

11-13-2025

Novice Teacher Voice of Preservice Preparation to Support Low-SES Students

Edna Richardson Richardson Billingsley
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations>



Part of the [Public Policy Commons](#)

This Dissertation is brought to you for free and open access by the Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies Collection at ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in Walden Dissertations and Doctoral Studies by an authorized administrator of ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact ScholarWorks@waldenu.edu.

Walden University

College of Education and Human Sciences

This is to certify that the doctoral dissertation by

Edna Richardson Billingsley

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

Review Committee

Dr. Robert Voelkel, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty

Dr. Robert Flanders, Committee Member, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer and Provost

Sue Subocz, Ph.D.

Walden University

2025

Abstract

Novice Teacher Voice of Preservice Preparation to Support Low-SES Students

by

Edna Richardson Billingsley

MA, University of South Alabama 1981

BS, University of South Alabama, March 1978

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

PhD in Education/Leadership, Policy and Change

Walden University

August 2025

Abstract

The problem that was addressed through this study was that there is a gap in the literature about the preparation of mid to lower elementary novice teachers to teach students with low-socioeconomic status (low-SES) in several districts throughout the Southern United States. Grounded in social justice theory, the purpose of the basic qualitative design was to explore lower to middle elementary teachers' perceptions on their preservice preparation to teach low-SES students. For this basic qualitative design, 12 novice teachers participated in semi-structured interviews. Data were analyzed through thematic analysis with the following three top themes emerging: (a) poor preparation towards culturally responsive teaching, (b) lack of training concerning classroom management strategies, and (c) lack of knowledge towards community engagement strategies. Recommendations are for teacher preparation programs to emphasize social justice, increase fieldwork in schools with a large number of low-SES students, and provide exposure to culturally responsive pedagogies. The implications for positive social change include the potential for teacher educators to redesign preservice curricula that better prepare mid to lower elementary novice teachers to meet the learning needs of low-SES students, in turn improving student learning.

Novice Teacher Voice of Preservice Preparation to Support Low-SES Students

by

Edna Richardson Billingsley

MA, University of South Alabama 1981

BS, University of South Alabama March 1978

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Philosophy

PhD in Education/Leadership, Policy and Change

Walden University

August 2025

Dedication

I dedicate this research to everyone who supported me through this metamorphosing journey. To my family, your love, patience, and encouragement have been my biggest foundation. Moreover, your belief in my capabilities sustained me through the challenges and urged me to hang in there. To my mentors and advisors, your guidance and expertise have been invaluable to me. You challenged my thinking, expanded my scope of understanding, and ensured that my work remained of the highest quality. To the educators and students who inspired this research, your resilience and commitment to education fueled my passion. Your encouraging stories and experiences shaped the focus of this study and deepened my understanding of equity in education. Lastly, to all those who believe that education is capable and should be a transformative experience, this research work is a tribute to you. May it create a more inclusive, equitable, and supportive learning environment for all.

Acknowledgments

I would like to acknowledge the people who saw me through this journey. I am elated to have my son, (Angel Billingsley MD.), who was in med school at Stanford always challenge me to think outside the box on social change and constantly pushed me even when I would say, "I am not well, and I have one doctorate so I will just quit." Thanks to my sister Sandra, who personally drove me to 3 residences in another state and picked me up.

Thanks to Dr. Robert Voelkel and Dr. Robert Flanders from my Walden dissertation committee for guiding me and keeping me on the correct trajectory. Special thanks to Dr. Stephanie Galeotti, my Walden student adviser, for being impressed with my perseverance in finishing this lifelong learning project.

Table of Contents

List of Tables.....	v
Chapter 1: Introduction to Study.....	1
Introduction	1
Background	2
Problem Statement	7
Purpose of the Study.....	7
Research Questions	8
Conceptual Framework for the Study	8
Nature of Study	10
Definitions.....	11
Assumptions	12
Scope and Delimitations.....	14
Limitations	15
Significance.....	15
Summary	16
Chapter 2: Literature Review	17
Introduction	17
Literature Search Strategy	17
Low-SES Students and Novice Teacher Challenges.....	18
Novice Teacher Training.....	25
Comprehending Pedagogy and Educational Theory.....	28

Professional Growth and Reflective Practice	30
Understanding Family Background through Teacher Preparation Programs.....	31
Importance of Teacher Preparation Programs.....	32
Training and Support Given to Novice Teachers	34
Classroom Management	36
Importance of Teacher Preparation Programs.....	38
Perceptions of Preservice Teachers.....	39
Teacher Training Programs.....	44
Importance of Preparing Teachers to Support Low-SES Students	47
Novice Teachers Feel Underprepared	47
Evidence-Based Practices for Supporting Low-SES Students.....	49
Caring Teacher-Student Relationships	49
Inclusive Classroom Communities.....	50
Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies.....	51
Family and Community Partnerships	51
Areas for Further Study.....	52
Summary	55
Chapter 3: Research Method.....	56
Introduction	56
Research Design and Rationale.....	56
Role of the Researcher	57
Methodology	58
Participant Selection Logic	59

Instrumentation.....	61
Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection	62
Data Analysis Plan	63
Issues of Trustworthiness	69
Ethical Procedures.....	71
Summary	72
Chapter 4: Findings.....	73
Introduction	73
Demographics.....	73
Data Collection.....	74
Data Analysis	74
Step 1: Data Familiarization.....	74
Step 2: Generating Initial Codes	75
Step 3: Searching for Themes	77
Step 4: Reviewing the Initial Themes	78
Step 5: Naming Themes	78
Step 6: Reporting Findings.....	84
Findings.....	85
Theme 1: Gaps in Preservice Training	85
Theme 2: Challenges Faced in Classroom Application.....	88
Theme 3: Preparation Programs Needed to Support Low-SES Students.....	91
Theme 4: Mental Health Challenges Among Students	94
Evidence of Trustworthiness	99

Summary	101
Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations.....	103
Introduction	103
Interpretation of the Findings.....	103
Theme 1: Gaps in Preservice Training	103
Theme 2: Challenges Faced in Classroom Application.....	109
Theme 3: Preparation Programs Needed to Support Low-SES Students.....	112
Theme 4: Mental Health Challenges among Students	116
Limitations of the Study	119
Recommendations	120
Implications	122
Conclusion.....	122
References	124
Appendix A: Interview Protocol	147
Appendix B: Initial Themes	149

List of Tables

Table 1. Sample Codes.....	76
Table 2. Emergent Themes	81
Table 3. Themes with their Respective RQS	84

Chapter 1: Introduction to Study

Introduction

Preservice teacher preparation has been a long-standing concern in the field of education, particularly with regard to how it prepares novice teachers to work with diverse populations of students. One specific population that has garnered attention in recent years is the low-socioeconomic status (low-SES) students, who are often faced with unique challenges in the classroom (Azzarello & Bergstrom, 2021; Takashiro & Clarke, 2020). There is a wide achievement gap between low-SES students and their high-socioeconomic status (high-SES) counterparts that has continued to present a significant challenge in education (Takashiro & Clarke, 2020). Novice teachers, being new to the education scene, may face substantial difficulties in providing support to students from low-income families because of a lack of training, experience, and resources (Cuozzo, 2024; Kocabas & Deniz, 2023). Thus, it is very important to evaluate the efficacy of preservice teacher preparation programs in addressing the needs of low-SES learners to equip new teachers with the required skills and knowledge to effectively support them (Daum et al., 2022).

Preservice teacher preparation programs equip preservice teachers with greater awareness of diversity and skills to support students with a wide range of needs (Lange et al., 2022). Researchers have discussed the impact of these preparation programs on teachers' diversity awareness (Wilson et al., 2020) and competency development (Cancino et al., 2020). There is a growing awareness of the central role that preservice preparation programs play in ensuring success for all children at school. Zuhairi et al.

(2020) identified that teachers are committed to ensuring the success of all students by providing them with the necessary support. Nevertheless, novice teachers face difficulties in providing adequate support to low-SES students. To understand why novice teachers, face these difficulties, I conducted a literature review. From the review, it was evident that novice teachers' perceptions regarding their preparation to support low-SES students and the effectiveness of their preservice teacher preparation programs have not been explored. It is crucial to examine the extent to which preservice preparation adequately addresses the unique needs and challenges faced by low-SES students. The remainder of this chapter includes the background, the statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, the research questions, and the significance of the study.

Background

Preservice teacher preparation has long been a focal point within the field of education, as it plays a crucial role in equipping novice teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to work effectively with diverse student populations (Gisewhite et al., 2021). During their preservice teacher preparation, these aspiring educators undergo training programs and coursework aimed at developing their pedagogical skills, content knowledge, and classroom management strategies (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). However, these preparation programs emphasize instructions and curriculum. Focus on equity-based dispositions and practices is often absent in these preparation programs (Warren, 2018). Among the various student groups affected by this limited focus on equity dispositions are the low-SES students (Destin et al., 2019).

Numerous studies have documented the impact of SES on educational outcomes (Broer et al., 2019; Destin et al., 2019; Poon, 2020; Suna et al., 2020). Suna et al. (2020) found that students in high-SES attained significantly higher scores in science, mathematics, and language tests. This persistent achievement gap between low-SES students and their high-SES counterparts can be attributed to the unique challenges low-SES students face in the classroom and at home (Destin et al., 2019). Such challenges may include limited access to educational resources, inadequate healthcare, unstable living conditions, and exposure to environmental stressors (Broer et al., 2019; Destin et al., 2019). Broer et al. (2019) suggested that variability in family SES, which can be assessed by considering three forms of capital: social, cultural, and economic capital, results in disparities in children's academic achievements. Economic inequalities influence access to material resources such as books and dictionaries and the extent to which parents can provide financial support to the student's academic pursuits (Broer et al., 2019). For instance, family finances can be used to fund organized after-school activities and access better educational opportunities (Broer et al., 2019). Additionally, low SES may impact parental factors which influence academic achievement (Poon, 2020). Poon (2020) sampled 165 primary school students with middle SES and 184 students with low SES and found significant differences in parental involvement, parental expectation, child engagement, and academic scores in English and Chinese subjects. Parents from low SES were less likely to contribute to their children's learning activities because they had lower levels of education compared to those from middle SES. Thus, the contributions of teachers are important in breaching this gap (Fischer et al., 2020).

However, novice teachers frequently encounter substantial difficulties in providing adequate support to low-SES students due to limited training, experience, and resources. Preservice teacher preparation has a long history and dates back beyond the 19th Century, before the establishment of formal schools in the country (Trotman & Kerr, 2001). Then, teachers would be prepared via apprenticeships, in which they learned by observing and assisting experienced educators (Trotman & Kerr, 2001). By the onset of the 20th Century, normal schools and teachers' colleges gained prominence, and teacher training became more structured, focusing not only on content knowledge but also on pedagogy. Though the education sector was significantly influenced by social and political changes, teachers' preparation was relatively uniform, with little consideration given to the diverse needs of different student populations (Horsley et al., 2004). However, over time, there has been increased recognition for training teachers in preparation for diverse classrooms. Landmark cases such as *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) and the civil rights movement set the stage for future equity by prohibiting discrimination based on race, color, religion, sex, or national origin. Minimal effort was channeled to cater to low SES students in teachers' training until the dawn of modern legal advancements such as the No Child Left Behind Act (2001) and the subsequent Every Student Succeeds Act (2015; Tardif, 2001). Today, preservice teacher preparation continues to evolve in the quest to attain an equitable approach that emphasizes field experience and reflective practices (Jacobs & Burns, 2021).

As the need for equitable preservice teacher preparation continues gaining more relevance, more focus is being channeled to the low SES students. According to the U.S.

Census Bureau (2023), 11.5% of Americans, equivalent to 37.9 million people, lived below the federal poverty line by the end of 2022. This number implies that a significant portion of students are engrained in the low SES category, echoing the need to meet their needs and expectations more precisely. The scores of this population are invariably one standard deviation lower compared to the high SES learners (Rodriguez-Segura et al., 2021). This evidence means that they are roughly 3 academic years behind as they have minimal access to books, computers, and other learning materials. Blending these inadequacies with improper teaching strategies by novice teachers tends to be problematic. Their academic achievement is further derailed by the increased chances for poor physical and mental health outcomes as they are more prone to chronic health conditions despite limited access to healthcare (Vadivel et al., 2023). Hence, this population lacks a competitive edge, and apart from the achievement gap, they are more likely to drop out and record lower college enrolment and completion rates (Chatterji et al., 2021; Parutis & Howson, 2020). For instance, the high school dropout rate for low SES students aged 16-24 stands at 11.6% compared to 2.8% for students from high-income families (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Nevertheless, failing to ensure proper and effective teaching practices for low SES students can, in turn, affect their employment opportunities in the future, resulting in more challenges (Cunninghame et al., 2020).

