of seeking learning support through

the statement “I only speak about school things like how to help each other in a class... we do talk about that class a lot because we try to do the work.” Participant 9 shared her understanding of her reasons why she thought it was beneficial to ask questions as part of her math class behaviors through the assertion “If I don’t ask questions, then the teachers will not know that I’m struggling... especially in math.” These participants’ statements exhibited how they realized that posing questions enabled them to receive needed help to strengthen their capabilities to learn or retain academic content.

The participants explained that situations or mindsets impeded them from implementing self-advocacy skills in school to remediate personal learning barriers. Participant 1 explained how she did not ask questions as a manner to self-advocate when she needed explanation or clarification. She shared “I didn’t ask before I didn’t ask before because in the other school like there are many other students and they like did good so I was afraid to ask questions.” Interestingly, Participant 2 stated how formerly he did not self-advocate for help when interviewed by saying “No, I never did it before. I do it now because I feel more comfortable at this school [meaning Rebecca AHSP].” While at the comprehensive high school, Participant 4 admitted he did not self-advocate at that setting because “I’ve never uncomfortable there it is big... it would be like a like almost like a burden to them because they just had so many kids they lie wanted to attend to.” An example of admitted inconsistency in decision-making and use of self-advocacy for learning came from Participant 5 in the statement “I ask for help when I need help and it’s not all the time, but I do.”

Additionally, in his statement “If I feel like I can’t do something it affect me... and not asking for help sometimes when I really need it hurts me.” Participant 5 acknowledged he didn’t ask for help to support the acquisition of learning concepts even though he knew precisely when he needed assistance. An admittance of choice not to self-advocate effectively for support earlier in her high school years came from Participant 6 upon declaring that “I don’t ask in front of people... I don’t ask questions when it’s a lot of people, them looking at me.” A segment of interview data captured inconsistency and refrainment to make decisions to self-advocate from Participant 7 in his statement “usually I don’t seek help because... I don’t know, I just don’t feel like seeking for help, ahm, maybe I feel like asking for help is weak.” Participant 9 admitted that she did not self-advocate but instead tried to get her assigned teachers for classification support to speak regarding needs or complaints on her behalf. She provided a statement to confirm her position of avoidance to self-advocate when she said, “I will ask other teachers to tell those other teachers about my situation, so they advocate, advocate on my behalf.” The data results highlighted that even as adult students, the participants still displayed inconsistent behaviors related to self-advocacy. These behaviors indicated that the participants did not consistently feel confident in using self-advocacy skills to support their learning.

Some students displayed self-advocacy by utilizing educational resources for personal instructional purposes. Participant 2 discussed his use of content resources when he said “I might look it up in some apps... I can and use all the things I learn like the graphic organizers...like using colors and that helps me a lot.” Another student,

Participant 4 shared how he self-advocated for additional educational instruction “in communicating with my teachers ... and then letting them know in advance.... Or to for them to help me hmmm... get on Canvas or via zoom call.” Participant 6 admittedly shared she used math instructional resources for help as an alternative to the teacher through the reference of suggested instructional technology for supplemental math instruction when she stated, “I go to Delta Math to watch the videos”. Additionally, Participant 9 declared how she used formal and informal resources to help bolster her capabilities to perform the math skills though her “use of YouTube, Desmos, teacher stuff on Canvas, and Delta Math.” Participant 5, Participant 7, and Participant 8 also shared in their interviews that they self-advocated for assistance in math classes to use YouTube, Canvas, Delta Math, Desmos, or Google with and without teacher support to feel capable of learning and performing math tasks. Participant 9 recounted that “there are times that I would use YouTube, Desmos to find out how to do certain equations” to self-advocate as an attempt to informally learn content that she did not retain during the class instruction. Interestingly, although in different math classes and not necessarily those that talk amongst each other in their respective math classes, these participants relayed that they used almost all the same instructional technology for supplemental, individualized instruction.

Influences of Vicarious Experiences on Self-Efficacy Perceptions

This last section presented evidence regarding how the participants’ responses highlighted how vicarious experiences influenced their positive or negative self-efficacy perceptions. Traditionally, vicarious experiences can influence people’s beliefs and their

self-efficacy perceptions from their perceived observations and interpretation of other people's plights, aftereffects, expressed words, or behaviors during cycles of academic struggle. The analysis revealed reflective observations from the participants where they expressed instances of reflective observations analytically grouped as vicarious experiences where they acknowledged seeing their peers either fail or succeed after struggling to learn a concept.

These vicarious experiences provided the participants with information that they used to influence their capability perceptions of thinking they were similar or different from the observed student(s) and, therefore, might or might not perceive themselves as capable of learning or meeting their graduation requirements. The data also evidenced that vicarious experiences stemmed from how the person perceived their capability to succeed amidst being in the throes of struggling in one of their positions or placements compared to how they perceived they could handle a similar challenge or struggle in another position or placement. The participants based their vicarious experiences on observations, interpretations, recollections, or reactions of one of their perceived statuses relating to the positioning or placements between their personal, educational, or employment positions. They comparatively generalized it to another of their positions relational to the given settings and situations. For example, the students discussed how they remembered that they needed to ask questions at their jobs while in their training to learn the job. Alternatively, they remembered that they needed to pose questions to their managers to consider reasonable or regulatory options to resolve the problems. When the participants offered responses to specific prompts, they discussed how they realized the

need to ask questions positionally as students, just as they did positionally as employees, to resolve the learning barriers that could negatively impact their ability to score well on their math assessments. The participants concluded from their interpretation of these vicarious experiences that they had either positive or negative capabilities to learn or meet the standard high school requirements.

Younger Placements vs. Older Placements Which Informed Self-Efficacy Perceptions

Several participants relayed vicarious experiences of themselves as younger students who engaged in negative or reactive thinking compared to their current placements as adult students who now elect to make more mature, proactive decisions that support learning. The participants also discussed their vicarious perceptions of viewing younger peers engage in immature or irresponsible behavior, which they perceived deterred from their own or others' capabilities to learn. In most of these instances, the participants offered statements that inferred that as adults, they primarily elected to place themselves in positions to increase learning opportunities and, therefore, felt positively self-efficacious about their potential to succeed at Rebecca AHSP because they now engaged in decision-making that leaned towards feeling capable of learning.

Seven participants provided statements that reflected how they perceived the vicarious experiences of themselves, or others influenced their self-efficacy perceptions. Through the lens of vicariously seeing other adult students at Rebecca AHSP, Participant 2 shared, "The other kids, they like play a lot. They don't take school like seriously. It's a lot of students, older students like me, who work hard in school and want to learn. We want to do well and graduate." In this instance, he informally relayed his perceptions that

the other students, particularly younger ones, can be playful and choose to let their actions detract from their capabilities to learn. Additionally, he stated his perceptions that his other older peers not only worked like him but also perceived that he held aspirations to learn and complete high school like him.

Participant 3 gave similar perceptions when he stated, “The friends I have are all serious, work, and want to graduate. They don’t have time to play around.” Stating similar sentiments of distractibility of learning by her younger peers, Participant 4 declared, “A lot of people there would play in class, not take the teacher seriously, try to get me to make jokes and talk. They would try to get me to go to different lunch periods and skip school.” Participant 5 noted instances where he observed adult students displaying accountable, proactive, self-advocacy behaviors, which he perceived contributed to increased learning opportunities. He remarked that many adult students engaged in “just coming into class every day, turning in their work on time, asking for recourses, notes, anything, and just trying to get it [meaning their work] out the way.”

Participant 6 shared, “I respect my teacher while others are distracted and are not listening to the teacher and are doing something else and don’t get anything done.” With her statement, Participant 6 recognized student differences relative to how some of her younger peers’ behaviors thwarted their learning opportunities. She knew those were not behaviors she wanted to participate in.

Participant 7 discussed a student’s difference of actions with the observation of a peer, which exemplified a vicarious experience that motivated him to believe that he could try to excel in learning like his peer. He proclaimed,

“I saw that one of my friends, he knew a lot of vocabulary early on. And I remember, like my teacher would know words that none of us knew. So, I was like you, I should be able to use big words like this man cause man, I wanna be smart. I wanna be like this guy! That made me want to get good with my vocabulary.”

Participant 9 compared a vicarious experience in which she viewed a friend pass a test whom she said self-advocated in her math class by asking many questions before taking the assessment. She said:

“I was happy for them when they got it [meaning passed the math test]. I also think that I could go [meaning ask for help] when they preserved and keep going. I wanna go and ask them if I didn’t understand something. I want to ask them if they can explain it to me cause I think they can help me too.”

In this statement, Participant 9 discussed how the vicarious experiences made her receptive to self-advocate for assistance. It made her believe this self-advocacy activity could strengthen her ability to refine and perform the new math skills on future assessments. These vicarious experiences of younger students influenced the participants to perceive that in their current, mature state they felt positively self-efficacious about their capabilities to succeed in their classes this year.

Vicarious Experiences of Apprehensiveness to Self-Advocacy Relative to Asking Questions

Each student recalled how their self-advocacy activities, or lack thereof, affected their perceptions of self-efficacy concerning perceived capabilities to learn. As examples

of vicarious experiences, many students referenced how they recognized that they did not self-advocate for themselves prior to working in the educational settings. The participants did, however, recognize that they needed to ask for assistance at different times at their places of employment to learn job-related skills because they did not know how to perform some the necessary duties that their positions required of them. They explained that their rationale for asking questions, as one self-advocacy strategy, served the specific purpose of receiving initial or remedial instruction for the specific purpose of professional development/training assistance necessary to meet employment evaluation standards. These episodes formulated into vicarious experiences for the participants because they now had the experience of adding to their status the role of employee.

Some participants disclosed that due to their experiences and positions as employees, they now had more intuitive understanding and decision-making rationale as working adults to institute self-advocacy strategies related to asking for help in school. The participants with jobs discussed how they recognized that when they did not ask questions at work, the participants either did not learn how to do their job effectively or made many critical mistakes that they did not know how to remediate that jeopardized their placements and wages at work. These participants provided statements which further explained how they made connections from their work experiences to their school experiences. The participants explained how they surmised that their past behaviors of not asking questions in previous classes at school placed them in the position of not learning content, making mistakes that could have been avoided, and therefore, not scoring to the potential that they could have on previous assessments and assignments.

Their statements indicated that the consequences of not asking questions led to increased academic failure, which deflated the participants' grades and impaired their potential to earn a high school diploma. The participants further explained that their placements as employees aided them now to understand the importance of asking questions in their placements of students. Their statements reflected the understanding that this self-advocacy strategy placed them at less risk of garnering more academic failure plus increased their potential to improve their skills and satisfactorily achieve academic goals. Most students admitted that prior to their experiences as employees they engaged in poor decision-making to not ask questions that triggered negative self-efficacy perceptions because they did not perceive they had the potential to succeed. They acknowledged that once they gained the work experiences, they realized they could apply this self-advocacy technique in their later high school, which supported them to cultivate positive self-efficacy perceptions because they could see their learning and grades improve. The participants acknowledged how their vicarious experiences as employee highlighted a difference in their later high school experiences versus former high school experiences.

The following examples highlighted how the participants discussed Vicarious Experiences regarding how they realized they needed to ask questions to self-advocate as employees to maintain their jobs. Although at first reluctant, Participant 2 later understood the value of self-advocacy for learning when he remembered "I didn't want to ask for help, but I did tell my boss that I didn't know how to use the work computer after

they trained there...I asked him to show me ... I needed to learn it to keep my job.”

Participant 4 conveyed this by saying:

I have like experiencing it and I feel like I could overcome it definitely. I’m learning now like at my job. I get my job... its like ... so everything is a learning process... like I’m learning everything for the first time and I have to memorize everything... so I feel like my job is also helping me to overcome things... ask for help when I need it.

“For me to learn at my job I had to ask questions... I asked my manager questions when he trained me... I figured out I have to do the same thing here, at school for me to get help... to graduate” conveyed the awareness of Participant 2 to explain his change in perspective of willingness to self-advocate for academic assistance.

Maturity as a factor to use self-advocacy skills came from Participant 8 as he divulged “Since I’ve gotten older, especially after I started working both jobs...yeah...I don’t have a problem with asking for help like I did when I was younger, like in elementary.”

Participant 9 discussed how she believed that adult students have a different perspective from younger students with “being a adult student I’m better explaining how I feel and what I need.” Participant 10 disclosed his hesitancy to discuss learning challenges in previous years because in his words “I am a private person, so I don’t tell people things.”

Yet Participant 10 also revealed “I used to say very little at work but then... during training at my second job I had to get help... so I had to ask questions to know what to do. Later during the interview, he shared “I needed help in math cause I failed it last year... I realized I needed talk... to somebody even though I didn’t want to... but I

needed to... to get help cause ... I didn't wanna fail another time." These statements indicated that Participant 10 learned to ask questions to self-advocate for assistance over time. The data revealed that the participants did not experience the benefit and relevance of self-advocacy until after they became adults engaged in employment experiences. Their shared statements explained how through their own vicarious experiences, they recognized the need to use the self-advocacy skill of asking questions to improve performances to retain their placements in work and progress in school.

Five participants shared responses that indicated they held self-efficacy perceptions derived from vicarious experiences associated with self-advocacy. Some of the participants expressed apprehension about self-advocating by asking questions. The participants shared vicarious experiences that the analysis showcased how they perceived their peers who did not have dual classifications were more intelligent. Subsequently, they felt apprehensive about posing questions because they usually felt that action made them appear less intelligent compared to their non-dually classified peers.