A critical examination of the current education sector in the country indicates that the demand for novice teachers keeps escalating in response to the bulging population (LaVan, 2019). As such, the National Center for Education Statistics (2020) documented

that at least 10% of public-school teachers in every academic year are usually in their first or second year of teaching. According to National Center for Education Statistics. (2024) though their expertise in handling low SES students is arguable, they play a critical role in covering the escalating attrition rate, considering that the turnover rate of public-school teachers is 8%. However, 17% of novice teachers, particularly those with less than 5 years of experience, leave their jobs, citing challenging working conditions, lack of support, and inadequate preparation (Nguyen et al., 2020). It is worth noting that most entry-level teachers have a higher propensity to work in high-need schools with higher rates of poverty and low academic outcomes, further increasing their teaching burden (Copes, 2022). Furthermore, existing studies suggest that aspects of teacher's professional development have a significant correlation with student performance, particularly among students from low SES backgrounds (Fischer et al., 2020). At this juncture, the impact of low SES appears to be bidirectional, impacting both students and teachers. This context begs the question of the efficacy of preservice preparation programs for supporting low SES students.

Preservice teacher preparation courses are held in high regard due to their invaluable role in student learning. According to a report by the U.S. Department of Education (2021), 65% of teachers countrywide confirm to have taken preservice courses on serving learners with diverse background affiliations. Seventy percent have adequate training in catering to students with special needs, while 41% have covered coursework on teaching those with limited English proficiency. These figures reflect major milestones in catering to the low SES learners. However, the central concern remains on

the comprehensiveness of these courses and how they affect the readiness, confidence, and performance of the teachers.

Problem Statement

The problem that was addressed through this study was that there is a gap in the literature about the preparation of mid to lower elementary novice teachers to teach students with low-socioeconomic status (low-SES) in several districts throughout the Southern United States. Grounded in social justice theory, the purpose of this basic qualitative study was to explore lower to middle elementary teachers' perceptions on their preparation to teach low-SES students through their preservice in two southern states.

While researchers have shed light on the achievement gap between low-SES students and their high-SES peers, there is a dearth of studies focusing specifically on novice teachers' descriptions of their preservice preparation to support low-SES students. Understanding the perspectives and experiences of these novice teachers is crucial in identifying the existing gaps in preservice programs and informing necessary improvements. Furthermore, examining how preservice preparation programs address the unique needs and challenges of low-SES students from diverse backgrounds is essential to fostering more inclusive and equitable educational environments.

Purpose of the Study

In this study, I explored the perceptions of novice teachers regarding their preparation to support low-SES students, including the effectiveness of their preservice teacher preparation programs. My goal was to provide recommendations to improve preservice teacher preparation programs to better address the needs of low-SES students.

I used a qualitative approach and semistructured one-on-one interviews with 12 novice teachers who had completed their preservice teacher preparation programs just prior to this study. The data collected from the interviews were analyzed thematically to identify common themes and patterns related to preservice teacher preparation programs and their effectiveness in supporting low-SES students.

Research Questions

There were two research questions in this study:

1. How do novice teachers perceive the effectiveness of their preservice teacher preparation programs in equipping them to meet the needs of low-SES students?
2. How can preservice teacher preparation programs be enhanced to better prepare novice teachers to support low-SES students?

Conceptual Framework for the Study

I used equity-based approaches in this study to address disparities in educational outcomes of low-SES students. My goal was to ensure full equity in students as teachers are prepared for their learning requirements. Equity-based approaches involve being aware, which includes setting and changing barriers emanating from systemic inequity and disproportionately affected disadvantages (Redding & Henry, 2019). This conceptual framework emphasizes approaches including culturally responsive teaching strategies intended to create positive attitudes toward valuing diversity in the inclusiveness of a classroom.

For the conceptual framework for this study, I integrated Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Bandura's social cognitive theory, and Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory. Vygotsky emphasized the role of social interactions in learning. The scaffolding of student understanding by Vygotsky expressed that they pay extra attention to collaboration (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021). Following this, teachers can be expected to create an environment that has regard for pupils varied cultural or socio-economic contexts from which they progress and feel important when learning takes place (Paris & Alim, 2017). This justifies the practice of culturally sustaining pedagogies to further support promoting the engagement levels of the most marginalized communities of these low SES.

Bandura's social cognitive theory underscores the role of teacher efficacy in shaping student outcomes (Bandura, 2001). Teachers who possess high self-efficacy are better prepared to manage classrooms for diverse populations and the practice of equity (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). This theory supports that scaffolding of pre-service teacher preparation should focus on building confidence to deal with challenges concerning students from socio-economic disparities (Casey et al., 2020). The relationship between teacher self-efficacy and better classroom management outcomes is important in tackling behavioral challenges amongst low-SES backgrounds.

I used Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory to review how the environment influences student development. I used Bronfenbrenner's model to show how educational results depend fully on interactions between students and their family members as well as their settings at school and in the community (Vadivel et al., 2023). A complete view of

these linked environments can be used to create support systems to assist students whose outside-of-class stresses trouble them (Fischer et al., 2020). Effective teacher service preparation must include teaching methods to connect with students' families and communities to provide total student support.

I combined multiple methods to examine both social fairness and cultural learning settings while studying cognitive and environmental influences. I used this framework to determine the essential skills preservice teachers require to deliver effective help to students from low-income families. I also used the framework to understand how teachers feel about their training to handle educational inequality issues.

Nature of Study

In this study, I used a basic qualitative research design to investigate the experiences of novice teachers regarding their preservice preparation to support low-SES learners. I chose this research design based on its appropriateness for delving into the subjective accounts and perspectives of the participants (Creswell & Poth, 2016). This qualitative approach can be used for a comprehensive exploration of the essence and meaning of individuals' experiences within the educational context (Kostere & Kostere, 2021).

The basic qualitative research design is useful for an in-depth examination of participants' perspectives, encouraging them to articulate their experiences, perceptions, and challenges (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This methodological approach includes the collection of rich qualitative data essential for identifying areas for improvement in preservice teacher preparation programs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Furthermore, this

research design is well-suited for capturing the diverse and unique viewpoints of novice teachers (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). Given the variability in preservice preparation experiences influenced by personal backgrounds, training programs, and instructional contexts, the generic qualitative approach was suitable for the exploration of individual differences while also identifying common themes and patterns (see Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

While other research designs, such as narrative research, case study, and grounded theory, offer valuable insights, they may not adequately capture the nuanced and subjective nature of novice teachers' experiences (Nigar, 2020). These designs may prioritize statistical analysis or causal relationships, which may not have aligned with the primary objective of this study. Therefore, I used the basic qualitative research for exploring the experiences and descriptions of preservice preparation among novice teachers.

Definitions

Pre-service teacher preparation: Training programs and coursework tailored to develop pedagogical skills, classroom management strategies, and content knowledge for aspiring teachers (Khasawneh, 2023).

Low-SES Students: Students who face financial constraints that significantly impact their academic progress in the long run (Fischer et al., 2020).

Novice Teachers: Teachers in their early stages of the teaching profession often transition from pre-service preparation to in-service teaching, thus having limited training, experience, and resources (Bar-Tal et al., 2020).

Teacher Preparation Programs: Unique educational programs mainly offered by higher learning institutions to proactively prepare individuals to become professional educators (Romijn et al., 2021).

Equity-Based Approaches: Educational practices and strategies that aim to deliver fair and inclusive support to all learners, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Baek et al., 2024).

Field Experiences: A critical part of preservice teachers training that offers practical teaching opportunities, allowing them to apply theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings (Nelson & Voithofer, 2022).

Professional Development: An ongoing training and education that helps teachers enhance various aspects of their careers by learning new strategies, enhancing their teaching skills, and staying updated on educational research (Vadivel et al., 2021).

Assumptions

In this study, I explored important factors about how novice teachers learn to teach students from low-income backgrounds. I assumed participants would talk openly about their teaching practices during their interviews. When participants discuss their preparation experiences in semistructured research interviews, I relied upon their statements about their preparation and its success. I assumed participants understood and could explain specific problems they encountered during their work with low-SES students.

I also assumed that preservice programs completed are different in structure, focus, and comprehensiveness. These differences resulted in myriad perspectives in terms

of how teacher preparation leads to getting prepared to service low-SES students (Casey et al., 2020). Under this premise, I assumed that all participating teachers would have had some common core preparation components such as coursework, field experiences, and reflective practices (see Vadivel et al., 2023). Under this assumption, findings are generalizable across programs to inform generalizable recommendations.

I assumed that novice teachers face problems with low-SES students that affect the way they teach. Such problems include limited resource availability, stressors from outside, and increased incidents of behavioral problems among children and youth, as noted by Fischer et al. (2020). I also assumed the participants were aware of such issues arising from direct links with socioeconomic disadvantages and not due to individual deficits only, as noted by Paris and Alim (2017). Understanding how they work to combat such challenges at the practice level would therefore depend on participants' sensitivity to systemic disadvantages.

I assumed that preservice preparation programs intend to equip teachers with culturally responsive and equity-focused pedagogies. These programs prepare teachers for inclusive lessons that consider students' ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. According to Redding and Henry (2019), novice teachers received training on some of this but may identify some gaps or weaknesses in their preparations.

Lastly, I assumed that participants' views on their preparation reflected their genuine perceptions of its effectiveness. This helped me highlight where the programs were succeeding and where they were failing in preparing them to deal with challenges at the workplace (Burton & Campbell, 2018). Their assumptions brought into perspective

the experience of novice teachers and what should be done differently to improve the preservice program. I used these assumptions to arrive at truthful findings that can help promote equity in education and further provide better support for low-SES students.

Scope and Delimitations

In this study, I focused on understanding novice teachers' perceptions of their preservice preparation to support low-SES students. I examined how such programs address the challenges that come with teaching low-SES learners and are effective in enhancing instructional strategies and equity-focused curricula (Redding & Henry, 2019). In this study, I provided recommendations on how teacher education programs can be enhanced to foster an equitable learning environment. This research was limited to novice teachers with fewer than 5 years of teaching experience who worked with low-SES students. For consistency in the data collection, participants needed to have undergone preservice programs. Veteran teachers, alternative certification routes, and those teaching solely other populations of students were beyond the scope of this research.

I only examined socioeconomic factors affecting pupils' academic achievement, not race, ethnicity, or language proficiency, unless expressly related. Semistructured interviews as qualitative methods could limit generalizability by subjective replies from respondents (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). Geographic-based schools or districts with high low-SES student populations offer context-specific findings. However, the results cannot be blindly applied to schools in other regions or with different educational systems (Fischer et al., 2020). Though small in scale, the study does bridge a critical gap in teacher preparation for low-SES children.

Limitations

This study had several limitations that may have influenced the interpretation and generalizability of its findings. Reliance on self-reported data through semistructured interviews may lead to socially desirable responses or unintentional omissions, affecting the authenticity of the findings. The use of virtual data collection methods may have limited rapport-building and the observation of nonverbal cues, potentially impacting the richness of the data. Time constraints, as I captured participants' experiences at a single point in time, further restricted the ability to understand evolving perspectives. While these limitations were acknowledged, the study's rigorous approach to data collection and analysis was taken to enhance its credibility. Future research with larger, more diverse samples and longitudinal designs could address these limitations and expand understanding in this area.

Significance

This study is significant for various stakeholders in education, including teacher educators, policymakers, school administrators, novice teachers, and low-SES students, particularly those from minority and rural backgrounds. My goal was to inform teacher education program leaders about existing gaps and areas for improvement, guiding revisions to curricula, pedagogical approaches, and field experiences. Policymakers can use the findings to develop evidence-based policies and initiatives that reduce educational disparities and promote equity. At the same time, school administrators can design comprehensive induction programs and support networks for novice teachers. Novice teachers benefit by providing insights into potential growth areas, enhancing their

instructional practices, classroom management skills, and culturally responsive teaching approaches. Ultimately, my goal was to foster a more inclusive and equitable educational environment for low-SES students, empowering them to overcome barriers and achieve their full potential.

Summary

In this study, I examined the perceptions of novice teachers regarding their preservice preparation to meet the needs of low-SES students. I identified shortcomings in teacher training programs and highlighted challenges such as limited equity-focused training and poor classroom management strategies. I collected data from novice teachers through semistructured interviews. This indicated that the recurring themes of discussion included the culturally responsive teaching method and preparation for socioeconomic disparity.

The results indicated that the preservice programs prepare teachers differently for the low-SES students. The shortcomings can be curbed better through well-curbed curricula and professional development. Equity-focused strategies with evidence-based practices use tools that make teachers more competent in their pursuit of inclusion in the learning environment. As a result, the study provides some actionable recommendations for policymakers, administrators, and teacher educators. This can eradicate educational inequality and remodeling academic outcomes for children from lower-SES backgrounds.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The literature review in this study includes a comprehensive overview of existing research and scholarly work related to preservice teacher preparation and its impact on supporting low-SES students. In the review, I examine and highlighted the unique challenges faced by novice teachers in providing effective support to low-SES students and explored their perceptions, experiences, and areas of professional growth related to working with this specific student population. Additionally, the factors contributing to novice teachers' difficulties, such as a lack of training, limited resources, and unfamiliarity with the sociocultural contexts of low-SES students, are explained. In this literature review, I explore the role of preservice teacher preparation programs in addressing the needs of low-SES students. I examine the components of effective preservice programs, including coursework, field experiences, mentoring, and support networks, that can enhance novice teachers' preparedness to work with this student population. I also identify gaps and limitations in the in-use preservice preparation models, highlighting areas for improvement to ensure that future educators are equipped with the necessary tools and knowledge to support low-SES learners effectively.