The perceived sense of intellectual inferiority compelled the participants to feel intimidated, and therefore, they refrained from posing remedial or clarifying questions that could strengthen their learning of concepts. Participant 1 conveyed her reluctance to request assistance despite knowing she needed it by saying, "I didn't ask before because in the other school, there are many other students, and they did well, so I was afraid to ask questions." Participant 4 said, "I was always, I'm a hard learner. For a long time, I didn't ask teachers questions in school cause I didn't want to look dumb in front of the

whole class.” Participant 5 discussed the rationale behind his long-held hesitation to ask questions during class. He said:

“I saw them [meaning his classmates] end that dude when he asked his questions. I wasn’t gonna give em a chance to go in on me like that. I kept my mouth closed a long time when I saw them do that to him.”

The example by Participant 5 highlighted his deterrence to self-advocate by asking questions because he perceived the mocking and understated judgment from his peers towards a classmate who asked questions as an undesirable side effect of seemingly proactive academic behavior. Participant 7 discussed his refrainment to self-advocate with the words:

“Sometimes, I like wait for a while to see if I can figure it out, like when I see the teacher helping someone else, I’ll stop and listen, and see if I was doing it the way the teacher said or another way instead of bugging them.”

Participant 10 disclosed his perception of a segment of vicarious experiences. He explained how he sometimes felt bad for some students but not for others because he observed that they did not conduct themselves in ways that might garner positive learning outcomes. He shared, “Oh yeah, it makes you feel bad that some students are not doing well, but at times they are not being responsible and not enough effort to do something.” The participants shared information in the examples mentioned above that indicated that these vicarious experiences associated with self-advocacy. These examples inclined them to recognize that their lack of self-advocacy via not posing questions or adverse academic engagement made them feel negatively self-efficacious.

Vicarious Experiences about Similarities that Informed Student Capability Perceptions

The analysis revealed reflective observations from the participants. They expressed instances of reflective observations analytically grouped as vicarious experiences. They acknowledged seeing their similarly classified peers, with one or both classifications, succeed after struggling to learn a concept. These vicarious experiences provided the participants with information that they used to influence their capability perceptions of thinking they were similar or different from the observed student(s). Therefore, they might or might not perceive themselves as capable of succeeding in their respective math courses.

Participant 1 recalled a similar experience of seeing her similarly situated peer struggle with the math content but pass an assessment. She rendered, "If they can do it, I can also. Because if someone is struggling and was able to later do it, then I can also," to confirm her positive self-efficacy perceptions that she perceived herself as similar to the observed person and also felt capable of passing some of her future tests. Participant 2 gave insight into his positive perceptions stemming from vicarious experiences when he said:

"So, I see them do good, I know that I can also do good. This is more true when they don't know as much English as me like there are some students that don't know English as much like I can speak more. So, when I see students like that who don't speak a lot of English, I know I can also do it."

Participant 3 explained his vicarious experience of feeling positively efficacious when he said:

“When you see someone struggle a lot through something and then you see that they are shining, you say, if they did it, I can also. When I see them succeed after going through a tough time, it lets me know that I can also succeed, so that’s encouraging.”

Participant 5 explained how his vicarious Algebra 1 experiences with similar students struggling with achievement challenges influenced him to perceive that he is capable of learning the content. He stated, “I read slowly like I hear some people read and they are fast, but I’m not. because if they did it, then I can also. When I saw that [the peer passed the Algebra 1 assessment], I said that I can also do it. It’s like an example for me that it can be done.” Through her explanation of vicarious experiences, Participant 6 confirmed her recognition of learning challenges that she perceived were like hers, but also spoke of feeling innately positively efficacious with the recollection:

“some look like they are slow like me, I feel like like I can do it. It it tells me that if they struggle and made it, I can also, so I feel and think that that’s me. I see myself in them.”

When questioned about strategies used to push through challenges, Participant 9 stated that her vicarious observations led her to believe that most students, regardless of classifications, used discussions with their friends like her to sustain positive efficaciousness. She explained, “The other kids have their friends. I don’t know what they say, but I guess they do the same thing because they seem to talk a lot in school, so I guess they talk about that.” The analysis showed that the participants perceived

themselves as similarly situated with their peers and potentially capable of achieving success at Rebecca AHSP.

Vicarious Experiences about Differences that Informed Student Capability Perceptions

The participants expressed instances of reflective observations analyzed as vicarious experiences, where they unconsciously acknowledged their perceptions of capability relational to success. They grounded these perceptions from the vicarious experiences where they compared being different from their peers. These peers were students they perceived without the classifications of English learner or student with disabilities. They based their perceptions on seeing these peers successfully navigate academic challenges or fluency in learning environments. They consciously or unconsciously used this information to inform their capability perceptions of whether they felt they could succeed despite perceiving they had learning challenges associated with their classification statuses.

Participant 1 relayed her negative self-efficacy perceptions when she reflected, “I feel it’s much harder for me to learn things at the same speed as other people, and I can’t learn things immediately at the same time as the rest of my classmates.” In this instance, Participant 1 conveyed that through her observations of some classmates, she felt less intelligent than her peers and that they had greater potential to succeed while she simultaneously had less potential to pass in their respective Algebra 1 classes. Participant 2 vicariously perceived himself as negatively self-efficacious and commented about how his perceptions of non-EL-classified students have an intellectual advantage in learning over students classified with the EL classification. He shared this thought process with

the words, “Kids that already know English don’t have problems knowing what the words mean or how to use them. They don’t make the same mistakes. They don’t have those same problems. We’re different.” Participant 4 showed how her negative self-efficacy perceptions stemmed from vicarious experiences with the statement:

“I know that it takes me longer, ahm, to learn like, ahm, I see other students like finishing fast and then they just play with their phones, ahm, and, and I can’t do that because it takes me longer to finish that. So, there’s something I don’t know what it is, but I know that there is just something not good with my brain. Like there is something that doesn’t allow me to learn fast like other people.”

Here she unconsciously and comparatively perceived that her non-classified peers’ completion speed and other behaviors as indicators of accuracy with learning, that they were smarter than her, and felt that she had intellectual deficiencies that negatively impacted her capabilities to learn at an expected rate. Participant 5 unconsciously discussed his perceptions of learning challenges, felt incapable of learning to the degree he desired in his example of a vicarious experience, and instinctively perceived himself as negatively self-efficacious about his ability to succeed in some classes. He mentioned:

“I felt dumb because I saw other students like read fast and write easy, and I took longer, and sometimes I couldn’t write fast like them. Sometimes, because I saw that there were other students like me like we were different and took longer to learn.”

Participant 8 discussed how, with his recall of some vicarious experiences, he grappled with the idea of perceiving he had a disability. However, he unwillingly acknowledged

for years that he felt negatively efficacious about being able to succeed in high school. He stated, “I mean, you kinda see some kids struggle in school, just failing, but I never thought about myself being like them in that way.” Participant 9 shared how select vicarious experiences of comparatively seeing other students graduate in a timely manner versus herself compelled her to feel negative about her capabilities to graduate from high school. She recounted, “everyone else has graduated, and I’m still in high school, so that kind of sucks when you are kind of comparing like if I compare myself to them.” In these examples, the participants translated their perceived vicarious experiences of others to discern that they had learning challenges that negatively impacted their learning capabilities.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

In this section, I discussed strategies instituted to provide credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability to the study. As I stated before, I used these measures to execute what Ravitch and Carl (2021) referred to as “trustworthiness” (p. 167). I executed several evidence-based activities to show I upheld trustworthiness procedures in my study while I conducted my investigation without interference from unpredicted external or internal issues.

Credibility

I employed the element of credibility, also known as internal validity, as a measure of trustworthiness into my study. Ravitch and Carl (2021) described credibility as the researcher’s acknowledgement of and activities to curtail potential issues that might have affected the study. Throughout sections of the analysis, I noted where the

participants' responses consistently showcased similar results that evidenced either high/positive or low/negative self-efficaciousness foundationally stemmed from Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (Bandura, 1994) of physiological/emotional states, verbal persuasion, performance accomplishments, and vicarious experiences. The analysis of the evidence results supported how I met the marker of theoretical sufficiency (Marshall & Rossman, 2016). Additionally, the analysis supported that neither of the four elements of Bandura's Self-Efficacy framework in isolation solely informed the participants' self-efficacy perceptions.

Transferability

I also instituted transferability, the second element of trustworthiness. Ravitch and Carl (2021) described transferability as a stage where, as the qualitative researcher, I gave focused, descriptive accounts in each section of this chapter analysis to show how I sustained specific, characteristic robustness to the analysis. To show transferability, at the beginning of each a priori code subsection, I listed steps in a specified order to display the specific characteristics of each a priori code with the analytic criteria used to discern when the evidence of the theoretical framework appeared in the data. These descriptors supported the detailed narrative information that highlighted the significance of how English learners with disabilities recounted ways their perceptions aligned with the theoretical framework. I developed a robust analytic compilation of perceived beliefs, recollections, and observations from this exceptional group of dually classified adult students enrolled at Rebecca AHSP. This portrayal of the analysis reinforced the usage of transferability, also called external validity.

Dependability

The study reflected the balance between the parts, as dependability is the third element of trustworthiness. Ravitch and Carl (2021) stated that dependability, also known as reliability, means administering specific formats to achieve alignment with collected data and an evidence-based assertion. I used information from my doctoral courses and suggestions from my dissertation committee to effectively implement the general qualitative methodology. I created and used an original interview protocol developed from facts related to the theoretical framework, basic student information, specific Algebra 1 graduation requirements, and the selected school district setting. When I realized that I did not have sufficient data during the initial data collection session to answer my research questions, I reviewed the information as mentioned earlier, then developed follow-up questions that I posed in the same order to each participant to gather more data that supported the rationale and use of the qualitative design of general qualitative methodology. The original protocol and follow-up questions were pre-approved before the administration sessions and fully supervised by my designated university committee.

Confirmability

Additionally, the study showed objectivity through the fourth element of trustworthiness, confirmability. Ravitch and Carl (2021) denoted confirmability as neutrality, where the researcher explains ways in which biases or preferences could taint interpretations of data but puts reflective, systematic activities in place to guard against misinterpretation of data collection and analysis. I wrote a Researcher Identity Memo to

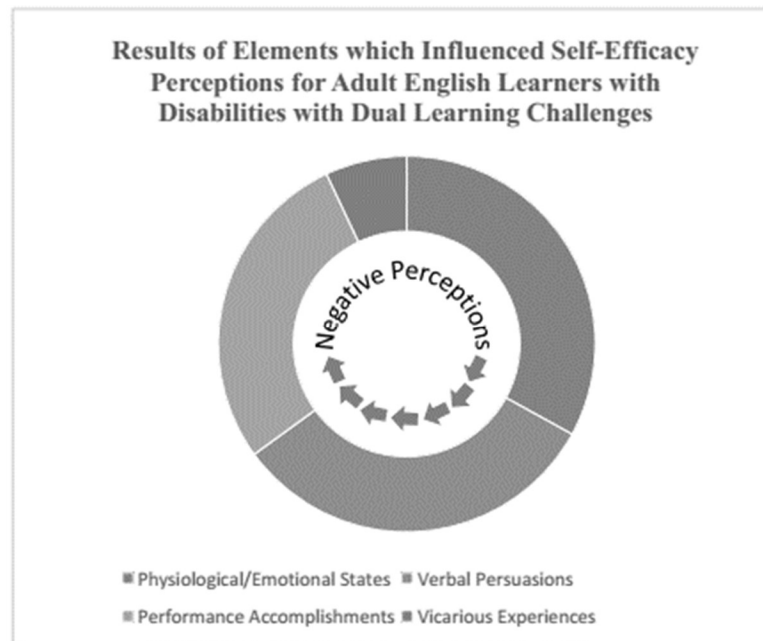
identify my potential biases, personal views, and perceptions from years of professional experience with this population that could affect my dissertation data collection or analysis procedures. Before starting each a priori code data analysis, I reviewed the Researcher Identity Memo to inform me of possible ideas or mindsets that had the potential to skew my data analysis negatively. For instance, in the Researcher Identity Memo, I recognized that as an educator, I held the negative disposition that some adult high school students had high absenteeism rates because they elected to skip school for the fun of it. During the analysis, I had to remind myself to be open-minded about information in the data that potentially aligned with the theoretical framework and related to their perspectives about absenteeism. This activity supported my aims to institute confirmability.

Results

The evidence in the following section addressed how the participants' responses aligned with the research questions. I patterned the results section to reflect the same format as the rest of the analysis. However, this section showcases how the participants' responses indicate that physiological/emotional states, verbal persuasions, performance accomplishments, and vicarious experiences informed their self-efficacy perceptions concerning their abilities to complete Algebra 1 requirements in their respective math courses at Rebecca AHSP. Below is a graphic representation of the results of this study.

Figure 2

Results of Elements that Influenced Self-Efficacy Perceptions for Adult English learners with Disabilities with Dual Learning Challenges



How Physiological and Emotional States Influenced Perceived Math Capabilities and Affected Self-Efficacy Perceptions

Several participants shared negative emotional statements about math, specifically during courses taken toward achieving Algebra 1 proficiency. Participant 1 stated, “math is hard. I do not like math. I wish I didn’t have to do math ever.” Participant 2 recalled in math how he felt “really stressed sometimes, that does make it hard.” Participant 3 shared how his negative emotions about the teacher influenced him to not feel capable in his math course through the statement, “I hated math.” Participant 4 shared her dislike with the statement, “sometimes it’s hard because I don’t like math... because I don’t do well, like, I hate numbers.” When asked about her perceptions of being a math student

Participant 6 exclaimed, “I hate it. I’m not good at it. I’m bad at math.” When asked how he felt about math, mainly related to learning Algebra 1 skills, Participant 7 replied, “I hate it. I’ve always hated it. It’s such a waste.” Participant 8 discussed his negative sentiments about his math capabilities when he said, “I’m not good at it. It’s real hard for me. I try real hard but it’s real hard for me.” Participant 9 stated her loathsome perspective about her capabilities to pass the class when she discussed how her work efforts did not materialize into acceptable grades. She shared, “I hated my grade (referenced her Algebra class) because I go everyday and complete hundreds of worksheets and do all of the work and I still don’t have a B or C.” Participant 10 disclosed apprehensions about his perceived capabilities to succeed in the Algebra course with the words, “I was scared that it was going to be a repeat from my other school. I failed it there. I didn’t know if this was going to help me.” Most participants expressed adverse perceived feelings of hatred about their course to complete Algebra 1 requirements and their capabilities to complete their respective Algebra 1 skills course even after years of being in math classes.

The participants recognized their adverse physical or emotional states during specific activities in courses to improve their Algebra 1 skill proficiency they perceived was challenging to persevere through. Participant 1 recalled “like when they have many steps, I get confused. I realize in the middle of the steps, in between the steps. I don’t know how to get to the last steps” as her Algebra 1 moments that she perceived as difficult to persevere through. Participant 3 explained how he consistently felt frustrated and struggled with specific Algebraic activities because “I don’t know how to use the formula or what to plug in... and it’s just not registering in my head... and I start feeling

uncomfortable.” Participant 4 discussed how she recognized in earlier Algebra 1 courses feeling “if I’m not getting something I get frustrated... and uh just completely shut down” because of her perceptions of not feeling capable of learning the skills. Participant 5 discussed how he felt in classes to learn Algebra 1 skills, “on the tests I don’t do well, I feel discouraged” and upon the receipts of “a whole packet with 10 pages... I get panicked to see all the work.” Participant 7 described his defeatist perspective about learning during Algebra 1 practices by conveying, “when we are working with those letters like x, y, z, and things like that, any time they show me stuff like that I already know I’m finished.” Participant 8 recognized he experienced adverse emotions by saying, “I took Algebra Part 1 and 2. But I don’t get why they gave me those classes at the other school (before having an IEP) if I couldn’t use them for graduation. I don’t get that, that’s so messed up and makes me mad at taking those math classes.” He also expressed negative sentiments when he recalled doing select types of math items, “I also hate word problems.” Although the school district consistently integrated strategies to improve student proficiency using variables, Algebraic formulas, and Algebraic word problems, plus instituted variations of Algebra 1 courses to promote skill acquisition, most participants continued to discuss their strong dislike and perceived incapacities to succeed in their respective classes.

Many participants shared that although they had previous poor or adverse experiences when trying to pass the Algebra 1 benchmark, they felt they had different experiences at Rebecca AHSP. Participant 2 acknowledged how Rebecca AHSP teachers made him feel emotionally comfortable and, therefore, capable of learning with the

words, “my AFDA teachers, they worked with me, and they gained my trust little by little. The small details make all the difference.” Participant 4 shared her emotions by saying, “I’m happy here. I fought to get here cause the other school kept blocking me when I tried. I knew I needed to be here. I finally passed my Algebra 1 SOL here. I’m so happy.” After five attempts in her high school career, Participant 5 received a passing score on the state Algebra 1 assessment on her first attempt at the ahsp. This statement from Participant 5, “And with the teachers here... In math, I do better because I’m in class during the instruction. Now I’m doing good, like my best, and that makes me like happy. I can ask for help” came after he passed the Algebra 1 state assessment.

Participant 6 shared, “they [meaning Rebecca AHSP teachers] had me drop my other class, and just focus on studying for the Algebra 1 test... at first, I was mad about it but then when I passed the test, I was happy. Now I just need one more class to graduate.” Although Participant 6 did not actually pass the Algebra 1 state assessment, she received her first acceptable score on the test to meet the math graduation requirement at the ahsp. Participant 7 stated, “I finally passed the Algebra 1 (state assessment) after the second go round in the class. I kinda... can’t believe it, after all this time.” Despite acknowledging the academic challenge, Participant 8 discussed his feelings about satisfactorily meeting his math graduation requirement, “It was hard, super hard to pass the (referenced the Algebra 1 state assessment). But I did.” He also stated his elation and disbelief in his ability to make a satisfactory test score with the response, “So we celebrated when we passed the (referenced the Algebra 1 state assessment). We didn’t think we would pass.” When asked about his Algebra 1 state assessment performance,

Participant 10 joyously exclaimed, “Ah, yeah, I passed it! I was surprised but real happy I did ‘cause I needed it.” Although the previous paragraph noted the participants’ perceived intense apprehension to successfully meet at least one Algebra 1 requirement, this section highlighted how many participants succeeded while attending Rebecca AHSP.

How Verbal Persuasion Influenced Perceived Math Capabilities and Affected Self-Efficacy Perceptions

The participants shared responses indicating that specific math self-efficacy perceptions stemmed from verbal persuasions they told themselves, which I earlier labeled “Self-Talk.” The participants responded how they felt the self-talk verbal persuasions influenced their perceptions about their math capabilities as high school students classified as adult English learners with disabilities. Relational to how self-talk influenced their perceptions of their ability to learn, several participants discussed necessary considerations or decisions they perceived did not support them to be available to learn math or avoid because they perceived it could detract from improving their math learning capabilities.

The negative self-talk focused on the participants identifying how their words or thoughts resonated that the participants perceived themselves as unintelligent or academically struggled to learn the Algebra 1 coursework and perceived it difficult to avoid the challenges, effects, or consequences of their mathematic failures. Additionally, they usually discussed their perceptions of how their perceived Algebra 1 deficit obstructed their ability to reach their goal of learning the math content in their respective

courses to meet the Algebra 1 requirements and achieve the desired Algebra 1 graduation diploma requirement.

Nine participants offered self-talk examples, which also confirmed connections with their present math capability perceptions and goals for satisfying their Algebra 1 graduation requirements. The evidence confirmed that direct verbal persuasion influenced their self-efficacy perspectives negatively. Participant 6 shared her negative verbalization about her Algebra capabilities when she admitted, “I’m not good at math,” as a sentiment she has told herself about her math abilities for years. With the single statement, Participant 6 indicated that she internalized herself as a continuous math failure, did not perceive that she could improve her Algebra 1 skills in the span to pass this course, and simultaneously believed that she could not complete the math graduation requirements satisfactorily.

Participant 1 described how she held low self-efficacy perceptions about her capabilities to be successful in her Algebra 1 course when she stated, “I just not good at math, never been good with it. I’ve always had bad grades in math.” Participant 7 declared, “I’m not really good at math. I can’t just solve a problem fast like a math whiz, but I guess I can get there someday. I’m full of potential, but I guess I haven’t really tried yet.” Participant 8 declared, “It takes me a long time to understand math,” highlighting his negative self-talk verbal persuasion about his math abilities. Participant 9 stated, “I didn’t know a lot of the math they were teaching” as her negative self-talk declaration about her math capabilities. Participant 3, Participant 4, Participant 5, Participant 8 made similar statements to Participant 10, “I say when I look at the problem (math), and I look

at the sheet twice, three times, and don't understand... That's' when I say you know what, I struggle with this. This is going to be hard," which highlighted how their repetition of reading math problems to figure out how to solve them but not knowing how informed the participants' perceptions of negative self-talk about their capabilities to complete several Algebra 1 assessment objectives successfully. These excerpts met the analytical qualifiers and highlighted how the participants' beliefs of negative direct verbal persuasion from their negative self-talk declarations convinced them to perceive they held adverse math self-efficacy perceptions.

The data showed that 6 participants perceived their variation of self-talk depicted how indirect verbal persuasion negatively influenced their Algebra 1 self-efficacy perspectives about their capabilities to learn the basic math skills used in or achieve the Algebra 1 outcomes. Participant 7 voiced, "I could be doing better now, but because I didn't learn some things earlier in my math classes, it makes things way more difficult now" as his indirect, negative verbal persuasions about his learning abilities and potential capability to succeed in his latest Algebra course. The statement from Participant 7 acknowledged that he believed he never learned basic math skills that could support him to excel in his current course to satisfy the Algebra 1 requirements. He indirectly connected that his past math history affected his current course progression and could jeopardize his potential to meet the math graduation requirement.

Participant 2 provided, "I know that I'm not good at it. I needed help to do better. I want to be better because I know that math is everywhere" as an indirect, negative verbalization about his math capabilities. Participant 4 shared her negative indirect verbal

persuasion about her perceptions of her abilities to learn math when she stated, “I don’t feel, not too good about being myself being a math student, I mean, yeah, it takes me a long time to learn, so it gets in the ways.” Participant 5 relayed, “I just wish I can do everything easily like look at a problem and immediately tell how to do it because I know I’m not very good in math,” which indirectly reflected how he did not believe he could be successful to pass his math class. Participant 8 discussed how, through self-talk, he perceived that he would not achieve the Algebra 1 math requirement with the recollection, “We thought we were gonna fail... because...teachers kept telling us that it was hard...” The reply from Participant 9 about her perceptions about her math capabilities included, “I feel like I’m, I am always like a few steps behind everyone else... because I don’t know the basic stuff, it’s harder for me to understand the harder stuff.” Participant 10 indirectly verbalized his perspective about his math capabilities when he stated, “I didn’t know a lot of the math that they were teaching.” These examples met the analytical qualifiers and highlighted how the participants’ beliefs of negative indirect verbal persuasion from their negative self-talk iterations made them perceive they held adverse math self-efficacy perceptions.

How Performance Accomplishments Influenced Perceived Math Capabilities and Affected Self-Efficacy Perceptions

The analysis evidenced how the participants’ performance accomplishments influenced their perceptions of their math capabilities and self-efficacy. Some of the participants’ responses indicated how their math, particularly Algebra 1 proficiency performances, influenced their perceptions about their ability to complete their Algebra 1

requirements successfully. Additionally, the analysis highlighted how the shift of educational setting from the comprehensive high school to Rebecca AHSP comparatively influenced some levels of change regarding their perceptions of their learning capabilities.

The participants evidenced how their past math failures informed their perceptions of their capabilities to succeed in their courses associated with fulfilling the Algebra 1 requirements. Participant 1 discussed how her past failed experiences tainted her perceptions of her math capabilities when she stated, “I’m not good at math, never been good with it. I’ve always had bad grades in math.” Participant 5 shared how his past failures gave him the perception that he could not learn with the recollection, “I didn’t really want to go to school when I was at my old school. I felt like it was pointless, like I kept failing all the class, and I wasn’t learning nothing.”

Participant 6 also perceived that she was incapable of success in her current Algebra Functions and Data Analysis (AFDA) course due to her perceptions of past mathematic learning struggles and failures with the statements, “I failed last year (referenced previous AFDA course). I don’t know the math. When I see the problem, and I don’t know the steps.” Participant 7 identified, “usually I don’t seek help... because I don’t feel like seeking for help” and “I know I’m not working to the level I should, that I can. I don’t know why I do that, why I feel like this, where I stop working, don’t come to school.” He perceived these two past behaviors lessened his capabilities to successfully pass his math class needed to complete the Algebra 1 requirements. Participant 8

recounted his perceptions of behaviors that compounded his failures and believed affected his abilities to meet Algebra 1 requirements successfully, including:

“I can’t focus in class... I tried my best to do work, but no matter how hard I tried and practiced, for some reason, I still had bad grades. I noticed I get distracted. I don’t ask questions because I don’t feel comfortable.”

Participant 9 remembered, “Until after I was way in school and getting bad grades no matter what I did, for a long time I didn’t know and kept thinking in my head that I was that dumb kid” as failures in her previous Algebra 1 courses. Participant 10 recalled, “I did math, the same class twice” and “I didn’t go to class” as part of his historical, adverse outcomes, which impacted his feelings of feeling incapable of passing Algebra requirements in his latest math course. These instances influenced his perceptions of feeling incapable of passing his AFDA course at the beginning of the semester. The analysis revealed that the participants prominently felt incapable of successfully achieving outcomes associated with the mandatory Algebra 1 courses and state assessment graduation requirements.

I discovered from the analysis that the participants held capability perspectives before and during their attendance at Rebecca AHSP. Participant 1 disclosed her views about her capabilities in the two educational settings. She stated:

“Being at this school makes me... I think I can I think do what I want in my life. I believe in myself now. I’m still struggling with some classes, like math, but I’m doing better in school than before.”

Participant 3 shared how his behaviors changed his math course at Rebecca AHSP by saying, “This is why I’m good at doing math now... because I take my time and think about things before beginning solving the problem. Like checking my work. Also reading word problems.” Participant 4 admitted her changed self-advocacy behaviors at Rebecca AHSP to feel more capable of learning with the declaration, “I need a lot of help in math so I’m always asking a lot of questions.”