Literature Search Strategy

I conducted the search for literature using Walden University's library. The ERIC, EBSCOhost, ProQuest, Academic Search Complete, and the Education Source databases. Key search terms and combinations included *low SES, poverty, disadvantages, low income, low socioeconomic status, social class, instructional strategies for SES, teach*

strategy, achievement, attainment, preservice teacher preparation, teacher preparation programs, and strategies to engage SES students. The criteria used in the literature search strategy included peer-reviewed, full-text articles published between 2019 and 2024. The total number of references for the literature review was 39 articles. Out of those 39, approximately 23% were peer-reviewed journals.

Low-SES Students and Novice Teacher Challenges

According to Sovansopha (2020), children of a low SES are those who come from homes with poor incomes and who may have trouble affording housing, healthcare, and education. These concerns could have an impact on their grades as well as their overall well-being (Broer et al., 2019). Poon (2020) studied the differences in academic accomplishment between pupils from low- and middle SES and found that SES affected student performance. According to Poon (2020), academic performance is lower among students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds than it is among middle- and high-income children. The findings of the study suggested that this disparity can be attributed to insufficient levels of parental expectation, child participation, and parental involvement (Poon, 2020). According to Poon, these are the most significant factors that influence SES and educational attainment. Poon was of the opinion that parental participation in their children's educational activities is necessary for improved academic success.

Similarly, Merga (2020) reported that SES is a significant determinant of literacy attainment. According to Merga, students in the highest socioeconomic quartile attained a higher average score (551) compared to those in the lowest socioeconomic quartile (462).

Furthermore, disadvantaged students often attend schools where other students are disadvantaged as well or in low-income neighborhoods with limited resources (Campos & Kearns, 2022; Edwards, 2021; Merga, 2020; Triventi et al., 2020). Low SES students are unable to access schools that are farther away from home, and school district boundaries may hinder access to high-performing schools for disadvantaged students (Edwards, 2021).

However, Merga (2020) suggested that it is important to understand whether the impact of SES can be mediated by school factors. Archambault et al. (2020) argued that high-quality teaching is even more critical in low socioeconomic neighborhoods because many students have more academic challenges and lower classroom cognitive, effective, and behavioral engagement. According to Merga, low levels of engagement in low SES students can be attributed to prolonged educational avoidance and disengagement, lack of motivation, and a history of failure. The cycle of underachievement, behavioral challenges, and low self-esteem are also barriers to academic performance in this population (Cunninghame et al., 2020). These poor engagement levels and attitudes are associated with low skill acquisition among low-SES students (Merga, 2020). However, a study by Archambault et al. (2020) sampled 696 low-SES elementary school students found that teacher involvement and autonomy support contributed to greater levels of classroom and behavioral engagement. Additionally, Scales et al. (2020) found that student-teacher relationship quality was lower for low-SES students and that strengthening the student-teacher relationship could have significant effects on the achievement and motivation of these students.

When working with children from disadvantaged socioeconomic backgrounds and diverse backgrounds, teachers encounter a unique set of challenges (Kaniuka & Kanuika, 2019). García and Weiss (2019) suggested that adverse working conditions contribute to the high turnover of teachers in high-poverty schools. Several studies suggest that student SES is the most significant predictor of teacher turnover (García & Weiss, 2019; Kaniuka & Kanuika, 2019; Van Eycken et al., 2024). High-poverty schools experience significantly higher rates of teacher turnover compared to affluent schools (Van Eycken et al., 2024). High turnover rates in schools with large student populations of low SES results in schools having more inexperienced and novice teachers than affluent schools (García & Weiss, 2019). However, novice teachers are ill-equipped to deal with the challenges and provide support to students from low SES backgrounds (García & Weiss, 2019).

Novice teachers also have to deal with communication problems and cultural differences (Wolff et al., 2021). Additionally, diverse student populations and classroom complexities make it difficult to manage the classroom (Wolff et al., 2021). Wolff et al. (2021) argued that the teachers' ability to deal with such issues depends on their level of experience, which influences how they monitor the class, maintain an ongoing awareness of the students, and react to events in the classroom. Knowledge from experience bolsters the teachers' awareness and ability to handle classroom complexities (Wolff et al., 2021). Thus, novice teachers may face difficulty in handling classroom difficulties and diverse student populations (García & Weiss, 2019). Bertram (2023) suggested that novice teachers may be overwhelmed when monitoring and tracking the students' progress, face

challenges in applying teaching approaches they learned in colleges and universities and may be daunted by the limited mentorship provided. According to Gaikhorst et al. (2017), students with a low SES have difficulty in the classroom, and thus, preservice training for teachers is required for them to appropriately serve these pupils. Choi and Chiu (2022) stated that the lack of social, cultural, and economic resources, as well as communication barriers, make it more difficult for novice educators to work with children from low-SES families. They agreed that inexperienced teachers may not be prepared to oversee pupils from varied backgrounds and that there are deficiencies that need to be addressed to enhance the academic outcomes of children from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Choi & Chiu, 2022).

High levels of poverty and unequal distribution of resources reinforce and sustain unequal academic achievement among students (Allais et al., 2019). These structural constraints cannot be easily resolved by the agency of the individual teacher (Bertram, 2023). Gaikhorst et al. (2017) and Song et al. (2019) advocated that schools collaborate with outside organizations and governments to help low-SES children by providing learning materials, assisting instructors and students in developing skills, reorganizing educator roles, and using technology. However, Bertram (2023) suggested that initial teacher preparations can compensate for the unequal schooling system by enabling novice teachers to gain resilience in their early years of teaching.

To provide low-SES students with adequate support, novice instructors go through extensive preservice training. This training is essential for giving teachers the understanding, expertise, and tact needed to deal with the difficulties these communities'

children encounter (Choi & Chiu, 2022). Preservice preparation includes a strong emphasis on comprehending the socioeconomic variables that affect students' lives. Inexperienced educators explore the complexities of poverty, realizing that it encompasses a range of social, emotional, and educational difficulties in addition to financial limitations. They get a sophisticated understanding of how low SES might impact students' academic achievement, motivation, and general well-being through coursework and real-world experiences.

Preservice programs emphasize how crucial it is to create an inclusive and culturally sensitive learning environment in the classroom. To acknowledge that children from lower socioeconomic origins may have different cultural experiences, novice teachers learn how to establish an environment that respects and embraces diversity in backgrounds. This entails using culturally appropriate teaching resources, introducing a variety of viewpoints into the curriculum, and encouraging each student to feel that they belong (Choi & Chiu, 2022). Differentiated education is emphasized heavily in preservice preparation. To meet the varied learning needs of their students in a classroom, novice teachers must adapt their pedagogy to consider differences in students' academic preparation, learning preferences, and socio-emotional growth. Because students from low-SES families may have a wide range of academic experiences and abilities when they first enter the classroom, this method is especially important in supporting them.

Preservice training helps teachers, students, and their families form solid partnerships by honing their collaboration and communication skills. To effectively engage parents and guardians in their children's education, novice teachers must first

recognize their value as partners in learning. For students from low-SES families, this cooperative approach fosters a supporting network by bridging the gap between home and school (Hilton & McCleary, 2019). Practical experiences, such as student teaching assignments in schools with a range of socioeconomic backgrounds, are incorporated into preservice programs. Incorporating theoretical information into practical situations allows novice teachers to receive direct exposure to the difficulties experienced by children from low socioeconomic backgrounds. Novice teachers get the flexibility and resiliency necessary to handle the challenges of varied classrooms thanks to this experience of learning (Madler et al., 2022).

Preservice preparation includes placing a strong emphasis on classroom management techniques catered to the requirements of kids from poor socioeconomic backgrounds. Inexperienced educators learn how to establish a disciplined and encouraging learning environment that tackles possible behavioral problems that have a socioeconomic basis. Through the implementation of proactive measures and comprehension of the effects of external stressors, they can foster an environment that is favorable for learning (Knight et al. 2010). Additionally, preservice programs place a strong emphasis on making decisions based on facts. To determine each student's unique needs and modify their teaching strategies accordingly, novice teachers get the ability to evaluate academic and socioemotional data (Zhukova, 2018). This focused intervention is crucial for closing learning deficits that could result from low SES.

Preservice training also incorporates professional development activities that promote lifelong learning and introspection. It is advisable for new educators to stay

up to date on educational legislation, cutting edge research, and strategies for assisting children from low-SES backgrounds. By staying committed to ongoing improvement, educators can adapt to the changing requirements of both their communities and students. (McMahan & Garza, 2016) The process of preparing new teachers for preservice work to assist pupils from low-SES backgrounds is complex and ever-changing (Hilton & McCleary, 2019). The process entails a blend of academic understanding, real-world application, and a dedication to continual professional growth. Preservice programs serve a critical role in promoting educational equity for all children, regardless of their socioeconomic background, by providing educators with the tools they need to build inclusive and supportive learning environments.

However, in a study to explore preservice teachers' implicit attitudes and stereotypical and prejudiced beliefs toward low SES students and the causal attributions for poor educational achievement among low SES students, Glock and Kleen (2020) reported that teachers had negative implicit attitudes towards these students and associated good working and learning habits, language proficiency, and competencies to high SES students. Glock and Kleen (2020) argued that preservice teachers favor high-SES students over low-SES students in their stereotypical beliefs on school-related attributes and their implicit attitudes. Similarly, Daum et al. (2022) found that cultural biases, differences, and similarities between preservice teachers and students affected the learning environment. The study further suggested that additional attention should be provided to developing behavior management skills in preservice teachers and exposing

preservice teachers to teaching learners from experiences and cultures that are different from their own (Daum et al., 2022).

Novice Teacher Training

Preservice teacher education is facing significant challenges in today's age of globalization, particularly in terms of how well it prepares new teachers to work with students from a variety of backgrounds (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021). Several studies have increasingly focused on students from low-income families and their academic performance (Chen et al., 2022; Dynarski et al., 2021; McGee, 2021; Roksa & Kinsley, 2019). Students in this situation frequently face educational challenges that other students do not face (McGee, 2021). A significant challenge in education continues to be the achievement gap that exists between children from low-SES and high-SES families (McGee, 2021). Beginner teachers may require assistance in supporting children from low-income families because they lack the necessary training, experience, and resources (Yuan & Jiang, 2019). Therefore, preservice teacher preparation programs need to be assessed to see whether they satisfy the requirements of students from low-SES backgrounds (Clever & Miller, 2019). The assessment will allow new teachers to train on how to work with pupils from lower socioeconomic backgrounds.

The comprehensive process of novice teacher training equips aspiring teachers with the fundamental know-how and abilities needed to successfully negotiate the challenges of the teaching profession (Höl, 2024). A crucial aspect of this instruction entails delving deeply into educational theory and pedagogy. As part of their education, novice teachers study several learning theories and instructional techniques, providing

them with a theoretical framework that guides their approach to teaching (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021). Comprehending the fundamental concepts of education establishes the foundation for efficient teaching methods and active participation from students (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2021).

An essential component of teacher education is the focus on effective classroom management strategies. Inexperienced educators pick up techniques for creating a disciplined and encouraging learning atmosphere (Wolff et al., 2021). This entails learning how to handle behavior, resolve conflicts, and foster a supportive learning environment in the classroom (Wolff et al., 2021). A classroom that is well-managed greatly helps to foster a learning environment by freeing up teachers to concentrate on teaching material and developing deep relationships with their pupils (Berger et al., 2021; Wolff et al., 2021).

During novice teacher training, differentiated instruction is a major area of emphasis (Bondie et al., 2019). This method includes teaching teachers how to adapt their instruction to meet the demands of different learning styles, academic preparation levels, and socioemotional development (Bondie et al., 2019). It also acknowledges the diversity of learning needs that exist within a classroom. Novice teachers who adopt differentiated instruction ensure that each student gets individualized attention, which promotes a more welcoming and equal learning environment (Napanoy et al., 2021). Diversity awareness and cultural competency are essential elements of teacher preparation programs. Novice instructors are trained to comprehend and appreciate the variety of cultural backgrounds, languages, and experiences that their students bring to the classroom. Establishing an

inclusive environment that celebrates variety and fosters a sense of belonging for all children requires a foundation of cultural awareness.

Technology integration is incorporated into novice teacher training in response to the changing nature of education. Educators acquire the ability to use instructional software, digital materials, and web-based platforms to improve student involvement and conduct productive lessons. Instructors must possess this technological competency to address the demands of their pupils in terms of digital literacy and to navigate the current educational landscape. Data analysis and assessment are two other essential components of training for new teachers (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). Instructors gain the ability to create relevant exams, evaluate student performance information, and decide how best to implement lessons based on assessment findings. With the use of this data-driven approach, educators can ensure that each student's requirements are met, monitor progress, and modify their methods of instruction to maximize the learning outcomes of all students.

Training programs cover inclusion and special education to give new teachers the knowledge and talents to work with kids who have a range of learning needs, including those who are disabled. Adapting teaching strategies to foster inclusive learning settings, working with special education experts, and gaining insights into special education practices are all included in the training. During their training, novice instructors also learn how to collaborate and communicate with one another. Effective communication with administrators, parents, coworkers, and students are stressed. To enhance the overall achievement of their students, novice teachers gain experience in fostering strong

connections, leading productive parent-teacher conferences, and working in teams with other experts.