Participant 5 recognized at his comprehension high school that he contributed to his inability to learn, “I would go to school, but not enter classes because of lack of motivation.” He, however realized at the ahsp that he can be accountable and positively impact his learning through better attendance with the statement, “when I miss school, I miss class and miss the opportunity to learn and do work in class.” When prompted about any actions or behaviors that influenced his current perceptions about his recent successful semester outcomes as an adult in the AFDA course, Participant 7 admitted, “I was going to school every day. I surprised myself sometimes that I came most days and was passing the classes. It did feel good.”

Participant 8 noted that, since he transferred to Rebecca AHSP, “Standing up and being active helps me focus. I kept coming to school, my grades this time are better than it was before (about his previous high school experience), but I wish I could have done better with this class before. But this last time, I didn’t fail the test! I did pass the (referenced the Algebra 1 state assessment).” Participant 10 discussed, “I tried to change my schedule, I looked for help...I put a lot of effort. It took me a lot of time to practice and finally understand most of the formulas for math, practicing over and over again” and

as changes in his behaviors, to feel capable of garnering desirable outcomes. Some participants' responses indicated they felt more capable of success at Rebecca AHSP than at their respective comprehensive high schools. Other participants admitted that they instituted changes in their behaviors at Rebecca AHSP to support themselves to feel more capable of meeting their Algebra 1 requirements.

How Vicarious Experiences Influenced Perceived Math Capabilities and Affected Self-Efficacy Perceptions

Many participants shared recollections of vicarious experiences from their Rebecca AHSP math class to meet the Algebra 1 requirements at the time of the study, which informed their perceptions of self-efficacy. The participants shared their feelings and observations of witnessing their peers' math assessment experiences of achieved success or failure despite the participants' perceptions of their peers' struggles to learn. Most participants responded that they felt adverse sentiments about the vicarious experiences of seeing their peers fail math assessments. Accordingly, most of these responses relayed thoughts of empathy about how the participants perceived their peers felt about the adverse assessment outcomes. However, their answers did not detail how their perceptions of these adverse outcomes influenced their self-efficacy perceptions.

The following participant responses captured how their successful vicarious Algebra 1 assessment experiences influenced their self-efficacy perceptions. The data evidenced that the participants' vicarious experiences influenced their self-efficacy perceptions. The following citations proved the participants felt positive sentiments about

their peers' abilities to pass their assessments regardless of the perceived learning challenges.

Participant 1 discussed how the recollected experience impacted her feelings, "if they can do it, I can also because if someone is struggling and was able to later do it, then I can also, cause I see me in that student. I'm in that situation a lot where I fail my tests. I know what it feels like to do bad in school. It feels so bad, I hate it." Participant 2 professed, "So, I see them do good, I know that I can also do good. I know I can also do it." Participant 3 shared, "I see them succeed after going through a tough time, it let's me know that I can also succeed, so that's encouraging." Participant 4 provided her perceptions with the words, "if they could do it, I could do it because they're trying like everyday... and they're still turning in all their work.... just, if they could do it I could do it... I could definitely do it."

Participant 5 said, "because if they did it, then I can also. When I saw that, I said that I can also do it. It's like an example for me that it can be done." Through his and his classmates' previous experiences with failing the Algebra 1 math requirement, Participant 7 discussed how "We all had failed it before (referenced the state Algebra 1 assessment)... because we weren't having good grades... ha, I was surprised to find out we passed. I didn't think it could happen, but glad for me cause I didn't feel as hopeless... and for them too." The participants' responses indicated that these vicarious experiences inclined them to feel positively efficacious about their potential to pass their respective classes taken to fulfill the Algebra 1 requirements.

Summary

This chapter provided a summary of the findings of the qualitative research study conducted at an alternative high school setting at a mid-Atlantic school district.

Participants discussed ways their self-efficacy perceptions developed or adapted to informed feelings of being capable or not capable of graduating successfully from high school. They shared self-efficacy perceptions in a generalized, educational sense and specifically while they attempted to complete their Algebra 1 requirements during the allotted data collection timeframe. The students described their beliefs about perceived capabilities to achieve one component of the high school graduation math requirements, precisely their Algebra 1 requirements, at Rebecca AHSP. They also described beliefs about their former comprehensive high school settings as adults with dual classifications as special education and English learners.

Data analysis revealed how physiological/emotional states, verbal persuasion, and performance accomplishments from Bandura's Self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1994) primarily informed negative perceptions of their perceived capabilities to succeed. Additionally, the analysis showed that vicarious experiences from Bandura's Self-Efficacy theory (Bandura, 1994) also mostly negatively informed their self-efficacy perceptions to succeed but did not have as similar an impact as the other elements.

Concerning the research question, the study revealed that all four areas of Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy comprised their self-efficacy. The study disclosed that the participants sustained mostly negative perceptions about their capabilities to learn in school. The study proved that the participants primarily held negative perceptions about

their capabilities to satisfy the Algebra 1 requirements despite evidence that they did pass the Algebra 1 requirements by the end of the study.

This chapter summarized the results of the study. In chapter five, I discussed ways the findings contributed to confirming and extending literature in the educational topics concerning self-efficacy perceptions, English learners, students with disabilities, English learners with disabilities, high school students in alternative high school settings, adult high school students, and influences to meeting Algebra 1 requirements. Chapter five also discussed recommendations for future research studies and potential practices to improve student outcomes.

Chapter 5: Interpretation of the Findings

Introduction

This study investigated how adult English learners with disabilities at an alternative high school setting perceived their self-efficacy related to their dual classifications, influenced their beliefs as learners, and perceived capabilities to meet the Algebra 1 requirements. I conducted this study to see if there was evidence from the participants' statements that identified if the four foundational components of Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1994) informed their perceptions to learn in this specific high school setting while striving to meet this gatekeeping graduation requirement. The results noted how physiological/emotional states, verbal persuasion, performance accomplishments, and vicarious experiences influenced variations of positive and negative self-efficacy perceptions to learn as they strived to complete Algebra 1 requirements as adult high school students at Rebecca AHSP.

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings confirmed the components of physiological/emotional states, verbal persuasion, performance accomplishments, and vicarious experiences outlined in Bandura's Theory of Self-Efficacy (1994) do influence people's self-efficacy perceptions. The study highlighted that the theoretical framework remained relevant as a measure that informed self-efficacy perceptions of adult English learners with disabilities from Rebecca AHSP. Furthermore, the study showcased that the adult English learners with disabilities from Rebecca AHSP held mostly negative self-efficacy perceptions about their perceived capabilities to learn both generally speaking and regarding meeting

benchmarks associated with the Algebra 1 graduation high school standard diploma requirement.

The Interpretation of Findings in Context of the Theoretical Framework

I used the Self-Efficacy Theory from Bandura (1977) as the theoretical framework to analyze my data. The findings confirmed that each foundational component of the theoretical framework influenced the self-efficacy perceptions of adult English learners with disabilities at Rebecca AHSP in a broad educational sense and specifically related to their perceived capabilities to satisfy the Algebra 1 graduation requirements. The study confirmed physiological/emotional states, verbal persuasion, performance accomplishments, and vicarious experiences influenced the participants to feel some positive but mostly negative self-efficacy perceptions about their capabilities to learn in their respective comprehensive high school settings, Rebecca AHSP, and their select course.

Physiological/Emotional States

Bandura (1994) explained how physiological/emotional states influence people's perceived capabilities to achieve or not achieve success amid adverse conditions can inform their negative or positive self-efficacy perceptions. This study's findings confirmed that perceived negative sentiments, including anger, isolation, frustration, embarrassment, invisibility, stress, perceived lack of family and teacher support, and unworthiness, were physiological/emotional state indicators that informed the participants' negative self-efficacy perceptions. The participants affirmed that anger, embarrassment, and unworthiness about being adult high school students, dual

classification of English learner with disabilities, past poor performances, performance underachievement, inability to ask for help in classes, and undeserving perceptions to receive support due to absenteeism influenced them to feel negative perceptions of self-efficacy to succeed in their high school settings.

The results demonstrated perceived negative sentiments of isolation, feeling uncared for and invisible, negatively pressured, negative interactions, and lack of familial support about comprehensive high school experiences, initial Rebecca AHSP experiences, high school absenteeism, high school dropout experiences, adverse high school teacher interactions, and lack of family support with academics. These sentiments prompted the participants to hold negative perceptions about their perceived capabilities to achieve success in high school and their respective classes to satisfy the Algebra 1 requirements. These findings confirmed that the physiological/emotional states of the adult English learners with disabilities at Rebecca AHSP aligned with those mentioned in Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) to inform their negative self-efficacy perceptions.

Verbal Persuasion

Bandura (1977) described how verbal persuasion influences negative and positive perceptions formed from beliefs that if other people coax them, they can achieve or not achieve goals despite disadvantageous circumstances. The findings confirmed how people's actions or words directly coaxed the participants to believe they were capable or incapable of meeting their desired outcomes. A current, relevant finding not noted in Bandura (1977) or Bandura (1994) regarding the verbal persuasion component is how people can interpret being indirectly coaxed as a way of being verbally persuaded that

they are or are not capable of meeting their desired outcomes and it informs their self-efficacy perceptions, just as you can discern direct verbal persuasion. The findings sustained confirmation that Bandura's self-efficacy component of verbal persuasion, directly or indirectly, influenced participants' negative and positive perceptions that they could or could not overcome select barriers to meet academic benchmarks at Rebecca AHSP.

The results corroborated that words and actions from teachers, family members, and friends, whether direct or indirect, influenced the participants to have positive or negative perceptions. The results revealed participants perceived that they could learn or meet graduation requirements at Rebecca AHSP despite perceived academic struggles to learn and pass classes. As Bandura (1994) noted, study findings confirmed how participants interpreted family members, friends, and some teachers' words and actions, both directly and indirectly, seemed encouraging. The participants' responses showed how they positively perceived they had academic capabilities to learn and satisfy performance outcomes in their Rebecca AHSP classes. They held these perceptions despite their perceived school-associated barrier or academic challenges in completing and submitting work.

Conversely, just as Bandura (1994) explained, the findings confirmed that the participants interpreted some teachers' words and actions, both directly and indirectly, as belittling. These instances influenced the participants to negatively believe that they did not have the intellectual capabilities comparable to their non-classified peers. Therefore,

the participants perceived higher probability of failing in classes where they perceived those teachers treated them adversely.

An additional finding was the variation of verbal persuasion with the self-efficacy theory by Bandura (1994). The findings noted how the participants described that they had active, mental conversations with themselves to confirm their beliefs that they could or could not overcome select barriers to succeed in general and at Rebecca AHSP. I labeled the discussions of these personal conversations to himself/herself as “self-talk.” The data revealed direct and indirect forms of self-talk as part of this verbal persuasion variation.

The finding highlighted how self-talk, as a part of Bandura’s self-efficacy component of verbal persuasion, influenced positive and negative self-efficacy perceptions. The participants referenced self-talk episodes that centered around topics such as affirmations about their recent capability perceptions, beliefs about achieving future goals, perceived actions to deter barriers to meeting high school requirements, and discussions about academic perseverance or the lack thereof. Some positive self-talk affirmations directly focused on their beliefs that despite their academic challenges, they had to convince themselves to consistently engage in select behaviors. They realized the need to improve some behaviors to increase their potential to learn and reach desirable postsecondary goals.

Yet other participant descriptions involved negative self-talk negations of an indirect verbal persuasive nature. These episodes showcased how the participants influenced themselves to perceive negative self-efficaciousness as it related to feeling

incapable of learning and their lack of academic perseverance to overcome learning challenges. Additionally, they indirectly persuaded themselves verbally through self-talk to perceive they did not have the academic capabilities to learn like their non-classified peers by convincing themselves that they were intellectually inferior. These findings confirmed that the perceived verbal persuasions, whether direct or indirect, of the adult English learners with disabilities at Rebecca AHSP aligned with those discussed in Bandura's self-efficacy theory (1977) to inform their positive and negative self-efficacy perceptions.

Performance Accomplishments

Bandura (1994) demonstrated how performance accomplishments influence people's perceived capabilities to achieve or not achieve success amid adverse conditions and can inform their negative or positive self-efficacy perceptions. This study's findings confirmed that perceived negative sentiments related to historic failures versus recent successes, ways work habits and accommodation usage, absenteeism, and self-advocacy influenced set the stage to inform the participants' self-efficacy perceptions. The findings confirmed how either their course results resembled past negative performances. The findings also confirmed how recent improved grades related to ways intentional decision-making influenced participants to feel negatively or positively self-efficacious. These two variations of self-efficaciousness influenced ways the participants gauged or informed their learning potential.

The findings highlighted how the participants formed positive self-efficacy based on their perceptions after the successes they mentioned during this select year at Rebecca

AHSP. These reflections of past, poor work habits and adverse grade achievement throughout their math course history inclined them to consider the integration of different work habits. These reflections facilitated mental connections of how these decision-making adaptations resulted in recent achievements. The recent achievements included satisfactory Algebra 1 state test scores and grades in their current math classes that cumulatively resulted in the successes of meeting graduation requirements. The participants explained how the growing accumulation of improved performances cultivated positive self-efficacy perceptions.

Conversely, the findings affirmed how the participants formed negative self-efficacy perceptions based on their perceptions following moments of failure during past high school math courses, and this select year at Rebecca AHSP. Their reflections on their failures influenced them to feel negative perceptions of self-efficacy to succeed in their high school settings or math courses to meet the Algebra 1 requirements. The results demonstrated perceived negative sentiments from past and recent failures related to how their learning challenges inclined them to generate negative self-efficacy perceptions. Some negative self-efficacy perceptions included: inappropriately behaving in classes to deflect perceived inabilities to learn, deliberate choices to not self-advocate by asking questions that they perceived could have aided them to learn, displays of inability to focus and succumb to distractibility, course failures causing them to be in high school over five years, adverse work habits and truancy deflating grades. The participants communicated how these actions influenced them to hold negative perceptions about their perceived capabilities to succeed in high school and their respective classes to

satisfy the Algebra 1 requirements. These findings also confirmed how these activities and perceptions aligned with those highlighted in Bandura's self-efficacy theory under the component of performance accomplishments to inform negative self-efficacy perceptions of the adult English learners with disabilities at Rebecca AHSP.

Vicarious Experiences

Bandura (1994) clarified how vicarious experiences influence people's self-efficacy perception to learn and achieve goals amidst their perceived challenges to inform their positive and negative self-efficacy perceptions. This study's findings confirmed that some participants' self-efficacy perceptions came from specific vicarious experiences. These vicarious experiences arose from experiences where the participants observed their high school peers navigate struggles or lack thereof to complete academic tasks. The perceived interpretations of these episodes influenced the participants to contrive perspectives of how they perceived they might have capabilities to succeed when placed in similar scenarios.

They delineated these vicarious experiences in the context of three scenarios. One set of vicarious experiences involved scenarios where they believed others perceived them as unintelligent before peers without any identified educational classification when they asked questions in class; therefore, these instances made them apprehensive about asking questions, regardless of the consequences. Another set of vicarious experiences included scenarios where the participants observed their peers without prescriptive educational classifications, maneuvered perceivably and quickly through academic challenges, and successfully passed assessments. With these observations, the

participants perceived that they did not have similar learning capabilities as these identified peers and, therefore, did not have the capabilities to learn or succeed in the same courses. The final scenarios encompassed the participants' perceptions that they could succeed at given math tasks despite their challenges after observing their similarly classified peers struggle to learn concepts but succeed in passing the subsequent tests.

The findings indicated that the first two vicarious experience scenarios resulted in the participants having negative self-efficacy perceptions. Findings showed that the last vicarious experience scenario concluded with the participants holding positive self-efficacy perceptions. These findings confirmed that the vicarious experiences results aligned with other studies conducted with Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory.

The findings revealed that the participants discussed how another variation of Vicarious Experiences influenced their self-efficacy perceptions. In one data segment, the results evidenced two scenarios of this vicarious experience variation. The first variation depicted the participants' acknowledgment of how their former immature and irresponsible behavior at younger ages and classes placed them in the detrimental position of not being capable of acquiring perceived foundational academic skills that could support their learning in their recent math courses. They realized that the loss of learning former academic skills impaired their capabilities to perform satisfactorily in more recent high school courses. They realized these academic loss episodes were former academic skills needed to build new knowledge.

Additionally, the study's findings confirmed another variation of vicarious experiences from which some participants' self-efficacy perceptions came. With this

variation of vicarious experiences, the analysis showcased how some participants' self-efficacy perceptions derived from their reflections on their past timeframe(s) or employment role/status. The participants discussed how some employment struggles seemed similarly challenging to those they experienced in school scenarios. Furthermore, the participants discussed their decision-making processes to adapt their job behaviors to the preserve the placements. They also recognized that the integration of those employment decision-making processes provided self-efficacy perspectives about their capabilities to succeed when placed in these similarly difficult scenarios at school.

In this study, the findings showcased the second vicarious experiences variation by the participants' descriptions of their self-efficacy informed by their decision to institute self-advocacy skills as a newly integrated behavior. They reflected on how this self-advocacy skill enabled them to succeed in their work environments and perceived that it could support them in achieving their latest classes associated with meeting the Algebra 1 requirements. In both variations of vicarious experiences, the participants exclaimed to feel positively self-efficacious about their potential to learn and perform in their latest classes. These findings also confirmed that this study's results related to vicarious experiences aligned with other studies conducted using Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory.

Interpretation of Findings in Context with Educational Topics in the Literature Review

The study's results highlighted how many findings confirmed knowledge across several educational topics concerning adult English learners with disabilities. The

findings showcased in this section focused on the following areas: federal laws that mandate demographic equity in schools, self-efficacy as it relates to English learners, Special Education, and math, equity issues with English learners with disabilities, and alternative high school programs. These findings connected relationships between the components listed in the study's purpose, problem statement, and research question.

Federal Laws that Mandate Equity Demographically in Schools

Several findings confirmed knowledge in the discipline I addressed in the literature review. The study participants confirmed previous studies' acknowledgment that this population represents the growing trend of student groups receiving educational services of limited English proficiency and special education services (Kangas, 2018; Lei et al., 2020; Tankard et al., 2019). Secondly, the participants stated that they historically had poor performance outcomes in math populations. This confirmation historically aligned with previous data for those identified with this dual educational designation. This evidence substantiated the need for research to improve this population's self-efficacy perceptions because these perceptions can inform their accessibility to service delivery and influence behaviors to improve performance rates. Thirdly, responses from the participants confirmed that 1) they received instruction in classes with non-disabled peers, and 2) they received some accommodations and educational resources that aligned with their dually classified educational status.

These findings showed that James CPS did comply with federal laws to reduce discriminatory inequity related to racial discrimination in schools based on race, color, nationality, and disability. Proven literature also showcased that many students do not

comprehend how their learning challenges relate to how their disability and English learner classifications affect their abilities to learn and perform across content areas (Knight et al., 2018). The findings evidenced that most participants did not understand the nature of their learning challenges or effectively communicate how they affected their capabilities to learn or perform relational to their dual classifications. The findings also evidenced the participants held a distain for one or both classifications because they stated it made them feel inferior in comparison to their non-disabled peers. Furthermore, the participants rendered responses which highlighted they were in denial about how one or both classifications affect their capabilities to learn (physiological/emotional states connections). The participants' negative self-efficacy perceptions about their dual classification possibly contributed to their denial of the status and their underuse or avoidance of services and resources associated with their dual educational classifications. The findings confirmed that English learners with disabilities held mixed but mostly negative perceptions about their dual classification status, especially the English learner classification.

Furthermore, the literature confirmed that implementing dually classified educational services for English learners with disabilities supported the attainment of desirable student outcomes (Tefera, 2019; Trainor et al., 2019). Math educators, special educators, and English learner educators simultaneously provide dually classified educational services in James County comprehensive high schools in Algebra 1, English 9 and 10, Biology, and World History. The Rebecca AHSP participants evidenced that they receive direct, special education services in their math classes. They did not state

that they received English learner services in their math classes. The Rebecca AHSP administrator shared that the English learner teachers provided consult services to teachers in those math classes because staffing constraints only allowed them to provide services in select content areas. This information could evidence educational inequities and noncompliance to provide free, appropriate educational services. The inequities were relatable to dually classified academic instruction and service implementation provisions for this cohort of students at Rebecca AHSP compared to the county's comprehensive high schools. Additionally, literature on this population affirmed that the tandem implementation of dual classification services improved instruction quality, effectiveness, and rigor and improved student performance outcomes (King-Sears & Strogilos, 2020; Vukman et al., 2018). In this instance, the participants were in the least restrictive environments; however, they may not have received the appropriate levels of support based on their identified classifications and needs. This scenario suggests that there may have been some WIOA (2014), ESSA (2015), and IDEIA (2008) infractions for lack of rigorous, accessible instruction and inequitable allocation of education services.

Numerous findings confirmed issues that I identified in the literature review related to the federal mandates of ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014). Many participants shared that different sociopolitical and economic issues impacted their abilities to attend and learn in school. Studies indicated that the US Department of Education, US Department of Health and Human Services, US Department of Labor, and US Social Security Administration collectively offer high-quality services and resources from their respective agencies to promote academic and employment preparedness for all

students (Cushing et al., 2019; Federal Partners in Transition Workgroup, 2016; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; US Department of Labor, n.d.(b)). The findings confirmed issues previously identified as infractions with this population's remittance of educational services. As a result, the federal mandates of ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014) have undergone several adaptations in attempts to remediate these issues. The US Department of Education, US Department of Health and Human Services, US Department of Labor, and US Social Security Administration (Cushing et al., 2019; Federal Partners in Transition Workgroup, 2016; Tomasello & Brand, 2019; US Department of Labor, n.d.(b)) are social service agencies currently and collectively responsible for providing guidance related to the oversight and implementation of institutional resources and programs through. This study extends ESSA, IDEIA, and WIOA educational research in K -12 settings. The findings confirmed these adult students held self-efficacy perceptions relative to their perceived connections about high school Algebra 1 graduation requirements and career preparedness.

The findings also evidenced that the participants could not articulate most of the modifications or accommodations delineated in their IEPs or English learner documentation. Nor could they effectively state how each set of modifications or accommodations should support them to learn and reduce the impact of their learning challenges in the classroom settings. These findings indicated a lack of informed decision-making, relatable to their self-efficacy perceptions, which affects their perceived capabilities to institute these services in their classes. This circumstance presents another possible infraction of ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014) because these

federal mandates work in tandem to support accessible, prescriptive procedures to remit career preparedness in high school. Their admissions of ineffective usage and omissions of usage related to dually classified resources, instruction, and accommodations suggest the potential ineffective execution of transition planning.

Self-Efficacy: Relational to ELs, Special Education, and Math

Studies by (Bandura, 1997; Bong & Skaalvik, 2003), Lee (2009), Sandilos (2020), Yuen and Datu (2021), and others confirmed that people's perceptions about their abilities to perform activities could influence what they believe they can or cannot do. Perceptions also influenced decisions about those beliefs and how they executed specific activities based on those perceptions of themselves. Several studies referenced how self-efficacy perceptions grounded by components of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1994) catalyzed and adapted from people's thoughts. These thoughts focused on their prior history (performance accomplishments), emotions and behaviors (physiological/emotional states), points of view (verbal persuasion), and autobiographical or biographical experiences (vicarious experiences) while they underwent challenges. Theorists stated how self-efficacy perceptions act as forecasts with combinations of awareness levels about people's beliefs with their perceived proficiencies across educational concentrations (Bai & Wang, 2020; Einav et al., 2018, p. 347; Rakoczy et al., 2019). Findings confirmed that the participants held certain beliefs about their capacity to achieve tasks or display behaviors related to meeting graduation requirements at Rebecca AHSP. These beliefs informed negative or positive self-efficaciousness.

Just as Lopez-Garrido (2020) affirmed, findings confirmed that the theoretical framework of Bandura's Self-Efficacy (1977) continues to be informative and relevant for use with high school students to identify their perceptions about learning. Researchers like Lopez-Garrido (2020), Soland and Sandilos (2020), and Yu and Jen (2021) proved how self-efficacy perceptions provided insight into the students' perceived academic confidence levels. Findings also provided insight into perceived self-efficacy perceptions related to general academics and, specifically, Algebra 1 skills of adult English learners with disabilities in an alternative high school setting. Ardasheva et al. (2019) and Griffin et al. (2020) evidenced how studies with Latino students measured their self-efficacy perceptions relatable to academic language. Findings additionally evidenced that relationships between the components of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory and academic language influenced students' self-efficacy perceptions. Findings confirmed how these adult English learners with disabilities felt they lacked the capabilities to use academic language. They also evidenced how academic language affected their self-efficacy perceptions to succeed in their courses.

Wanzer et al. (2019) affirmed that racial and ethnic considerations affected English learners' academic mindsets about being successful in learning. Studies from Datu and Mateo (2020), Griffin et al. (2020), and Soland and Sandilos (2020) found that Latino teen academic self-efficacy tied to prior performance accomplishments, perceived perceptions of teachers, and emotional perceptions, particularly relational to fairness and hope. The findings confirmed that academic self-efficacy perceptions of adult English

learners with disabilities formed from their past academic performances, recognized teacher perceptions, and perceptions of hopefulness and fairness.

Lindstrom et al. (2019) and Pham et al. (2020) discussed how people have self-efficacy perceptions about their abilities for planning and training for postsecondary career training and employment. Career self-efficacy and vocational self-efficacy are current labels for these types of perceptions. Findings confirmed that Participant 2 and Participant 7 directly tied the Algebra 1 skills to future career options. In contrast, other participants said they understood that this course could lead them toward future career goals.

Mueller (2019) conducted a qualitative study to examine how students with high-incidence disabilities, including learning disabilities, perceived it affected their abilities to learn, perform, and interact in classes given the special education classification. He found that the students generally understood their disability but focused more on negative stigmas associated with the general concept of the special education classification and environments. Findings confirmed that some participants had a generic understanding that an academic barrier interfered with their general learning capability, specifically math. The participants could not directly tell how the English learner or special education classification impacted their abilities to learn or perform in their respective math classes. Findings also confirmed that although the participants individually perceived they could learn in school overall, they also held negative self-efficacy perceptions about one or both of their dual classifications.