Experience in a real classroom is a crucial component of training for new teachers. Student teaching internships give newcomers practical experience using their academic knowledge in real-world classroom environments (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). Through this hands-on learning opportunity, they may hone their teaching abilities, improve their lesson plans, and learn how to deal with the day-to-day difficulties of running a classroom, all of which will help them prepare for the reality of the teaching profession.

New instructors are trained to exercise reflection and to be dedicated to continuous professional growth. This motivates teachers to evaluate their approaches on a regular basis, think back on their experiences, and adjust to the changing needs of their pupils. Incorporating professional development opportunities guarantees that educators stay up to date on the latest research and best practices in education, encouraging a dedication to lifelong learning. The thorough and meticulous process of training novice teachers covers a wide range of topics, including pedagogy, cultural competency, and technological integration (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). Training programs are used to develop teachers who are informed, flexible, sympathetic, and proficient in addressing the various needs of their pupils by offering a broad and useful basis.

Comprehending Pedagogy and Educational Theory

Courses for new teachers include understanding pedagogical tactics, instructional methodologies, and educational philosophies. This fundamental understanding aids in

rookie comprehension of the guiding concepts of student learning and offers a theoretical framework for efficient teaching techniques (Napanoy et al., 2021). Training courses put a strong emphasis on the value of efficient classroom management. To provide an organized and effective learning environment, novice instructors study methods, such as behavior control and conflict resolution, and create a healthy classroom culture. Novice teachers receive differentiated instruction training to help them recognize the variety of learning needs that students have. Ensuring that every student has access to an inclusive and supportive learning environment entails adapting instructional strategies to meet a variety of learning styles, academic preparation, and socioemotional development. To foster cultural competency and an awareness of diversity in the classroom, novice instructors receive training. This entails recognizing and honoring various linguistic, cultural, and personal backgrounds to promote an inclusive atmosphere that values diversity. Novice instructors receive training in incorporating technology into their teaching practices, given its significance in today's educational landscape. This includes enhancing engagement and facilitating successful learning experiences using instructional software, digital resources, and online platforms.

Inexperienced educators gain knowledge on how to create tests, evaluate student performance information, and make wise instructional decisions in light of the test findings. Teachers can determine each student's unique needs and adjust their lessons accordingly, thanks to this data-driven method. The inclusion of students with a variety of learning requirements, including those with disabilities, is addressed in training programs. To fulfill the requirements of all students, novice instructors might modify

their instruction, obtain insight into special education techniques, and work with professionals in the field.

Professional Growth and Reflective Practice

It is recommended that new instructors participate in reflective practice, reviewing and modifying their approaches as needed to meet the changing needs of their pupils (Bar-Tar et al., 2020). To encourage a dedication to lifelong learning and being up to date with the latest research and best practices in education, professional development opportunities are incorporated into the training program (Vadivel et al., 2021). Novice instructors go through a thorough and varied training program that blends classroom instruction with real-world experience (Dvir & Schatz-Oppenheimer, 2020). Training programs cover a wide range of topics related to teaching, such as pedagogy, cultural competency, and technological integration. The goal is to produce teachers who are competent, flexible, understanding, and capable of meeting the needs of their pupils. Important facets of a teacher's job include teamwork and effective communication with administrators, parents, coworkers, and students. To enhance student success, novice teachers receive training in fostering healthy connections, leading parent-teacher conferences, and collaborating with other professionals (Napanoy et al., 2021). Experiences that are more firsthand, such as student teaching placements, give beginners the opportunity to put their academic knowledge into practice in real classroom environments. They can improve their instructional strategies, hone their teaching abilities, and deal with the day-to-day difficulties of running a classroom, thanks to this experience.

Understanding Family Background through Teacher Preparation Programs

Students from low-SES families are disproportionately underrepresented in general educational settings. According to Song et al. (2019), poverty has several different effects on the development of students. One of these effects is a positive relationship between poverty and the stress and psychological discomfort that students experience. Most students from low SES deal with various forms of stress, including those related to their social interactions, mental and physical health, and economic situation. In this case, the detrimental effects of poverty on a student's ability to succeed academically can be shown in several ways. With the connection between poverty and lower levels of academic achievement among low-SES students, preservice educators should have adequate training to teach children from low-income households (Song et al., 2019). Preservice instructors need to foster a knowledge of the influence that poverty has on the academic life of their students. In addition, they require the capacity to recognize students' needs and provide them with the necessary resources. These include having the knowledge and abilities necessary to support such students in achieving academic success in their classes and having a strong connection with the children and their families.

When working with students who come from a variety of backgrounds, particularly low-income ones, inexperienced teachers face substantial challenges. According to Hilton and McCleary's (2019) research, students from low-income families can have challenges in the classroom. Preservice training is necessary for teachers to assist these students. According to Song et al. (2019), unskilled teachers have a difficult time helping children from low-income families because there are not enough social,

cultural, or economic resources available to them, and there are also communication problems. According to Song et al. (2019), inexperienced teachers have a challenging time controlling their classrooms because they may not have the necessary tools to deal with students from different backgrounds. They also recognize that inequalities need to be addressed to improve learning outcomes for kids from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. Song et al. (2019) noted that this is an issue that should be addressed to improve the educational opportunities available to children from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. This also indicates that students should form partnerships with external groups to supply learning materials, assist instructors and students in the acquisition of critical skills, reorganize educator positions, and use technology to better serve children from low-income families (Fischer et al., 2020).

Importance of Teacher Preparation Programs

Today's novice teachers are more inclined to teach students from various socioeconomic backgrounds, yet researchers indicate they need to be more prepared to work with students from low SES. Preservice teachers from conventional training programs need to be more equipped to concentrate on the unique needs of students from diverse backgrounds, such as those living in poverty. According to earlier studies, preservice teachers frequently have inaccurate perceptions of poor students (Milner & Laughter, 2015). However, a plethora of preservice teachers from traditional education programs stereotype low-SES students. While teacher preparation courses that engage with diversity in meaningful ways can dispel such misconceptions, this is only sometimes the case. According to Hilton and McCleary (2019), instructors who hold unfavorable

opinions about children who live in poverty often think that these pupils are less intelligent, less cultivated, and less deserving of learning opportunities. Additionally, Mundy and Leko (2015) discovered that many preservice teachers reduce poverty due to a lack of resources, obscuring the more complex social problems that come with lower SES.

Dvir and Schatz-Oppenheimer (2020) investigated the difficulties that rookie instructors face in the classroom. They argued that teachers with little to no experience have a hard time dealing with unforeseen educational, behavioral, and ethical challenges. Dvir and Schatz-Oppenheimer highlighted that if educators want to overcome these challenges, they must first understand their experiences to advance their careers. According to Napanoy et al. (2021), preservice teachers are essential because they can eventually become teachers in the classroom. A study was conducted to identify the issues faced by college preservice instructors and to find potential solutions to those challenges. According to the findings of the study, 79 future educators have difficulty dealing with student supervisors, administrative help, students, peers, the learning environment, cooperating teachers, and the accompanying obligations. According to Napanoy et al. (2021), the culprits are a lack of facilities, preparation, and training, as well as discrepancies between supervisors, peers, and students.

The rate of teacher turnover, which is an indicator of teaching instability and school volatility, affects the results of students. Mäkelä et al. (2014) defined teacher turnover as the number of teachers who leave the profession, migrate, and change subjects. According to the findings of the study, teaching instability is most strongly

influenced by teacher turnover. According to the findings of the Mäkelä et al.'s (2014) study, younger teachers (those who are just starting out in the field) are more likely to leave the field than older instructors due to working conditions, administration, rewards, respect, and pupils. According to the findings of the study, first-year teachers are not adequately prepared for the rigorous classroom environment, and the preservice training program should be modified to better assist new teachers as they transition into the classroom.

Training and Support Given to Novice Teachers

Training is a vital requirement if starting instructors are going to be successful in overcoming the hurdles they face. According to Casey et al. (2020), educational institutions of higher learning provide preservice teachers with numerous levels of training and assistance to better prepare them to interact with kids who come from several different kinds of families. Four actions are recommended for preservice teachers to take, as outlined by Casey et al. (2020): (a) learn content that is pertinent to the desired area of certification or level of certification; (b) implement strategies that are supported by research in educational settings; (c) take certification exams in both pedagogy and content; and (d) learn pedagogical strategies that are tailored to the needs of individual students. Preservice teachers might not be aware of how floor robots can assist with critical thinking and topic learning. According to this study, the use of floor robots, in addition to other treatments, is recommended to improve learning.

Garza and Smith (2015) advocated the use of technology as a means to enhance educational outcomes. Blogging as a way for students to engage in self-reflection is

something that may now be incorporated into preservice teacher training because of advances in technology (Collet, 2020; Kaçar, 2020). According to Garza and Smith's findings, blogging is beneficial to both teaching and learning because it encourages more self-reflection.

New teachers can better make sense of their experiences in the classroom by engaging in reflective thinking. Garza and Smith (2015) investigated how observation and reflection influence the professional development of preservice teachers. However, none of the studies demonstrated how observation and reflection influence the incorporation of classroom projects. According to Garza and Smith, preservice training programs encourage electronic journaling; however, it is not obvious how this affects the management of actual classrooms, particularly classrooms that do not have the resources that are meant to supplement student teaching. These findings imply that the preservice programs that are presently in place may not be adequate to address the needs of beginning teachers because they are founded on subjective assumptions about the effectiveness of the participants in managing any given classroom.

There is less cultural mismatch and more teacher retention in Title I schools when preservice teacher preparation courses encourage cultural competency. This is especially important in rural communities that are becoming increasingly diverse. These characteristics equip educators to manage any teaching situation they could be employed for or find themselves in. According to Carothers et al. (2019), the preservice teacher preparation program at a university should assign more students from culturally,

ethnically, and socioeconomically diverse school populations to solve the problem of cultural mismatch and the lack of teachers.

Classroom Management

When preservice education practices that increase preparation for classroom management are implemented, there is an improvement in the quality of teaching, as well as in the performance of the students. Every single teacher is accountable for leading and guiding the process of preparing their classroom as well as managing its daily operations. Dunst et al. (2019) conducted research that consisted of a meta-synthesis of 14 different preservice teacher training exercises and teaching quality, as well as the performance of students ranging from preschool to college, and the attitudes and beliefs of university students and rookie teachers. The introduction of these preservice education practices led to enhanced levels of flexibility among rookie teachers, as well as increased levels of classroom cohesion and student accomplishment, as stated by the researchers. A study with three million participants and 118 meta-analyses indicated that early involvement of teachers in pedagogical practices improved the quality of teacher training. The study was conducted in the United States. Student teaching, faculty coaching, simulated instructional practices, and clinical supervision were some of the various forms of professional development that were typically implemented during the beginning of an educator's career. However, to be successful, these methods required the inclusion of various additional holistic components. As a result, competent educators were produced. Educators who adopt the strategies outlined by Dunst et al. develop the capacity to instruct their students and encourage individual and group endeavors in the classroom.

These techniques are needed to demonstrate an inability to train teachers how to manage the many different classroom settings and environments that are included as part of Title 1.

Jones and Saye (2018) conducted multiple case studies in which they investigated the beliefs and practices of two preservice teacher training program graduates while they were working in practice settings. Before beginning their professional careers, both graduates participated in and finished problem-based historical inquiry (PBHI) preservice programs. Both grads had the same amount of preservice education and taught in the same school district, yet they were assigned to different schools. It was indicated in this study that each participant had a unique perspective on classroom practices, even though PBHI training had an effect on their practices and beliefs. One graduate claimed that their teaching philosophy was founded on the PBHI, whilst another graduate claimed that their teaching philosophy was founded on the idea of preparing pupils to become responsible citizens and that the PBHI had no influence whatsoever on their practice. These findings included indications that even after receiving comparable preservice training, instructors' pedagogical beliefs differed due to the roles they played in the classroom and the personal views they held. According to the findings of the study, preservice training programs for new teachers should not simply award diplomas but should instead encourage new teachers to truly embrace their principles.

Freeman et al. (2013) conducted research to determine the number of states that mandate novice teachers receive training in evidence-based classroom management, as well as the degree to which preparation programs for novice teachers provide adequate

instruction regardless of the demographics of the classroom, they find themselves in. There is a significant divide between research-based classroom management and the training that teachers receive, even though most states have implemented practices for effective classroom management. After completing their teacher preparation program, many new teachers find that they need additional meaningful and practical classroom management curriculum to successfully regulate the behavior of their students.

Importance of Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher quality depends on teacher preparation programs. Student learning and achieving curriculum objectives at all levels depends on teacher quality. Peterson-Ahmad et al. (2018) conducted a mixed-methods study of 164 preservice teachers to determine their views on special needs student organization and participation. The study findings included a high link between general and special education, so preservice teachers in both had comparable perceptions. These parallels were stronger in identifying perceived impediments to professional development that would help new teachers integrate into the classroom. Special education instructors quit twice as often as general education teachers. Special education preservice teachers think preservice training programs should increase helpful subjects. Teacher education programs improve teachers' abilities to address students' needs, but they might include more cultural and varied studies to help them thrive in a diverse context.