This study extended knowledge in self-efficacy research in several ways. The study extended awareness of a specific high school demographic not commonly acknowledged or considered in high school settings. This unique student demographic comprised adults dually classified with prescriptive learning challenges striving to complete Algebra 1 assessment and math courses to satisfy graduation requirements. This exploration provided insight into the prominently negative self-efficacy perceptions of adult English learners with disabilities partially related to math, their age and dual educational classifications as high school students. Part of the extension noted that English learners with disabilities held negative self-efficacy perceptions about being adults in high school and at least one of the classifications. The extension also acknowledged their positive self-efficacy perceptions about their enrollment in an alternative high school versus a comprehensive high school setting. Few studies explored self-efficacy related to math with adult high school students with dual classifications, especially in alternative high school settings. This study served as an extension of math and Algebra 1 research because previous studies showcased how lower-class high school students attempted to meet these requirements. The studies never discussed adult students, particularly adult English learners with disabilities in high school who worked to complete Algebra 1 requirements.

Equity Issues with English learners with Disabilities

Some literature on student subgroups and Algebra 1 content included English learners and students with disabilities. Grindal et al. (2019) and Morgan et al. (2020) reiterated that rates of under-identification for special education services occurred most

frequently for the subgroups associated with students of color in elementary and middle school settings. Half of the study participants received the special education classification as a second educational classification in high school, not in earlier academic settings. The information above confirmed that these students were most likely under-identified to receive special education services since the classification came while in high school. Most study participants also historically had adverse math outcomes in high school settings. The historically low math performance outcomes and dual classification status identified them as part of the targeted subgroups in James CPS to receive math support.

The dual classification status aims offer services which bridge the achievement gap statistical rates associated with the Algebra 1 state benchmark. Grindal et al. (2019) discussed how many minority students received special education services in more restrictive areas. This study, however, highlighted participants classified as minority students who received some educational services under provisions associated with achievement gap resources in general education math settings. The participants received Algebra 1 initial or remedial instructional services in locations denoted as less restrictive environments because they were not in self-contained classes. The study proved that at Rebecca AHSP, there are situations where students who received special education and English learner services did not endure placement inequity in their respective math courses.

Select literature focused on inequitable educational opportunities for high school students with disabilities. Kangas and Cook (2020) found that the math standardized test scores for middle school English learners with disabilities regulated their placements for

less or more rigorous math courses. Kangas and Cook (2020) highlighted that English learners with disabilities tended to have access to lower-level classes in math and, subsequently, other content areas due to their math course trajectory in middle school.

Findings from this study partially aligned with the previously mentioned study results. The participants confirmed that they lacked access to higher-level math and other content courses. These participants endured this fate because they worked to complete their Algebra 1 requirements in their senior year. Tabron and Rambachan (2019) and Yu et al. (2018) discussed how students with disabilities experienced inequities, specifically, lack of access to higher math educational opportunities by not being able to enroll in rigorous high school math courses that are college preparatory. Seven out of ten participants in this study were restricted from taking any math classes beyond the Algebra Functions & Data Analysis course before their anticipated graduation. This circumstance meant they would miss opportunities to take college preparatory math courses like Geometry, Algebra II, or Calculus.

Findings from this study confirmed that this student group of adult English learners with disabilities seem similar to the statistics cited by Tabron and Rambachan (2019). They found that 63% percent of students did not receive access to rigorous high school college preparatory coursework. A study by the US Department of Education (2019) found that less than 70% of students with disabilities graduated from high school on time. All students in this study stayed in high school for at least 5 years and did not meet state high school graduation timeline benchmarks.

This study extended knowledge in equity research in several ways. Unlike many equity studies, this study focused on students classified as adults in high school and English learners with disabilities. There is limited literature regarding equity issues on adult English learners with disabilities in any high school setting. Little literature also focuses on equity issues for students in alternative high school programs. This study is an extension of equity research because it showcased how these adults, a subgroup of this specified dual classification received Algebra 1 instruction. This adult subgroup received equitable instruction in inclusive, general education math classrooms that met federal and state compliance for less restrictive environmental options and equity initiatives for students with disabilities and English learners.

Alternative High School Programs

Alternative high school programs are locations where students can satisfy their graduation requirements. Some studies highlighted increased rates of English learners with disabilities in these educational settings. Kannam and Weiss (2019) and other past studies noted the relevance of alternative high schools for reducing adverse academic performance rates at comprehensive high schools while increasing credit recovery options.

Findings in this study confirmed academic credit recovery usage by participants as their rationale for transferred enrollment to Rebecca AHSP. Schwab, Johnson, Ansley, Houchins, and Vargas (2016) showcased how over 60% of public-school districts have alternative high schools. This study confirmed at least one alternative high school, known in the study as Rebecca AHSP in James CPS. Flores (2021) and Kannam and Weiss

(2019) also noted that the one purpose of alternative high schools is to bridge inequity issues by improving academic outcomes for subgroups like English learners, English learners with disabilities, and students with disabilities. However, these and past studies failed to identify the usage of educational resources and academic outcomes by dually classified students at alternative high school programs. The school districts report these statistics cumulatively because comprehensive high schools include alternative high school data in their statistical reports submitted to the state Department of Education.

The participants confirmed that they transferred to Rebecca AHSP to attempt credit recovery options to improve their academic outcomes across content areas. Studies in this literature review did not confirm if there were inequity issues in alternative high school settings that could influence their perceptions of learning in alternative high schools. Findings substantiated that there were compliance issues of dual educational instructional services observed at Rebecca AHSP. Special education and English learner teachers were not in Rebecca AHSP math courses to support students to meet Algebra 1 requirements like the school district's comprehensive high school counterparts. There could also be compliance issues because participants appeared to take limited college preparation courses because of their Algebra 1 course enrollment timeframes.

This study served as an extension of research aimed to provide information on self-efficacy perceptions of English learners with disabilities, particularly adults, related to their perceived learning capabilities in an alternative high school setting. This study also served as an extension of self-efficacy studies. It offered information on ways self-efficacy elements influenced the self-efficacy perceptions of adult English learners with

disabilities to learn and satisfy Algebra 1 requirements in an alternative high school setting.

Limitations of the Study

There were a few limitations that impacted this study. The participants were adult high school students classified as English learners and students with high-incidence disabilities. These participants had the specific primary identification of specific learning disabilities. Four participants had math learning disability identifications. The others had reading learning disability identifications. Two participants also had the secondary classification of emotional/behavioral disability. The sample size for the study was 10 participants because of the limited number of available adult students in the identified math classes of Algebra 1 and Algebra Functions & Data Analysis to strive to satisfy Algebra 1 high school graduation requirements. The ages of the participants and alternative high school enrollment were other limitations. This study contributed to limited research that explored adult high schoolers with this specific dual classification in an alternative high school setting to meet compulsory education requirements.

Another limitation included the number of participants who needed to satisfy the Algebra 1 requirements for a general education high school diploma. The conduction of the interviews occurred during dates outside of the state-criterion subject area and final exam assessment testing windows. Fortunately, university IRB approval came during the last week of the school year, a timeline outside of both assessment windows. The participants received compulsory education instruction while enrolled as adult English learners with disabilities in an alternative high school pedagogical setting.

This study's research question and limitations dictated that the literature review focused on pedagogical approaches and outcomes. Some information in the literature review revealed that the timeframe of when students complete the Algebra 1 requirements influences the levels of future course options. This information confirmed that the Algebra 1 course requirement acts as a gatekeeper course that sets the trajectory of access for successive high school courses. This circumstance confirmed that the completion timeline of Algebra 1 requirements influences on-time and extended high school graduation timelines. The final limitation included selecting the specified factors to frame the data analysis procedures for the study. The literature review informed the decision to use physiological/emotional states, verbal persuasion, performance accomplishments, and vicarious experiences from Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1977) as the theoretical framework to analyze the data.

Recommendations

I have several recommendations for future studies that could contribute to the literature on adult English learners with disabilities who strive to complete high school requirements. The following recommendations offer options for future researchers to explore perceptions of self-efficacy for this specified student group since they have affiliations with the largest growing demographics to receive prescriptive educational services across the nation. Self-efficacy studies can contribute to educational compliance and equity research to aid in bridging achievement gap rates and on-time graduation rates for adult English learners with disabilities in comprehensive and alternative high school

settings. The subsequent recommendations stemmed from the study literature review and results.

The study strived to discern if the elements of Bandura's Theory of self-efficacy remained a relevant, informative framework to analyze the perceptions of adult English learners with disabilities at Rebecca AHSP to meet their Algebra 1 requirements. Further studies can explore if these elements influenced self-efficacy perceptions simultaneously or via cause-effect. Additionally, future studies can explore self-efficacy perceptions of adult English learners with disabilities at comprehensive high schools and alternative high school settings. There are needs for information regarding how relationships with self-efficacy perceptions could influence learning potential to meet high school graduation requirements not only in other high school math requirements, but science, social studies, and English course graduation requirements. Furthermore, future studies can explore self-efficacy perceptions of adult English learners with disabilities to secure postsecondary placements in institutions of higher learning or professional training.

Studies confirmed that self-efficacy research can be helpful as investigational interventions to support performance and behavior improvements in youth (Margalit et al., 2019; Rhew et al., 2018). These participants, possibly due to their age and experiences, willingly shared their self-efficacy perspectives, and beliefs which are transparency levels not easily gained from interviewing youth. They also conveyed that they did not understand the nature of their learning challenges associated with their dual classification status. The participants also evidenced inconsistent use and knowledge of services associated with their dual classification status. This inconsistent use and

knowledge of services showcased the underuse or avoidance of services and resources associated with their dual educational classifications. The findings showcased that the participants felt negatively self-efficacious about their dual classification status. Study results do not provide information to confirm if the participants possibly learned late how and what dual classification supports/resources to use to counter their learning challenges. The study results also do not provide information to confirm if the participants have knowledge in how to adapt their classification service usage to fit their learning needs to feel more capable of learning and performing in a satisfactory manner. Findings from this study can inform future studies that aim to improve accessibility and receptiveness to instructional strategies, improve dual classification resource and accommodation usage, and increase academic outcomes for adult English learners with disabilities across high school settings and content areas. Future research studies might include:

1. Explore this population's self-efficacy awareness where the concentration of learning disability may and may not be affected in the registered course or content area.
2. Explore this population's self-efficacy awareness in conjunction with other content areas and in all high school settings.
3. Investigate how self-efficacy and transition planning influence awareness of self-efficacy in alternative and comprehensive high school settings.

4. Explore adaptations of transition planning to investigate self-efficacy awareness about dual classification learning challenges and dual service usage across content areas.
5. Explore adaptations of transition planning to investigate self-efficacy awareness about potential career preparedness options.
6. Explore adaptations of transition planning instruction to investigate student self-efficacy perceptions about dual classification learning challenges and dual service usage across content areas.
7. Investigate how self-efficacy as a focus in transition planning instruction might influence self-efficacy perceptions of adult English learners with disabilities in alternative high school and comprehensive high school settings.
8. Explore adaptations of transition planning instruction to investigate self-efficacy perceptions about potential career preparedness options.

The federal mandates ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014) support English learners with disabilities in having access to free, appropriate educational services and their corresponding resources. Some educational services include prescriptive procedures like transition planning to assist students in effectively using both classification services to meet high school graduation requirements and access career preparedness options. Future studies could investigate how student outcomes in comprehensive high schools and alternative high school programs influence this population's self-efficacy perspectives about their secondary transition planning course options to meet high school graduation requirements. The self-efficacy perception

explorations could provide insight into their decision-making processes about their perceived course options, usage of the classification services, and on-time/extended high school graduation rate options. A future study could also examine how perceptions of perceived course options, potential accommodation usage, and graduation timelines influence their perceptions of postsecondary transition planning options.

Studies to improve self-efficacy perceptions related to the dual classification and learning challenges of English learners with disabilities can support educators in preparing students affiliated with this subgroup to access robust analytical college preparatory courses in all high school settings. Self-efficacy studies can support additions of literature to increase equitable educational services and outcomes in high-school settings for this subgroup, math efficacy and their respective potential outcomes in high-school settings, improve special education and English learner services in alternative high school programs, improve general education, special education, and English learner service implementation with adult high school students in comprehensive and alternative high school settings.

Implications

This study had selected implications that may provide specific contributions to some audiences. This study offered a potential impact for positive social change. This study also highlighted how using of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1994) is an appropriate, relevant theoretical framework to use with future studies to explore ways to improve outcomes for English learners with disabilities. The findings of this study led to some recommendations for practice in school districts.

Potential Impact for Positive Social Change

This study has the potential to positively impact social change for individuals associated with educational subgroups composed of English learners, students with disabilities, and English learners with disabilities who are under and surpass the age of eighteen in high school settings. The findings of this study were significant because educators can use this information to support English learners with disabilities in becoming aware of their self-efficacy beliefs to learn in different content areas and high school settings. Student awareness of their self-efficacy perspectives can support educators with transition planning to guide these students to understand better their learning challenges and capabilities to learn across content areas. Lastly, increased student self-efficacy awareness can complement educator efforts to improve student misunderstandings, misuse, and misconceptions of their dual classification and general education services associated with strengthening educational compliance initiatives and bolstering performance rates.

The integration of self-efficacy awareness into transition planning instruction and goals can also support this subgroup in understanding the rationale behind decision-making to effectively use dually classified services. Self-efficacy awareness can manifest as progressive decision-making to include appropriate usage of their dual accommodations to reduce perceived learning barriers and potential negative, academic outcomes. As students grasp how to minimize the potential impact of learning barriers and improve student outcomes, educators can more effectively train these students to make decisions about secondary and postsecondary transition planning. These decisions

could concentrate on using self-efficacy awareness to support student on-time or extended-time graduation rates. Self-efficacy awareness can also aid educators in facilitating transition planning decision-making to determine academic and career interests, needs, and options related to career preparedness planning.