Teachers should be prepared to govern the learning environment in the classroom as part of preservice education programs, which should also support a comprehensive and subjective grasp of societal issues. Saribas et al. (2016) investigated how taking an

environmental education course as a preservice primary teacher affects students' levels of self-efficacy and environmental literacy. Fifty-eight aspiring primary school teachers enrolled in the environmental education class included topics such as ecology, climate change displays, and presentations. Self-efficacy, opinions on environmental usage, and attitudes toward the environment were all shown to be greater among the participants. The participants did not demonstrate any plausible improvements in their general concern and understanding of environment-enhanced sentiments of environmental pollution or teacher environmental knowledge. The results were indicative of how reflection and observation help teacher-learners grow professionally and personally. The study results showed that teacher preservice programs should focus on teacher education rather than society-level training.

Perceptions of Preservice Teachers

Intrinsic motivations, such as an inexperienced teacher's perception, can affect the outcomes for students. Inclusion in active learning environments has traditionally been considered an essential component of effective educational practices. Even though it helps teachers address the needs of a diverse range of students, many preservice teachers still have difficulty with inclusion. Stites et al. (2018) evaluated the inclusion criteria of preservice teachers using various research methods. A total of 120 preservice teachers from elementary and early childhood schools participated in the research. The preservice training for these teachers came from the same university that also served the general education and special education teachers that were selected. According to the findings of the survey, many future teachers thought they required more mentoring and coaching as

well as a clearly defined conceptual framework to successfully navigate inclusion and manage a classroom full of pupils whose sociodemographic characteristics were radically different from those they were accustomed to.

The perceptions of new teachers are influenced by their training and preparation. According to Manasia et al. (2020), there are three aspects of a teacher's professional preparation that should be considered. These aspects include technical awareness and practice, professional dedication, and self-management. There are vectors present in each dimension. According to Manasia et al., having technical experience significantly increases teaching practices and involvement. According to the participants, training rarely provides sufficient coverage for areas such as self-management, professional commitment, and comprehension and practice of technical concepts. These deficiencies were likely to influence the novice's capacity to properly direct a classroom (regardless of how near the assignment was to the student teaching experience), as well as the outcomes for the students and the likelihood that the novice would return the following year.

As a result of changes to the educational system, it is the responsibility of educators, parents, and students to ensure that low-income children receive an appropriate education. According to research conducted by the National Centre for Children in Poverty, 38% of children under the age of 18 in the United States originate from households with low incomes, and 17% of these children are impoverished (Koball et al., 2021). Because of these startling statistics, it is imperative that educators seriously consider how they might meet the educational requirements of children from low-income

families. Some teachers have a responsibility to assist poor students in finding solutions to problems and in their academic pursuits. According to Lavy and Ayuob (2019), educators should encourage students from low-income families to continue their education despite the challenges they face. Therefore, first-year teachers need to have adequate preparation to assist students from low socioeconomic backgrounds and close the achievement gap.

Even if there were enough first-time teachers who were prepared to teach students from low-income families, there are not enough different types of teacher-training programs. The importance of people acting on their own to find solutions to problems is highlighted here. Student instructors are required to conduct studies on neighborhoods with low incomes and compare the socioeconomic standing of those communities (Koball et al., 2021). As a result, future educators would have a better understanding of socioeconomic differences and more empathy for children from low-income families. In addition, participants in a comprehensive simulation exercise may develop a more constructive attitude towards families and children from low-income households. According to Song et al. (2019), preservice educators can get something from participating in activities that involve discussing poverty. Several of the course's instructors, however, contributed to the development of these projects. It is necessary to try to implement teacher education programs more broadly. In this scenario, participants in teacher training programs should be equipped to fulfill the requirements of low-income learners and raise the academic performance of the students in their classrooms.

Research supports the difficulties that inexperienced teachers face in the classroom. According to AL Naimi et al. (2019), even after completing training programs, newly certified teachers would require assistance in the early years of their careers. They frequently encounter difficult issues that require professional training, such as working with children from varied backgrounds, particularly children from low-income families. In addition, the teaching profession and the working conditions in schools present several obstacles that are uniquely difficult for educators to overcome (AL Naimi et al., 2019). Previous research on novice educators included details of the difficulties of juggling the many responsibilities that come with teaching. According to Lew and Nelson (2016), additional responsibilities outside of teaching, frequent curriculum changes, added administrative work, a growing need for technical skills, and student diversity are examples of some of these constraints. The administration and organization of the classroom, the number of students to be taught, the variety of students and their levels of motivation, the evaluation, and concerns over student backgrounds can be challenges for beginning teachers.

Students from families with a lower SES confront greater personal and academic challenges. The fact that they come from a lower socioeconomic background does not prevent them from having the persistence necessary to overcome such obstacles and advance in society. Teachers can build their students' resiliency and cultivate an environment conducive to learning. According to Lavy and Ayuob (2019), the most effective method for teachers to assist their pupils is to cultivate true relationships with those students. According to Lavy and Ayuob (2019), educators who are more aware of

the impact they have on students and who have a stronger sense of purpose in their profession are more likely to care about and invest in their students, which results in better relationships with those students. This not only gets new teachers ready for their training but also makes them aware of the responsibility of ensuring that all students, regardless of where they come from, are treated the same.

For teachers to be competent, they need extensive training to decrease the difficulties they face in their first year of teaching. According to the findings of Taylor et al. (2015), educational institutions train and help preservice teachers at several levels to cater to the requirements of students from a wide range of backgrounds. To understand how students' sociocultural values and cultural backgrounds affect their educational progress, preservice teachers need to undergo significant training and exposure to deal with diversity. In addition, Casey et al. (2020) recommended that employed educators find out more about floor robots, as these devices have the potential to enhance both critical thinking and subject learning. It is also most important to encourage the use of technology in the classroom. Research on the attitudes, knowledge, and perceptions of minority students among preservice teachers is required because of the gap that exists between students who come from various backgrounds and teachers who manage to satisfy their needs.

To properly accommodate children from low socioeconomic backgrounds in the classroom, novice teachers need to have a solid understanding of their students' home situations. According to Vadivel et al. (2023), a family's socioeconomic background determines its social and economic standing in the community's social hierarchy. This

becomes the most key component responsible for determining a child's academic accomplishments. The amount of money a family earns, the line of work that its members pursue, the amount of education that family members have attained, and the neighborhood in which they reside are the components that make up a person's socioeconomic background. As Eo and Kim (2020) pointed out, the standards, attitudes, and behaviors of a family are dictated by the family's SES. As an example, if a parent has a greater SES and a higher level of education, they may discover that it is easier to be active in their children's educational experiences. It is possible for parents to acquire the social abilities and problem-solving strategies that, when passed on to their offspring, will allow their children to thrive academically and then teach those talents to their children (Vadivel et al., 2023). Therefore, students with better SES and greater levels of educational attainment may have a higher appreciation for learning, more positive perspectives, a stronger career perspective, and may apply more effective learning techniques than students whose parents have a lower SES and lower levels of education.

Teacher Training Programs

The most important aspect of accommodating low-SES students by novice teachers is through proper and adequate teacher training programs. The level of care and education students get from their teachers depends significantly on the level of training in the programs that prepare them. The quality of the teacher has a direct bearing on the amount that students learn and their capacity to achieve the goals set out by the respective curricula at all grade levels. Al Darwish and Sadeqi (2016) investigated the influence a teacher training program had on potential educators by observing its impact on preservice

teachers. As a result of the training, the participants reported improved self-awareness and confidence in their abilities and areas of competence, as demonstrated by the results. According to the study's findings, preservice teacher programs significantly impacted the preservice teachers' ability to increase their educational outcomes, as well as their teaching practice competency and ability to plan and prepare effective lessons. According to Wilson et al. (2020), preservice teacher programs had a significant impact on the preservice teachers' ability to increase their educational outcomes, as well as their teaching practice competency and their ability to include all students' needs.

Another important aspect of preservice training programs is that it helps novice teachers to develop positive interactions with the students. Lavy and Ayuob (2019) suggested that relationships between teachers and students are one of the most reliable determinants of students' health and well-being and their levels of motivation, social conduct, academic engagement, and academic accomplishment. To be more specific, students' perceptions that their instructors care for them were linked to these children's self-esteem, well-being, and engagement in school, and teachers' drive to interact with their students was a predictor of teachers' ability to educate and provide social support to their students effectively. According to Lavy and Ayuob, the consequences may be even more important for connections between instructors and students from low SES. This is because students from low SES need more support resources on which to depend in situations of need and may have fewer adult relationship figures available to them. Furthermore, beyond their impact on students, instructors' connections with their pupils also help teachers' capacity to perform effectively. This is because of the possible

contribution that these relationships have to the environment of the classroom as well as to the internal resources of the teachers. Therefore, they may lessen teachers' difficulties at work and raise their ability to deal with challenges.

Teacher preparation programs have attracted attention as academics and practitioners strive to understand ways to ensure that trainees are competent to teach all learners, and that district staff can control turnover rates in their teaching staff. Even while teacher education programs result in large numbers of graduates interested in becoming teachers, not all graduates go on to the career education sector (Casey et al., 2020). More information is needed about the percentage of people who graduate from schools that prepare teachers but do not go on to work in the profession. The training that would-be novice teachers get when enrolled in teacher preparation programs and throughout the initial years of teaching is another problem that prospective novice instructors face. According to Wilson et al. (2020), the turnover rate in the teaching profession is greater than the change rate in other professions, and the turnover rate in beginning teaching positions is higher than the attrition rate in other teaching positions. Through a service-learning field experience, the preservice teacher mentorship program has been developed to prepare future teachers to work in settings that include a high number of students from low-SES backgrounds and high levels of diversity.

Students from low-SES backgrounds often face additional challenges in the classroom that can impact negatively their academic achievement if not properly addressed by teachers. As such, it is critical that teacher preparation programs adequately equip novice teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions needed to support the

needs of low-SES students. This literature review synthesized research from the past five years regarding how novice teachers describe their preservice preparation to support students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.

Importance of Preparing Teachers to Support Low-SES Students

Extensive research highlights the unique needs of students from low-SES backgrounds as well as the achievement gaps that persist between low-SES students and their more advantaged peers (Berkowitz et al., 2017; Gagnon & Mattingly, 2016). Poverty and associated risk factors make it more difficult for low-SES students to thrive academically. However, researchers also indicated that teachers could make a profound difference in the lives of disadvantaged students when they employ evidence-based and equity-focused instructional practices (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2016). As such, it is essential that teacher preparation programs equip novice educators with the specialized knowledge and skills required to support the needs of low-SES children. Without proper training in this area, new teachers enter the classroom unprepared to address factors that disproportionately impact low-SES students, which can inadvertently exacerbate achievement gaps.

Novice Teachers Feel Underprepared

Despite recognizing the importance of tailored preparation, most of the recent research includes suggestions that novice teachers generally feel underprepared by their teacher education programs to meet the needs of low-SES students. In multiple nationwide surveys, less than one-third of new teachers reported feeling well trained to address learning needs stemming from poverty (Redding & Henry, 2019). Areas

commonly identified as gaps in their preparation include building relationships with families and communities, creating positive and equitable learning environments, teaching social and emotional learning, and employing culturally relevant practices (Redding & Henry, 2019). Without such skills that are critical for supporting struggling students from challenging backgrounds, novice teachers feel ill-equipped to help some of the students who need it most.

Other studies, including examinations of the perceptions of specific subsets of teachers, have had similar findings about feeling underprepared by teacher education programs for meeting the needs of low-SES students. In one study of novice rural educators in high-poverty schools, most felt their preparation was oriented towards middle-class suburban environments and failed to provide differentiation for rural contexts or high-needs populations (Burton & Campbell, 2018). Similarly, a study by the National Board-certified exceptional needs teachers working in special education included findings that they felt inadequately prepared to serve students living in poverty, both through their traditional certification programs as well as their advanced National Board certification (Anderson et al. 2022). Such findings included affirmations of consistent trends across contexts around new teachers feeling underprepared by their university-based preparation programs for addressing educational inequities associated with poverty.

There have been calls for more with an intentional focus on poverty and equity. Researchers have documented perceived gaps in preparation for supporting students with low SES, and many scholars argue that teacher education programs should focus more

intentionally on issues of poverty and educational inequity. As an example, Gagnon and Mattingly (2016) advocated centering teacher preparation curriculum around a “poverty-based pedagogy” grounded in the sociocultural realities’ students living in poverty face at school and in their communities (p. 232). Others suggested that programs aiming to foster more equitable student outcomes must prioritize preparing teacher candidates. According to Burton and Campbell (2018), “to apply a critical and structural analysis of disparities” impacting marginalized students in the classroom (p. 370). Teacher educators must bring awareness to such socioeconomic inequities in schools and equip novice teachers with practical tools to counter biases and foster more equitable opportunities for struggling students (Redding & Henry, 2019). Without purposefully embedding a lens of economic justice across the teacher training curriculum, programs will continue to graduate new teachers who feel unprepared to mitigate educational barriers associated with poverty.

Evidence-Based Practices for Supporting Low-SES Students

Although the research highlights room for improvement in preparing new teachers to address issues of educational inequity around poverty, scholars also point to evidence-based practices that should be emphasized in training programs. These include practices aimed at nurturing caring relationships, fostering inclusive classroom communities, employing culturally sustaining pedagogies, and partnering with families and communities.

Caring Teacher-Student Relationships

Extensive research studies have underscored the vital role caring teacher-student relationships play in positive student outcomes, especially for marginalized students from

low-SES backgrounds who are more apt to face adversity outside of school (Berkowitz et al., 2017). As such, scholars argued teacher preparation should equip novices with strategies for building warm, safe, and respectful classroom environments where each student feels valued and supported (Redding & Henry, 2019). Coursework and clinical placements should allow candidates to learn practical relationship-centered practices, such as morning greetings, regular check-ins, identity-affirming rituals, cooperative learning structures, and restorative circles for facilitating connection and trust (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2016). By fostering strong teacher-student relationships grounded in genuine care, novice teachers can help combat the negative effects of trauma and adversity experienced by many low-SES students.

Inclusive Classroom Communities

Teacher education must prepare novice educators to facilitate inclusive classroom communities that honor all students' identities while upholding elevated expectations for each learner (Redding & Henry, 2019). Course readings and activities should bring awareness to implicit biases around race and class that negatively impact low-SES students and equip candidates with inclusive teaching practices to foster a positive classroom culture (Anderson et al., 2022). As an example, training in practices, such as culturally responsive classroom management, prepares new teachers to respond equitably to students by acknowledging cultural norms without lowering behavioral expectations (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2016). Novice teachers should also be prepared to adapt traditional parent involvement models to foster greater collaboration with families from marginalized communities who often face barriers to traditional involvement. By learning

to establish classrooms that embrace each child's cultural assets with high standards for all, novice teachers develop mindsets and practices to counter deficit views that negatively impact many low-SES students.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogies

Teacher preparation must also equip novice educators to employ culturally sustaining instructional approaches that leverage low-SES students' cultural knowledge and backgrounds to make learning relevant and effective (Paris & Alim, 2017). Course readings should expose candidates to scholarship on how traditional instruction often fails to connect with low-income students' cultural experiences, thereby hampering engagement and achievement. Then, teacher educators should provide hands-on training in strength-based pedagogies that sustain linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism within classroom learning. As an example, classes can model practices, such as contrastive analysis, linguistic modeling, or cultural simulations, that bridge home and school experiences for marginalized student groups (Paris & Alim, 2017). By implementing such culturally sustaining approaches that tap into low-SES students' pluralistic knowledge and backgrounds, novice teachers use one of the most powerful levers—prior experience and culture—to enhance student learning.

Family and Community Partnerships

Teacher preparation must adequately prepare novice educators to engage students' families and communities for low-SES students who often face language barriers, lower traditional parental involvement, and resource constraints at home (Redding & Henry, 2019). Coursework should bring awareness to common obstacles

disadvantaged families face, as well as counter deficit narratives plaguing marginalized communities. Teacher candidates should be trained in relationship-centered practices for fostering robust school-home partnerships, such as home visits, regular communication in parents' home language, offering family workshops, or identifying community support services (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2016). By establishing strong family and community ties, novice teachers open vital lines of communication and sources of socioemotional support that research shows enhance outcomes for vulnerable student groups (Berkowitz et al., 2017).

In summary, scholars argue teacher preparation must equip novice educators to counter educational inequities linked to poverty by implementing relationship-centered, culturally sustaining, and equity-focused instructional practices. According to Abel et al. (2018), the conflicting realities of practicing teaching and the beliefs associated with teaching make it even more difficult for new teachers to navigate new teaching environments. By adequately preparing candidates with such evidence-based approaches, teacher education programs can empower the next generation of teachers to help shrink achievement gaps for low-SES students.

Areas for Further Study

While emerging insights highlight perceived gaps in supporting low-SES students, as well as suggested practices for teacher preparation programs aiming to fill those gaps, further research is warranted. First, more empirical work is needed to examine the specific aspects of university-based teacher education that effectively equip novice teachers to address issues of educational inequity associated with poverty (Burton

& Campbell, 2018). Such scholarships would provide an evidence base for enhancing the poverty and equity focus on teacher training standards and would help programs improve targeted learning opportunities for candidates. Additionally, further research should explore the impacts of teachers' socioeconomic backgrounds, life experiences with poverty, or levels of intercultural competence on their perceived readiness and actual ability to support low-SES students (Gagnon & Mattingly, 2016). Such an inquiry could aid teacher education by identifying candidate selection criteria or targeted support that help foster a more poverty-responsive teaching workforce beyond traditional curriculum alone. Finally, longitudinal inquiry assessing the long-term impacts of enhanced equity-focused teacher preparation on novice teachers' practices with low-SES students and associated student outcomes merits further exploration (Anderson et al., 2022). Although a poverty-centered focus shows promise for closing preparation gaps, an empirical study of resulting teaching practices and student achievement over time is needed. Ultimately, building such research could help strengthen and sustain efforts to enhance teacher readiness for serving students challenged by poverty.

While teacher preparation programs aim to prepare novice educators for meeting the needs of all students, extensive research shows new teachers consistently report feeling underprepared by their training to address barriers associated with poverty that hinder many students' learning. Scholars argue teacher education must take a more intentional approach, embedding issues of economic inequality and evidence-based mitigation strategies into curriculum, coursework, and clinical experiences. By inadequately preparing candidates for the instructional realities of low-SES school

settings, teacher education inadvertently perpetuates achievement gaps. Alternatively, enhanced equity-focused teacher preparation holds the potential for closing opportunity gaps for struggling students. Further study of practices that yield more poverty-responsive novice educators is warranted. Ultimately, the goal remains to ensure all teacher candidates develop knowledge, skills, and mindsets to facilitate robust learning for students from all socioeconomic backgrounds.

To effectively support novice teachers in preparing to work with low-SES students, it is crucial to consider the pedagogical approaches and support systems available. In the literature, there is an emphasis on the importance of teacher preparation programs in equipping novice teachers with the necessary skills and attitudes to address the needs of low-SES students (Abel et al., 2018). Novice teachers need to be trained to notice students' sense-making and respond more equitably, which requires ongoing efforts to systematically design and refine supports for novice teacher learning (Abel et al., 2018). Additionally, preservice training programs have been found to provide novice teachers with some skills and confidence in inclusion, but more in-service training is required (Stolz, 2019). In addition, pedagogical approaches in the literature also included the underscoring of the challenges faced by novice teachers, such as classroom management issues and administrative support in low-SES schools (Saleem et al., 2021). Novice teachers are often given low-achieving and overcrowded classes at the start of their careers, which can significantly impact their ability to effectively support low-SES students (Saleem et al., 2021). Furthermore, the quality of teachers in low-SES schools has been identified as a critical factor affecting students' academic outcomes (Li, 2020).

Low-SES schools are more likely to have less academically qualified teachers, highlighting the importance of addressing teacher quality and support in these settings (Li, 2020).

Summary

In this chapter, existing scholarly literature related to teacher preparation programs was reviewed. The literature review revealed many ways in which novice teacher preparation may be used to help students from varied backgrounds. In addition, it is evident that many studies on these topics focused on how preservice teacher training programs might benefit from using digital technologies. From the literature reviewed, each of the fundamental components of the training programs is identified, in addition to their potential benefits and primary applications in the many different student scenarios examined. From the studies reviewed, the education that teachers get plays a crucial role in improving the overall well-being of the students in their classrooms. However, the studies did not include addressing novice teachers' perceptions regarding their preparation to support low-SES students and the effectiveness of their preservice teacher preparation programs.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

In this study, I explored the descriptions of preservice preparation of novice teachers to support low-SES learners. In this chapter, I provided an outline of the research design, research participants, instrumentation, procedures of data collection and analysis, rigor and trustworthiness, and ethical considerations.

Research Design and Rationale

I used a generic qualitative research design in this study to investigate the experiences of novice teachers regarding their preservice preparation to support low-SES learners. I chose this research design for its appropriateness for delving into the subjective accounts and perspectives of the participants (see Creswell & Poth, 2016). This qualitative approach was used to create a comprehensive exploration of the essence and meaning of individuals' experiences within the educational context (Kostere & Kostere, 2021).

The basic qualitative research design was useful for an in-depth examination of participants' perspectives, encouraging them to articulate their experiences, perceptions, and challenges (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This methodological approach resulted in the collection of rich qualitative data essential for identifying areas for improvement in preservice teacher preparation programs (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Furthermore, this research design is well-suited for capturing the diverse and unique viewpoints of novice teachers (Kostere & Kostere, 2021). Given the variability in preservice preparation experiences influenced by personal backgrounds, training programs, and instructional

contexts, the generic qualitative approach is suitable for the exploration of individual differences while also identifying common themes and patterns (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

While other research designs, such as narrative research, case study, and grounded theory offer valuable insights, they may not have adequately captured the nuanced and subjective nature of novice teachers' experiences (see Nigar, 2020). These designs may prioritize statistical analysis or causal relationships, which may not have aligned with my primary objective for this study. I chose a basic qualitative research design because it was a suitable framework for exploring the experiences and descriptions of preservice preparation among novice teachers.

Role of the Researcher

In my study, I acted as the primary instrument for data collection and analysis, as is characteristic of qualitative research (see Creswell & Poth, 2016). My role involved designing the study, conducting interviews, analyzing qualitative data, and interpreting the findings. My background, including prior knowledge and professional experience in education, served as both an asset and a potential bias to be managed. I employed reflexive practices by maintaining a research journal to document preconceptions, thoughts, and evolving interpretations during the study (see Lincoln & Guba, 1985). I also established rapport with participants to create an environment conducive to open and honest communication (see Dźwigoł, 2020). This included adopting an empathetic and non-judgmental stance to encourage participants to share their genuine experiences and perceptions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Ethical considerations were central to my role. I ensured informed consent from all participants, and I took measures to safeguard confidentiality and privacy. I assured participants that their identities would remain anonymous and that their responses would be used only for this study. Additionally, I remained vigilant in mitigating any potential power imbalances or undue influences during the data collection process. Lastly, I adopted a systematic approach to data collection and analysis using thematic analysis to ensure consistency and accuracy (see Braun & Clarke, 2022). This process involved iterative data analysis and crosschecking of findings to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the study's outcomes.

Methodology

I used the conceptual framework to approach and assess the data in this study. When going through the transcripts, I used Vygotsky's sociocultural theory and the idea of culturally sustaining pedagogy to focus on how participants described their interactions with students from different backgrounds. It was not just about whether teachers mentioned diversity, but it was about how they responded to it. I assessed if they were scaffolding understanding and aware of their students' cultural context. I used those aspects to discern the depth or lack of cultural responsiveness in their practice.

Bandura's social cognitive theory was applicable to understanding teachers' preparedness in the classroom. Self-efficacy was evident in the way they talked about managing behaviors or adapting to tough classroom dynamics. When someone said they felt like they were "just surviving," it was hard not to see the cracks in their preparation. I

used Bandura's theory to connect those feelings to bigger patterns about how teacher beliefs impact their actual practice, especially in challenging environments.

Bronfenbrenner's ecological systems theory was also useful. I used this theory to examine how participants talked about factors beyond the classroom like family instability, community violence, or lack of support systems. These were not just background details but were part of the story. I used this theory to frame the idea that teachers are not just working with students in isolation. They are navigating a web of influences that stretch far beyond school walls. As a result, the analysis became less about isolated classroom struggles and more about how those struggles are shaped by broader systems and environments. All of these perspectives wove together to ensure that the emerging themes stayed rooted in the real-world complexity of teaching in low-SES contexts. The framework made the findings not just descriptive but meaningful.

Participant Selection Logic

In my study, I used a purposive sampling technique to select participants who finished their preservice program to teach low-SES learners. In this sampling technique, the participant is selected if the individual meets the characteristics of the sample needed (Etikan et al., 2016). I used the purposive sampling technique to handpick preservice teachers who met the following criteria:

1. Recent graduates. Only teachers who have finished their preservice program recently could participate in the study.

2. Preservice preparation to teach low-SES learners. The research participants would have finished a preservice program that is centered on educating students of low SES.
3. Novice teachers. The participants had to be in their initial 3 years in the teaching profession.
4. Active classroom teachers.

The participants needed to be teaching in a classroom. Selecting participants using these criteria allows the collection of in-depth and relevant information regarding preservice preparation and how it affects their capability to provide support to low-SES learners. To verify that potential participants met all the eligibility criteria, a brief screening process was conducted. After identifying possible participants, I sent a pre-screening questionnaire along with the invitation email. This questionnaire included requiring them to confirm key details such as the year they completed their preservice training, the focus of their preparation program (specifically regarding low-SES learners), their current teaching status, and their total years of teaching experience. Only individuals who met all the predefined criteria were invited to participate in the study and received the consent form.

Doing this process gave access to a diverse pool of study participants with the necessary knowledge and experience relevant to the research questions. The approach was relevant to the main research question as the research focused on novice teachers who had finished their preservice preparation in educating students from low-income families. After acquiring the list of potential participants, I contacted them through email,

introduced them to the study, and asked them to participate. The email contained a short explanation of the study's purpose, the role of the participants in the study, and the time that it would be taken. Additionally, the email had a consent form for the potential participants to sign and send back before participating in the study. A total of 12 novice teachers were selected to take part in the study.