Federal mandates aim to support English learners with disabilities, including adult students, to receive appropriate educational classifications. Selected studies highlighted how English learners with disabilities frequently underwent misclassification of either special education or EL eligibility processes (Golloher et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2017; Trainor et al., 2019). The literature review showcased that educational misclassification of special education and English learner eligibility contributed to their lack of understanding of their dual classification status (Golloher et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2017; Trainor et al., 2019). This study revealed that several participants received the dual classification during their high school experiences versus other educational intervals. The later dual eligibility timeframe likely resulted in the students garnering more negative academic outcomes in timeframes prior to the dual eligibility that also affected self-efficacy perceptions.

As this study proved that dual classification eligibility affected self-efficacy perceptions, school districts and educators can support students in gaining awareness of these perceptions and using transition planning to counter misunderstandings, misuse, or misconceptions about their dual classification. By instituting transition planning initiatives that focus on dual classification awareness and service usage, school districts can reduce misunderstandings, misuse, and misconceptions of services and resources

associated with students having this educational formation of dual classification identification. In that case, they can refine the implementation of general and dual classification instruction and services to improve educational services and increase student outcomes. These efforts can aid these students in meeting gatekeeping course benchmarks, like Algebra 1, at earlier or within shorter intervals, which can help students satisfy graduation requirements.

Self-efficacy awareness can have organizational and societal implications. Transition planning currently entails decision-making that uses student outcome data and career interest information for IEP development. Self-efficacy awareness can change the way school districts drive transition planning. This study may provide the basis for exploring how to adapt educational methods, processes, and procedures to use self-efficacy awareness to improve compulsory education career preparedness across school districts nationwide. This study may influence how educational researchers, school districts, and educators recognize and teach adult English learners with disabilities, whether underage or adult, in any high school class and setting. To better understand how the students' dual classifications could positively impact their social and educational outcomes.

This study is my initial professional attempt to offer concepts that can shift me into a social change agent. My goal is to enable educators to become social change agents. This study strives to facilitate social change by influencing educators to understand better how and use dual classification self-efficacy perceptions of adult

English learners with disabilities for secondary and postsecondary planning and improve their compulsory education outcomes.

The results of the self-efficacy perceptions related to vicarious experiences indicated that adult English learners with disabilities understand how to generalize self-efficacy awareness to other placements and challenging scenarios. The potential for students to shift toward this kind of decision-making and awareness can have a positive national socioeconomic and political impact as these students transition into adulthood. As these students refine their awareness of learning challenges and use of the dual educational services, they can increase their exposure to more robust coursework and improve outcomes. These outcomes can bolster career preparedness. As they transition into adulthood, they can generalize this decision-making of course and employment options with the utilization of their disability service usage to secure upwardly mobile career choices. These upwardly mobile career choices can positively impact their quality of life and socioeconomic status.

This study may provide a foundational premise for nationwide English learners, special educators, and general educators to refine or adapt best practices for integrating self-efficacy into instruction across subject areas and transition planning with graduation requirements. These potentially adaptive best practices can support relevant and effective IEP development, English learner development, decision-making, transition planning, and implementation, emphasizing student self-efficacy awareness, student agentic traits, motivation, engagement, accountability, and self-advocacy. This study could potentially drive additional research in alternative high school settings, special education, and

English learners in explorations related to student perceptions of destiny and outcomes; student motivation, accountability, self-advocacy, and self-efficacy; and dual classification transition planning for secondary and postsecondary consideration options, secondary and postsecondary transition planning implementation, and IEP development.

This qualitative interview analysis approach gives SEAs, LEAs, higher education researchers, and policymakers insight into how English learner educators and special education teachers can more effectively use efficacious best practices with students across environments. Using student self-efficacy awareness and dual educational service implementation in classes and IEP development coincidentally may lead to increased compliance with the mandates of ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014). These mandates regulate educators to simultaneously integrate secondary transition planning regulatory practices and service implementation while using student data throughout secondary transition planning phases. If done effectively, school districts may note increased student performance outcome rates and graduation rates. These efficacious practices can lead educators to connect more with students socially and academically, improving educational climates in school settings.

Lastly, information from potential studies could inform procedures that educators use to adapt programs and allocations that support the implementation of educational services for this population across high school settings and content areas. Peer-reviewed educational literature and state departments of education generally report secondary and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities within public school districts. Yet these outcomes are collective instead of designating outcomes by enrollment at

alternative high school programs versus traditional high schools. Research is needed to confirm whether alternative high school program data is similar or different from traditional high schools in urban, suburban, and rural school districts. Suppose research proves that alternative high-school program data differs from traditional high school data. In that case, further research will need to figure out how to bridge the differences in school setting outcomes.

Theoretical Implications

There are theoretical implications for further research. This study reviewed self-efficacy research that spanned several types of self-efficacy categories. The literature review covered topics such as academic or educational self-efficacy, social self-efficacy, career self-efficacy, and math self-efficacy. However, there is a lack of literature on these different types of self-efficacy categories with this specific subgroup in traditional and alternative high school settings. English learners and special education researchers have yet to research these self-efficacy categories with transition planning and IEP development. Self-efficacy research in these areas with this subgroup can improve student-teacher relationships and student performance outcomes across several content areas.

This study has the potential to positively impact social change for individuals associated with educational subgroups composed of English learners, students with disabilities, and English learners with disabilities who are under and surpass the age of eighteen in high school settings. The findings of this study were significant because educators can use this information to support English learners with disabilities in

becoming aware of their self-efficacy beliefs to learn in different content areas and high school settings. Student awareness of their self-efficacy perspectives can support educators with transition planning to guide these students to understand better their learning challenges and capabilities to learn across content areas. The transition planning instruction and goals can also entail supporting these students in understanding the rationale and decision-making to effectively use their dually classified services, including dual accommodations, as measures to reduce perceived learning barriers. As students grasp how to minimize the potential impact of learning barriers and improve student outcomes, educators can more effectively train these students to make decisions about secondary and postsecondary transition planning that concentrates on using self-efficacy awareness to support student on-time or extended-time graduation rates. Self-efficacy awareness can also aid educators in facilitating transition planning decision-making to determine academic and career interests, needs, and options related to career preparedness planning.

Federal mandates strive to support English learners with disabilities, including adult students, to receive appropriate educational classifications. These studies highlighted how English learners with disabilities frequently underwent misclassification of either special education or EL eligibility processes (Golloher et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2017; Trainor et al., 2019). The literature review showcased that educational misclassification of special education and English learner eligibility contributed to their lack of understanding of their dual classification status (Golloher et al., 2018; Liu et al., 2017; Trainor et al., 2019). This study revealed that several participants received the dual

classification during their high school experiences versus other educational intervals. The later dual eligibility timeframe likely resulted in the students garnering more negative academic outcomes in timeframes prior to the dual eligibility that also affected self-efficacy perceptions. As this study proved that dual classification eligibility affected self-efficacy perceptions, school districts and educators support students in gaining awareness of these perceptions and using transition planning to counter misunderstandings, misuse, or misconceptions about their dual classification. The institution of transition planning initiatives that focus on dual classification awareness and service usage can support school districts to reduce misunderstandings, misuse, and misconceptions of services and resources associated with students having this specified educational dual classification identification. In that case, they can refine the implementation of general and dual classification instruction and services to improve educational service and student outcomes. These efforts can aid these students in meeting gatekeeping course benchmarks, like Algebra 1, at earlier or within shorter intervals, which can help students satisfy graduation requirements.

Self-efficacy awareness can have organizational and societal implications. Transition planning currently entails decision-making that uses student outcome data and career interest information for IEP development. Self-efficacy awareness can drive transition planning and bolster school district initiatives to improve student outcomes. This study may provide the basis for exploring how to adapt educational methods, processes, and procedures to use self-efficacy awareness to improve compulsory education career preparedness across school districts nationwide.

This study may influence how educational researchers, school districts, and educators recognize and teach adult English learners with disabilities, whether underage or adult, in any high school class and setting. This study may support educators to understand better how the students' dual classifications could positively impact their social and educational outcomes. This study is my initial professional attempt to offer concepts that can shift me into a social change agent. My goal is to enable educators to become social change agents. This study strives to facilitate social change by influencing educators to understand better how and use dual classification self-efficacy perceptions of adult English learners with disabilities for secondary and postsecondary planning and improve their compulsory education outcomes.

The results of the self-efficacy perceptions related to vicarious experiences indicated that adult English learners with disabilities understand how to generalize self-efficacy awareness to other placements and challenging scenarios. The potential for students to shift toward this kind of decision-making and awareness can have a positive national socioeconomic and political impact as these students transition into adulthood. As these students refine their awareness of learning challenges and use of the dual educational services, they can increase their exposure to more robust coursework and improve outcomes. These outcomes can bolster career preparedness. As they transition into adulthood, they can generalize this decision-making of course and employment options with the utilization of their disability service usage to secure upwardly mobile career choices. These upwardly mobile career choices can positively impact their quality of life and socioeconomic status.

This study may provide a foundational premise for nationwide English learners, special educators, and general educators to refine or adapt best practices for integrating self-efficacy into instruction across subject areas and transition planning with graduation requirements. These potentially adaptive best practices can support relevant and effective IEP development, English learner development, decision-making, transition planning, and implementation, emphasizing student self-efficacy awareness, student agentic traits, motivation, engagement, accountability, and self-advocacy. This study could potentially drive additional research across several areas. These areas can include alternative high school settings, special education, and English learners. The subareas could focus on explorations related to student perceptions of destiny and outcomes, student motivation, accountability, self-advocacy, and self-efficacy. Additionally, the subareas can include studies on dual classification transition planning for secondary and postsecondary consideration options, secondary and postsecondary transition planning implementation, and IEP development.

By using this qualitative interview analysis approach, this study gives SEAs, LEAs, higher education researchers, and policymakers heightened insight into certain areas. This insight can focus on English learner educators and special education teachers can more effectively use efficacious best practices with students across environments. Using student self-efficacy awareness and dual educational service implementation in classes and IEP development concurrently may lead to increased compliance with the mandates of ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014). These mandates regulate educators to simultaneously integrate secondary transition planning regulatory practices and service

implementation while using student data throughout secondary transition planning phases. If done concurrently and effectively, school districts may note increased student performance outcome rates and graduation rates. These efficacious practices also aid educators in connecting more with students socially and academically, which can improve educational climates in school settings.

Lastly, the information from these studies could inform procedures that educators use to adapt programs and allocations that support the implementation of educational services for this population across high school settings and content areas. Peer-reviewed educational literature and state departments of education generally report secondary and post-school outcomes for students with disabilities within public school districts collectively instead of designating outcomes by enrollment at alternative high school programs versus traditional high schools. Research is needed to confirm whether alternative high school program data is similar or different from traditional high schools in urban, suburban, and rural school districts. Suppose research proves that alternative high-school program data differs from traditional high school data. In that case, further research will need to figure out how to bridge the differences in school setting outcomes.

Recommendations for Practice

The findings showcased how the participants held negative self-efficacy perceptions about their dual classifications of English learners with disabilities. The participants evidenced difficulty explaining connections between their dual learning challenges and the dual classification. The participants' responses about their negative self-efficacy perceptions indicated they showed misuse, misunderstandings, or

misconceptions about services associated with their dual classifications. One recommendation for school districts includes supporting English learners with disabilities by placing certified English learners and special education teachers in gatekeeper courses identified in achievement gap initiatives. This level of dual classification services can support greater compliance with ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014) mandates at the LEA level to remit more effective, simultaneous general and dual education services in critical classes for this subgroup of students. There are other recommendations for practice at the LEA level that educators can implement as part of practical transition planning activities for English learners with disabilities.

The dual educators who support these services can facilitate these students to monthly notate self-assessments of their self-efficacy perceptions in the student-selected course(s) to aid in dual service transition planning focused on improving their understanding of how the dual services aim to reduce their learning challenges and decision-making considerations of use and potential adaptations of dual services. These dual educators can collaboratively conference with these students minimally at each report card interval to informally discuss the students' monthly notated self-efficacy perception self-assessment data. These sessions can serve as follow-up transition planning activities that facilitate informal inquiries and open discussions to gather perceived self-efficacy perception data about their perceptions of both sets of prescriptive services, including their classes, IEP goals, accommodations, etc.

If prompted effectively, these educators can use this information to refine or extend the transition planning activities to discuss continuing decision-making options for

navigating learning challenges, instruction, and the use of resources in their classes. With these self-efficacy perception check-ins, the educators can moderate the discussion sessions to provide students with opportunities to workshop or troubleshoot their current understanding, considerations, or remediation options for using the services. The self-efficacy perception check-ins can serve as informal transition planning assessment sessions to monitor how the students' self-efficacy perceptions might adapt and inform further decision-making and usage of the services based on their progressive outcomes and course options.

Conclusion

Enrollment statistics from state education departments noted trends that English learners with disabilities are increasingly the largest population of students who receive these unique prescriptive educational services. These enrollment statistics also displayed how English learners with disabilities achieved poor performance outcomes in comparison to other identified student demographics across content areas. These enrollment statistics showed how English learners with disabilities scored below their non-disabled peers and singularly classified peers across content areas.