Instrumentation

The primary data collection method for this study was semistructured one-on-one interviews that I conducted with 12 participants. Semistructured, one-on-one interviews are a qualitative data collection technique that is an exploration of participants' perspectives and experiences in detail (Nardi et al., 2020). I developed the interview protocol based on research questions and the literature review. The interview protocol included open-ended questions to explore novice teachers' descriptions of preservice preparation to support low-SES students (Labinjo, 2021). The interview protocol was pilot tested with two novice teachers who were not included in the final sample.

The interviews took place in a conversational format, permitting flexibility in the discourse while at the same time ensuring all major topics were covered. I transcribed the interviews and sent copies of the transcriptions to the participants to verify their accuracy or provide additional explanations. I took field notes from the responses to capture nonverbal cues and contextual information. The use of semistructured, one-on-one interviews allows for rich and detailed data to be collected (Eppich et al., 2019), which was necessary to explore the complex and multifaceted nature of novice teacher preparation for low-SES students. The interviews involved open-ended questions that

allowed participants to express themselves fully (Labinjo, 2021). The interviews covered the following topics:

1. The participants' background.
2. Their experiences teaching students of low SES.
3. Their preservice preparation.
4. The participants' perceptions of the effectiveness of their preservice preparation in readying them to work with low-SES learners.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I collected data using semistructured one-on-one interviews with the selected participants. I conducted the interviews through non-video Zoom and recorded and transcribed them for analysis. I analyzed the data collected using a thematic analysis technique. This approach involved identifying themes and patterns in the data related to the descriptions of novice teachers' preservice preparation to work with low-SES learners (see Lochmiller, 2021). The analysis included an insight into the effectiveness of preservice preparation programs in preparing novice teachers to support low-SES students, and it pointed out areas for improvement (Sundler et al., 2019).

The process of data analysis followed five steps. The first step involved transcribing audio recordings from the interviews to convert the spoken language into words and documentation of pauses, nonverbal cues, and other relevant data. The next step involved familiarizing myself with the data through reading and rereading the text to comprehend the information better. This was followed by coding and assigning labels to data segments that held similar concepts or ideas. Coding was done manually to ensure

no data were distorted or lost. After coding, the next step involved identifying themes by grouping similar codes to create overarching themes. The next step involved reviewing the themes to consider how adequately they represented the data. The final step was interpreting the collected data to get meaningful insights and conclusions related to the research questions. I used the NVivo software in the data analysis process. The software is modeled to assist in managing and organizing qualitative data and is key in thematic analysis. Finally, I presented the emerging themes in narrative form with direct quotations from the study participants.

Data Analysis Plan

The analysis followed the six steps of thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019).

Step 1: Data Familiarization

The first step in the analysis process involved immersing in the data to gain an understanding of the content and context of the participants' responses. This step laid the foundation for effective coding and theme generation. The data consisted of interview transcripts from 12 novice teachers, John 1 to 6 and Jane 1 to 6, who shared their experiences and perceptions regarding the preparation they received to teach low-SES students. Each transcript was read multiple times to ensure familiarity with the participants' narratives, challenges, and suggestions. During the initial readings, the focus was on capturing the overall tone, key ideas, and notable patterns in the data. I recorded observations such as memos or notes, noting recurring terms, unusual expressions, or

potentially significant insights. These notes served as guiding points during the subsequent coding phase.

Step 2: Generating Initial Codes

I familiarized the data and generated initial codes, which involved breaking the data into smaller, meaningful units that represented distinct ideas or concepts. I conducted the process manually, using an inductive approach to ensure that the codes emerged directly from the participants' responses rather than being pre-determined. I did line by line coding; I labeled each text segment that appeared significant or relevant to the research questions with a concise code that captured its essence. For example, I coded responses describing a lack of preparation for teaching in low-SES environments as unpreparedness, while statements about limited practical training as on-the-job learning.

In total, during this phase I identified 127 initial codes. This included a wide range of ideas from the data. These codes varied in specificity, focusing on challenges, such as lack of resources, while others captured cultural competency. I created each code to help understand the participants' intended meaning while maintaining accuracy. To ensure consistency, I reviewed the codes multiple times to confirm they accurately represented the corresponding text and did not overlap unnecessarily. After I identified the codes, some codes were recurring so many times in different interview transcripts and, therefore, I had to be code as one code. Some codes appeared repeatedly across multiple interview transcripts. For instance, many participants described themselves as feeling unprepared to handle behavioral challenges in the classroom. I grouped these recurring mentions under the code basic management. This process helped consolidate

similar responses into unified codes for consistency and clarity. This process narrowed down the coding process to 65 total codes. Among the most common codes were unpreparedness, cultural competency, basic management, and lack of resources, which appeared across the 12 interviews.

Step 3: Searching for Themes

The initial generation of themes was a result of the coding process. I coded the 65 codes with the participants' sentiments to develop themes. I grouped codes related in context and almost the same meaning manually in a table. This was an iterative process as sometimes codes with the same meaning could be placed in different categories. This process resulted in 14 themes comprising at least four codes and several direct quotations from participants' words. For example, the theme of lack of focus on socioeconomic issues emerged from codes like SES modules, general theories, and on-the-job learning. Similarly, inadequate cultural competency training was formed from codes such as brief training and diversity focus. Other themes, such as limited practical experience and classroom management struggles, were formed from codes like lack of exposure and ineffective techniques.

The themes also highlighted teachers' challenges in implementing the skills they learned during training. Resource utilization issues, formed from codes like lack of resources and ill-equipped, pointed to the lack of resources designed for low-SES students. At the same time, the theme of navigating external barriers emerged from codes like parent involvement and support network, showing how external factors hindered teachers' ability to engage with students effectively. Themes like curricular modifications

and field experiences were based on codes such as low-SES focus and diverse placements, underscoring the need for a curriculum that addresses the unique challenges of low-SES students and for more practical field experiences in these environments.

Step 4: Reviewing the Initial Themes

I shaped themes like mentorship enhancements and ongoing professional development with codes like tailored mentorship and continuous training, reflecting participants' desire for more personalized and ongoing support. The iterative process of grouping related codes, along with direct quotations from participants, helped reveal the underlying perceptions of the interviewees. Finally, four themes emerged from the 14 initial themes. The final themes emerged as a result of systematically refining and consolidating the initial themes based on shared characteristics, underlying patterns, and interconnected codes. This process involved identifying the essence of each group of initial themes and grouping them under more cohesive themes that captured the core issues highlighted by participants.

Step 5: Naming Themes

Theme 1, gaps in preservice training emerged by combining the initial themes of lack of focus on socioeconomic issues, inadequate cultural competency training, and limited practical experience. These initial themes all pointed to deficiencies in teacher training programs regarding low-SES student preparation. For example, codes such as SES modules and general theories from lack of focus on socioeconomic issues showed that training often emphasized theoretical knowledge without practical applications for low-SES contexts. Similarly, codes like cultural competency and limited understanding

from inadequate cultural competency training showed the brief and superficial nature of diversity training. Finally, the theme limited practical experience, with codes like teaching placement and no SES exposure, pointed to a lack of hands-on opportunities in low-SES environments. These themes shared a unifying issue: the preservice training inadequately prepared teachers to navigate the realities they encountered in the classroom.

The second theme that emerged was the challenges faced by SES trainers in classroom application. This theme was derived from initial themes such as classroom management struggles, resource utilization issues, and navigating external barriers. These initial themes reflected the practical difficulties teachers faced when attempting to apply their training in real-world, low-SES classrooms. Codes like basic management and inadequate skills from the initial theme of classroom management struggles revealed gaps in low-SES student's classroom strategies. Additionally, resource utilization issues highlighted the lack of tools and materials. This was evidenced by codes like resource gap and SES resources. The final component, navigating external barriers, with codes such as parent involvement and community connections, showed the external challenges teachers faced, such as building family and community engagement. These challenges shared a common theme of practical constraints in translating teacher training into effective classroom strategies.

The third theme was preparation programs to support low-SES students. This theme integrated initial themes like curricular modifications, field experiences, and mentorship enhancements, which were all potential improvements in teacher preparation.

Codes such as SES training and economic challenges from curricular modifications suggested that teacher training curricula should include more content focused on the unique needs of low-SES students. Similarly, field experiences, with codes like diverse placements and real-world learning, emphasized the need for practical exposure to low-SES school environments. Lastly, mentorship enhancements, with codes like focused guidance and practical support, indicated the importance of mentorship tailored to challenges in low-SES settings. The unifying characteristic of this theme was the call for systemic changes in teacher preparation programs to better equip educators for the realities of low-SES teaching.

The fourth and last theme was mental health challenges among students. This theme emerged from initial themes such as emotional and social support needs, trauma-informed practices, and understanding external stressors. I connected these themes through a shared focus on the mental health and emotional well-being of low-SES students. For instance, codes like anxiety issues and stressors from emotional and social support needs showed the prevalence of mental health challenges among these students. Trauma-informed practices connected with codes like trust building and restorative practices. These themes reflected the strategies to address the psychological impacts of poverty and instability. Lastly, understanding external stressors, with codes such as housing instability and food insecurity, pointed to the external factors affecting students' emotional health. Together, these themes brought the theme of mental health challenges faced by low-SES students and the need for teachers to adopt supportive, trauma-informed approaches.

Step 6: Reporting Findings

I organized the themes into ideas supported by illustrative participant quotes as the final step. The themes are aligned with the research questions in this section. This stage ensure that the opinions of the participants are voiced, and their experiences conveyed. The findings are presented in the findings chapter.

Issues of Trustworthiness

I used several measures to ensure this study was trustworthy and rigorous. Trustworthiness implies the research findings are credible and dependable, whereas rigor refers to the accuracy and thoroughness of the study process (Shufutinsky, 2020). The measures include conducting member checks with all study participants to ensure that the data collected reflect the participants' perceptions and experiences. The member-checking process involves the researcher presenting the study findings to the research participants to ensure that data are accurate and authentic (Rose & Johnson, 2020). Member checking enhances the reliability and validity of the research results by giving participants an opportunity to review and provide feedback on the collected data. Credibility, transferability, and confirmability ensured methodological rigor and trustworthiness. I achieved verification and reliability using triangulation and reflective journaling (Amin et al., 2020). These steps verified the data and findings. An audit trail was maintained to indicate all decisions made throughout the research process. The audit trail includes the research questions, the interview protocol, the data collection and evaluation procedures, and other modifications made during the research process. The audit trail was used to facilitate accountability and transparency of the study

process and allows other researchers to replicate the research findings in the future (Amin et al., 2020). Third, two free-spirited researchers were used to handle the data analysis process to improve the dependability and accuracy of the research. I independently coded the data collected and compared the findings to determine whether there were any inconsistencies or discrepancies. All arising disagreements were discussed and resolved through consensus. This process increased the validity and reliability of the research findings.

In addition, the use of triangulation is important to verify the consistency of the themes uncovered across the entirety of the data sources (transcripts and field notes) obtained through the Zoom meetings. Triangulation involves using multiple methods or data sources to confirm the findings (Dzwigol, 2020). In my study, I used triangulation when comparing the themes identified in the interview transcripts with the themes identified in the field notes. This process helped me ensure the themes' consistency and accuracy across the data sources. Finally, I kept a reflexive journal noting reflections on the research procedure and any potential assumptions or biases, including those biases and assumptions related to the zooms. Reflexivity gave me a chance to reflect on their role in the research process and document any acts that may have influenced the research findings (Dodgson, 2019). I kept a reflective journal documenting thoughts, processes, and decision-making throughout the process. This enhanced the transparency and credibility of the study results.

Ethical Procedures

I conducted this study following the ethical guidelines outlined by Hasan et al. (2021). I obtained the written informed consent from all study participants before they took part in the study. The informed consent form elaborated on the procedures of data collection, the benefits and risks of participation, and the rights held by participants to withdraw from the research at any point without penalty. The form clearly outlined the confidentiality that would be accorded to the data, and that identifying information would be omitted to protect the privacy of the study participants. All the data were then re-identified to protect the participants' confidentiality. Codes and pseudonyms were used to represent the study participants in the research material (i.e., field notes and interview transcripts). The data collected were kept on a password-protected computer, which I was the only one with access to this data. Research trustworthiness depended on ethical practices. The study was credible due to participant transparency and ethical conduct (Amin et al., 2020). Data protection, informed consent, and confidentiality were strategies.

No identifying information (addresses, phone numbers, names) was included in the data collected, and the same was secured separately from the research information to avoid cases of accidental disclosure. Additionally, measures to eliminate potential discomfort or harm to the study participants were set. This included ensuring that the interview process was not long or emotional and that the process took place at a convenient place and time for the interviewees. The participants were informed that

participating in the research was voluntary and that they were free to withdraw from the study at any point.