The literature review highlighted that many of these students historically accumulated poor math outcomes, including failing to satisfy Algebra 1 requirements in middle school or first year in high school. This circumstance curtailed their future learning opportunities to achieve on-time graduation rates and take rigorous coursework towards supporting increased career preparedness. This information contributed to this population's identification nationwide as those affiliated with academic achievement gap

initiatives, especially in math. The study participants met the criteria of being adults, dually classified as English learners with disabilities enrolled at an alternative high school setting who needed to satisfy Algebra 1 benchmarks to meet their standard graduation requirements.

Historical poor state performance data drove the need for the federal mandates, ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014), to protect and educate students, especially those with this unique classification in high school settings. The literature review for this study highlighted how English learners with disabilities, particularly adult students with this classification, have unique learning challenges and historically accrued poor Algebra 1 assessment outcomes in school districts across the nation. The review also confirmed that this population historically repeated coursework because of Algebra 1 course performance failures. Alternatively, because of low Algebra 1 state assessment rates, they took additional scaffolded or remedial courses to remediate poor performance outcomes identified by researchers and school district personnel nationwide on their respective Algebra 1 state assessment reports. The literature review highlighted how the repeated Algebra 1 and other subject area coursework, scaffolded, or remedial coursework negatively impacted this population's on-time and extended-time graduation rates.

The literature review also revealed that many students classified as adults, English learners, or students with disabilities enrolled in alternative high school settings because comprehensive high schools failed to support these students effectively. This literature review stipulated that these identified students transferred to alternative high school

settings to receive increased credit recovery support and support them in improving on-time and extended-time graduation rates. The study participants either failed the Algebra 1 state assessment or course and took Algebra 1 as a course to satisfy their math graduation requirement or Algebra Functions & Data Analysis to remediate Algebra 1 skills. Many study participants disclosed that they enrolled in the selected alternative high school setting of Rebecca AHSP because they wanted to take advantage of the credit recovery option, the location's accelerated school schedule, and improve their opportunities to achieve on-time or extended-time graduation.

Researchers noted the need for more research that identifies ways to improve low-performance outcomes across content areas with entitled educational services mandated by law, especially for this population in the content area of math because it correlates with career preparedness. The literature research highlighted the need to improve English learners with disabilities' academic outcomes in all high school settings to support their propensity to graduate with a regular high school diploma. There is a critical need to support English learners with disabilities, especially adult students with this unique classification status, to increase their abilities to achieve their high school requirements. The literature review showcased how they must gain the capability to pass the Algebra 1 benchmark requirement needed for high school graduation. Educators need research studies on English learners with disabilities to improve their potential to satisfy Algebra 1 requirements because it is a gateway requirement that affects their access to higher-level coursework and career preparedness options. This situation highlights the need to find

information on improving the Algebra 1 course and state assessment outcomes for adult English learners with disabilities.

The literature review for this study showcased how many researchers used Alfred Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1977) as a theoretical framework with students with one or both classifications. The literature review highlighted how researchers used self-efficacy studies to find ways to improve student outcomes across various content areas, particularly math subjects. The review also showcased studies with participants in elementary and middle school settings. The findings from this study highlighted that Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1994) elements of physiological/emotional states, verbal persuasion, performance accomplishments, and vicarious experiences influenced the participants' self-efficacy perspectives about their capabilities to generally learn and specifically satisfy the Algebra 1 requirements in the classes at the time of data collection. The four elements influenced the participants to feel positive and negative self-efficacy on various topics related to their high school experiences.

The study findings confirmed that the participants held a few positive self-efficacy perceptions. At the time of initial data collection, all participants either passed their designated math course or Algebra 1 state assessment to meet the Algebra 1 graduation requirement. Although the results found they generally held negative self-efficacy perspectives about their capabilities to learn, some participants did feel confident about their capabilities to successfully live and work as adults despite their academic learning challenges; hence, they had some levels of positive self-efficaciousness about their future. The analysis also disclosed how some participants perceived that some

teachers' words and actions verbally persuaded them to feel positively efficacious about their learning potential. The participants also admitted that they verbally persuaded themselves, identified as "Self-Talk," that they needed to engage in certain proactive activities to support themselves to have the capabilities to learn and effectively perform in classes. The participants did feel positively efficacious about their recent performance accomplishment of passing summative Algebra course tests or the Algebra 1 state assessment at Rebecca AHSP because they perceived these successes indicated they could pass their respective math course and one part of their graduation requirements. They indicated that their success at Rebecca AHSP contributed to them feeling positively self-efficacious in this learning setting compared to their traditional high school, where they incurred lots of academic failure. The participants disclosed how they perceived their status as employees struggling to show proficient work behaviors as vicarious experiences that revealed they self-advocated by asking questions to refine their abilities and retain their positions. The participants evidenced from the vicarious experiences how they realized that they could generalize the self-advocacy behavior to support them in feeling accessible to learning and capable of performing in their status of students in the selected alternative high school setting.

The study findings evidenced that these 4 elements primarily influenced the participants to hold negative self-efficacy perceptions about several issues. The participants evidenced that physiological/emotional states informed negative self-efficacy perceptions with issues relative to their perceptions about their dual classification status, being adults in high school, past poor performances and absenteeism impacting their

capabilities to learn, and past perceived inability to seek help when needed. The analyzed data showcased that verbal persuasion informed the participants' negative self-efficacy perceptions because they perceived direct and indirect adverse words and actions of some teachers belittled and made them feel intellectually incapable or inferior to their non-disabled peers. The participants also evidenced their negative self-efficacy perceptions because they verbally persuaded themselves through direct and indirect "Self-Talk" that they were intellectually inferior, incapable of learning content, and lacked academic perseverance to push through their learning challenges. The participants perceived their historic adverse math performance accomplishments related to courses and assessment failures in math and other courses attributed to deliberations that their learning challenges displayed their incapacities to learn, being in high school over five years were results of academic failure, choices to not self-advocate by asking questions negatively impacted capability to learn, perceived their choices to engage in adverse work habits and truancy also impeded their capabilities to learn. Lastly, the participants evidenced that through vicarious experiences of their non-disabled peers being successful in classes, they perceived themselves as incapable of learning to the degree necessary to graduate high school and intellectually inferior to these peers and, therefore, felt negatively self-efficacious. The findings also indicated that the participants perceived their past status of immature, irresponsible youth as vicarious experiences that negated their potential to learn currently in their present status as seniors.

The findings indicated that the participants had selected negative self-efficacy perspectives that they perceived the need to shift to positive ones so they might engage in

decision-making that could increase their perceived capabilities and influence their actions to access and perform. The study evidenced that the participants felt more efficacious at Rebecca AHSP than at their traditional high school. However, the findings also highlighted how the participants felt disdain for one or both classifications and were in denial of how their learning challenges affected their learning capabilities. Unlike the standard practice for Algebra 1 classes in the comprehensive high schools for James CPS, the findings revealed that the participants did not have direct English learner and special education services in their math courses taken to strive to meet Algebra 1 requirements at the time of the study. Findings indicated that the participants could not state their learning challenges associated with the classifications and how to use services associated with them to reduce learning barriers and improve student outcomes. Findings also confirmed how the components of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1997) remained relevant to examine how these components influenced negative and positive self-efficacy perceptions and, therefore, provide insight into how to adapt transition planning instruction to improve this population's academic behaviors and outcome rates. The results confirmed that self-efficacy studies can contribute to equity research to reduce achievement gaps and support unique subgroups to gain access to resources and specialized instruction. Lastly, the findings confirmed how the selected subgroup of adult English learners with disabilities perceived themselves as positively self-efficacious from their enrollment in the designated alternative high school setting.

This study can contribute to positive societal changes across various groups in the K -12 educational arenas. Improvements in self-efficacy awareness can improve student

dual classification usage and potential student outcomes in all high school settings. By improving student self-efficacy awareness, students can increase their capabilities to achieve higher academic performance rates, participate in more rigorous secondary course options, and broaden their career preparedness opportunities. This study can enhance how school districts implement secondary transition planning with specified aims to increase student outcomes, racial equity, and career preparedness. This study can also support school districts to improve student implementation/usage of dual classification services and educator compliance of academic activities and resources driven by the federal educational mandates of ESSA (2015), IDEIA (2008), and WIOA (2014) and state policies.

The above information meant that there are specific recommendations for future studies using the theoretical framework of Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1994) to investigate options to identify and understand this and other similar high school populations' self-efficacy perspectives. By identifying and understanding their self-efficacy perceptions, future studies can explore ways to improve their negative self-efficacy perceptions, which could result in studies to improve classification usage and student outcomes. This study effectively investigated whether Bandura's Self-Efficacy Theory (1994) components influenced the students' self-efficacy perceptions. The participants did not indicate that they felt any adverse mental stress from participating in this exploration. Since the participants were adults at the time of data collection, they could communicate that they felt relaxed about disclosing information about their past or latest perceptions about their classifications, perceived math capabilities, and alternative

high school enrollment. The study provided information about the students' self-efficacy perceptions about their ability to complete Algebra 1 requirements at the alternative high school, Rebecca AHSP.

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Appendix: Student Questionnaire and Interview Protocol

RQ 1: How do adult English learners with disabilities perceive their self-efficacy while completing Algebra 1 requirements in an alternative high school setting?

Student Questionnaire

- a. Where were you born? _____
- b. What is your first language? _____
- c. How old are you? _____
- d. What gender do you identify with? Female _____ Male _____ Undisclosed _____
- e. How many years have you been in high school? _____ years
- f. If not born in the U.S., when did you move to the U.S.? _____

Interview Protocol

Self-efficacy (General)

1. How do you feel about school? Please provide at least 3 words to describe how you feel about school and the reason you feel this way.

(If necessary because the student is non-responsive) For example, school is boring for me because classes are dull. Or you may say, school is awesome because I see my friends and get to learn a lot.

2. What helps you be a successful student?
3. What are your strengths as a student? What do you do well?
4. What challenges or difficulties do you have in school?
5. What do you do to overcome these challenges?

Physiological Arousal

6. What are some things outside of school that help you to be a successful student?
7. What are some things outside of school that make it harder for you to be a successful student? How do you overcome those challenges?

AHSP learner

8. What led you to come to this school versus your home school?
9. How did you feel about being at this school when you first enrolled?
10. How do you feel about being at this school now?

Adult learner

11. How do you feel about being an **adult** student?
12. Do you feel a difference being an **adult** student compared to being a youth or teenage student?

Math Self-efficacy (as a math learner)

Say: Now, I'd like for you to think about yourself as a learner in your math class specifically.

13. What kind of student are you in math class? (Why do you say that?) How would you describe yourself as a math student? Please provide at least 3 words to describe yourself as a math student and reason/s you believe that.
(if needed) For example, you may say, "I think I am a responsible student because I try to do all my work in all my classes. But, I think I am easily distracted because if I am with a friend, and I feel bored, I start speaking to her or him."
14. What do you think are your strengths when it comes to math, specifically Algebra 1?
15. What do you think are your struggles when it comes to Algebra 1?
16. When you struggle in math, what do you do?
17. When struggling in math, what motivates you to not give up and push through the challenges?
18. When you're struggling with math, who encourages you? How do they encourage you? How does the encouragement affect you?

Vicarious Experiences (element of Self-efficacy)

19. How do you see yourself as a math student in comparison to others in your class?
20. Think about a time when you saw another student in your math class struggle and push through to be successful. What did you feel or think when you saw your classmate persevere in math?
21. Think about a time when you saw another student in your math class struggle and not be successful. What did you feel or think when you saw your classmate not do well in math?

Personal Experiences (element of Self-efficacy)

22. When do you realize you are about to struggle with a topic in your math class? What do you do? Do you seek help? If so, how? If not, why not?
23. How does your math teacher(s) help you when you struggle? Does the teacher help you in different ways from the other students? What do you think you need to get through the challenges?
24. How do you feel about your academic performance in math? This means, how do you feel about your grades?

(if needed) For example, "I have a B in my math class, and I feel it is a fair grade because I complete my work, but sometimes I don't do well on tests. I have a D in math class. I don't think this is fair because I don't understand what is being taught and the teacher assumes I know the material." This is an example. Again, how do you feel about your academic performance? This means, how do you feel about your grades?

Self-efficacy (math learner)

25. Do you feel like you are working to the level you could in math? Why? Or why not? If not, what do you feel are the challenges?

Self-efficacy (SPED learner)

26. Do you know what an IEP is? Do you have an IEP? Do you know why you have an IEP?
27. Do you have a disability? What is your disability? How does it affect you in school? How do you feel about having a disability?
28. Do you have any accommodations under the IEP? What accommodations are provided under your IEP? Do you use them? Which ones? Why/why not? How do you feel your sped accommodations help you with your challenges in school?

EL self-efficacy (EL learner)

29. What is your understanding of being an EL? How do you feel being an EL affects you in school? Why?
30. How do your abilities as an EL affect your learning? How do you feel your abilities as an EL affect the decisions you make in the math class?
31. As an EL, do you use any services or accommodations to help in math? Why or why not?? How do those help you? How do you feel your EL accommodations help you with your challenges in school?

Verbal Persuasion

32. What do other people say about being an EL/SPED/ math? How do those statements make you feel? What do you do when you hear those statements?

EL&SPED combined self-efficacy

33. How do you feel about being an EL and a student with a disability? How do you think being an EL and a student with a disability affects your success in math?
34. As an EL with a disability, do you think you have the same, less, or more challenges than someone who is neither an EL or a student with a disability? Why? If they answer “more,” follow up with: How do you overcome these extra challenges?