Summary

This chapter outlined the methodology used in this study. The chapter discussed the study design and the rationale for the study method. Generic qualitative research design was employed to investigate the experiences of novice teachers regarding their preservice preparation to support low-SES learners. The chapter also outlined my role as the researcher responsible for designing the research, conducting interviews, and ensuring ethical procedures. I collected data using semistructured interviews with the selected participants. I conducted the interviews through Zoom with no video recorded and transcribed for analysis. The analysis followed the six steps of thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019). The issues of trustworthiness, such as credibility, transferability, and dependability, were discussed in this study. I conducted the study following the ethical guidelines by ensuring informed consent confidentiality and protection of data.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

In this chapter, I present the findings of my study in which I investigated novice teachers' perceptions about their preservice preparation towards effective support for low-socioeconomic status students. I examined the challenges educators faced, gaps in training, and how to support students from low-SES backgrounds. The recurring themes that emerged from the semistructured interviews completed with novice teachers were inadequate practical exposure, limited training in cultural competency, and insufficient resources in low-SES contexts. The findings have been thematically analyzed to reveal patterns and inform recommendations for enhancing preservice teacher preparation programs.

Demographics

I conducted interviews with 12 novice teachers who had between 1 and 3 years of teaching experience after recently completing their preservice preparation programs. Participants were drawn from various public schools in two states to provide varied teaching environments and socioeconomic contexts. The vast majority of the participants taught in schools with a predominantly low-SES population where resources were limited, student mobility was high, and economic instability was common. Therefore, a few participants had started teaching experiences in middle-income schools before transitioning to low SES environments, thus offering contrasting views on classroom dynamics and the needs of students. Their experiences, coming from urban to rural

schools, thereby provided insights into the connection between training, actual application in the field, and the demands of teaching within a low-SES setting.

Data Collection

I collected data using semistructured one-on-one interviews with the selected participants. I conducted the interviews through Zoom and then recorded and transcribed them for analysis. I analyzed the data through a thematic analysis technique. This approach involved identifying themes and patterns in the data related to the descriptions of novice teachers' preservice preparation to work with low-SES learners (Lochmiller, 2021). The analysis included an insight into the effectiveness of preservice preparation programs in preparing novice teachers to support low-SES students and pointed out areas for improvement (Sundler et al., 2019).

Data Analysis

For this data analysis, I followed the six steps of thematic analysis as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2019).

Step 1: Data Familiarization

The first step in the analysis process involved immersing in the data to gain an understanding of the content and context of the participants' responses. I used this step to lay the foundation for effective coding and theme generation. The data consisted of interview transcripts from 12 novice teachers, John 1 to 6 and Jane 1 to 6, who shared their experiences and perceptions regarding the preparation they received to teach low-SES students. I read each transcript multiple times to ensure familiarity with the participants' narratives, challenges, and suggestions. During the initial readings, my focus

was on capturing the overall tone, key ideas, and notable patterns in the data. I recorded observations such as memos or notes, noting recurring terms, unusual expressions, or potentially significant insights. These notes served as guiding points during the subsequent coding phase.

Step 2: Generating Initial Codes

Once familiarized with the data, the next step was generating initial codes, which involved breaking the data into smaller, meaningful units that represented distinct ideas or concepts. I conducted this process manually, using an inductive approach to ensure that the codes emerged directly from the participants' responses rather than being pre-determined. I did code line by line and labeled each text segment that appeared significant or relevant to the research questions with a concise code that captured its essence. For example, responses describing a lack of preparation for teaching in low-SES environments were coded as unpreparedness, while statements about limited practical training were coded as on-the-job learning.

In total, I identified 127 initial codes during this phase. This included a wide range of ideas from the data. These codes varied in specificity, focusing on challenges, such as lack of resources, while others captured cultural competency. Each code was created to help understand the participants' intended meaning while maintaining accuracy. To ensure consistency, I reviewed the codes multiple times to confirm they accurately represented the corresponding text and did not overlap unnecessarily. After identifying the codes, some codes were recurring so many times in different interview transcripts and, therefore, had to be coded as one code. This process narrowed down the

coding process to 65 total codes. Among the most common codes were unpreparedness, cultural competency, basic management, and lack of resources, which appeared in nearly every interview.

Table 1

Sample Codes

Code	Meaning
On-the-job learning	Practical learning gained in real-world classroom settings.
Lack of exposure	The absence of direct experience with low-SES student populations leaves teachers unprepared for these students' challenges.
Lack of resources	Insufficient availability of materials, tools, and resources designed for low-SES students.
Parent involvement	Involving parents and families in the educational process despite the external barriers they face.
Low-SES focus	Calls for training programs to focus more on the specific needs and challenges of low-SES students, including dedicated modules on socio-economic awareness.
Diverse placements	Highlights the importance of student teachers experiencing diverse teaching environments, especially low-SES schools, during field placements for real-world learning.
Tailored mentorship	The need for mentorship programs that are customized to address the specific challenges of teaching low-SES students
Continuous training	Ongoing professional development (PD) that focuses on low-SES student engagement.
Mental health	Acknowledges the mental health challenges faced by low-SES students (e.g., anxiety, depression) due to external stressors.

Step 3: Searching for Themes

The initial generation of themes was a result of the coding process. I coded the 65 codes with the participants' sentiments to develop themes. I manually grouped codes related in context and almost the same meaning in a table. This was an iterative process as sometimes codes with the same meaning could be placed in different categories. This process resulted in 14 themes comprising at least four codes and several direct quotations from participants' words. For example, the theme of lack of focus on socioeconomic issues emerged from codes like SES modules, general theories and on-the-job learning. Similarly, inadequate cultural competency training formed from codes such as brief training and diversity focus. Other themes, such as limited practical experience and classroom management struggles, were formed from codes like lack of exposure and ineffective techniques.

The themes also highlighted teachers' challenges in implementing the skills they learned during training. Resource utilization issues, formed from codes like lack of resources and ill-equipped pointed to the lack of resources designed for low-SES students. At the same time, the theme of navigating external barriers emerged from codes like parent involvement and support network, showing how external factors hindered teachers' ability to engage with students effectively. Themes like curricular modifications and field experiences were based on codes such as low-SES focus and diverse placements, underscoring the need for a curriculum that addresses the unique challenges of low-SES students and for more practical field experiences in these environments.

Themes like mentorship enhancements and ongoing professional development were shaped by codes like tailored mentorship and continuous training, reflecting participants' desire for more personalized and ongoing support. The iterative process of grouping related codes, along with direct quotations from participants, helped reveal the underlying perceptions of the interviewees (see Appendix B).

Step 4: Reviewing the Initial Themes

Themes like mentorship enhancements and ongoing professional development were shaped by codes like tailored mentorship and continuous training, reflecting participants' desire for more personalized and ongoing support. The iterative process of grouping related codes, along with direct quotations from participants, helped reveal the underlying perceptions of the interviewees. Finally, four themes emerged from the 14 initial themes. The final themes emerged as a result of systematically refining and consolidating the initial themes based on shared characteristics, underlying patterns, and interconnected codes. This process involved identifying the essence of each group of initial themes and grouping them under more cohesive themes that captured the core issues highlighted by participants.

Step 5: Naming Themes

Four themes emerged from the 14 initial themes. The final themes emerged as a result of systematically refining and consolidating the initial themes based on shared characteristics, underlying patterns, and interconnected codes. This process involved identifying the essence of each group of initial themes and grouping them under more cohesive themes that captured the core issues highlighted by participants.

Theme 1, gaps in preservice training emerged by combining the initial themes of lack of focus on socioeconomic issues, inadequate cultural competency training, and limited practical experience. These initial themes all pointed to deficiencies in teacher training programs regarding low-SES student preparation. For example, codes such as SES modules and general theories from lack of focus on socioeconomic issues showed that training often emphasized theoretical knowledge without practical applications for low-SES contexts. Similarly, codes like cultural competency and limited understanding from inadequate cultural competency training showed the brief and superficial nature of diversity training. Finally, the theme limited practical experience, with codes like teaching placement and no SES exposure, pointed to a lack of hands-on opportunities in low-SES environments. These themes shared a unifying issue: the preservice training inadequately prepared teachers to navigate the realities they encountered in the classroom.

The second theme that emerged was the challenges faced by SES trainers in classroom application. This theme was derived from initial themes such as classroom management struggles, resource utilization issues, and navigating external barriers. These initial themes reflected the practical difficulties teachers faced when attempting to apply their training in real-world, low-SES classrooms. Codes like basic management and inadequate skills from classroom management struggles revealed gaps in low-SES student's classroom strategies. Additionally, resource utilization issues brought attention to the lack of tools and materials. This was evidenced by codes like resource gap and SES resources. The final component, navigating external barriers, with codes such as parent

involvement and community connections, showed the external challenges teachers faced, such as building family and community engagement. These challenges shared a common theme of practical constraints in translating teacher training into effective classroom strategies.

The third theme was preparation programs to support low-SES students. This theme integrated initial themes like curricular modifications, field experiences, and mentorship enhancements, which were all potential improvements in teacher preparation. Codes such as SES training and economic challenges from curricular modifications suggested that teacher training curricula should include more content focused on the unique needs of low-SES students. Similarly, field experiences, with codes like diverse placements and real-world learning, emphasized the need for practical exposure to low-SES school environments. Lastly, mentorship enhancements, with codes like focused guidance and practical support, indicated the importance of mentorship tailored to challenges in low-SES settings. The unifying characteristic of this theme was the call for systemic changes in teacher preparation programs to better equip educators for the realities of low-SES teaching.

The fourth and last theme was mental health challenges among students. This theme emerged from initial themes such as emotional and social support needs, trauma-informed practices, and understanding external stressors. These themes were connected through a shared focus on the mental health and emotional well-being of low-SES students. For instance, codes like anxiety issues and stressors from emotional and social support needs showed the prevalence of mental health challenges among these students.

Trauma-informed practices formed from codes like trust building and restorative practices. These themes reflected the strategies to address the psychological impacts of poverty and instability. Lastly, understanding external stressors, with codes such as housing instability and food insecurity, pointed to the external factors affecting students' emotional health. Together, these themes brought the theme of mental health challenges faced by low-SES students and the need for teachers to adopt supportive, trauma-informed approaches (see table below).

Table 2

Emergent Themes

Key Themes	Initial Themes
Theme 1: Gaps in Preservice Training	- Lack of Focus on Socioeconomic Issues - Inadequate Cultural Competency Training - Limited Practical Experience
Theme 2: Challenges in Classroom Application	- Classroom Management Struggles - Resource Utilization Issues - Navigating External Barriers
Theme 3: Preparation Programs Needed to Support Low-SES Students	- Curricular Modifications - Field Experiences - Mentorship Enhancements
Theme 4: Mental Health Challenges among Students	- Emotional and Social Support Needs - Trauma-Informed Practices - Understanding External Stressors

Research Question 1 (RQ1) sought to understand how novice teachers perceive the effectiveness of their preservice preparation programs. Theme 1, gaps in preservice training, directly answered this question by highlighting the inadequacies in teacher preparation regarding low-SES (socioeconomic status) students. Participants consistently reported a lack of focus on socioeconomic issues, inadequate cultural competency training, and limited practical experience. For instance, teachers described how training programs prioritized theoretical over practical approaches, leaving them ill-equipped to address the unique challenges faced by low-SES students. Similarly, the absence of hands-on teaching placements in low-SES environments exacerbated this gap, as one participant noted they were completely unprepared for the types of emotional and academic support these students needed.

Theme 2, challenges in classroom application, further illuminated how preservice training was short of adequately preparing novice teachers. Participants expressed that they struggled with classroom management, resource utilization, and overcoming external barriers because their training did not sufficiently address these areas. One teacher shared how their management skills felt inadequate, emphasizing that techniques tailored for low-SES students were largely absent from their training. Similarly, the lack of resources tailored to low-SES needs meant teachers had to experiment on their own, wasting valuable time. These themes collectively suggested that while preservice programs may provide foundational knowledge, they often fail to equip teachers with the tools and skills necessary for real-world application in low-SES classrooms.

Research Question 2 (RQ2) explored how preservice teacher preparation programs can be enhanced to better prepare educators for low-SES teaching. Theme 3, preparation programs to support low-SES students, answered this by offering clear recommendations for improvement. Participants identified key areas for enhancement, including curricular modifications, field experiences, and mentorship programs. Teachers emphasized the need for curricula that explicitly address low-SES dynamics, suggesting that modules focused on economic challenges and cultural competency could bridge current gaps. Moreover, diverse teaching placements in low-SES environments were highlighted as crucial for providing hands-on experience. Mentorship tailored to the specific challenges of low-SES teaching was another recurring suggestion, with participants expressing a desire for ongoing guidance and support from experienced educators.

Theme 4, mental health challenges among students, also contributed to answering RQ2 by emphasizing the importance of trauma-informed practices in teacher training. Participants pointed out that low-SES students often face significant mental health challenges, such as anxiety and depression, due to external stressors like housing instability and food insecurity. They argued that preservice programs should include modules on trauma-informed care and strategies for providing emotional and social support. Teachers also called for professional development opportunities to address these issues continuously, ensuring they are well-equipped to meet the needs of their students. Together, these themes underscored the need for systemic changes in teacher preparation programs to better support educators working in low-SES contexts.

Table 3*Themes with their Respective RQS*

Final Theme	Initial Themes	Research Question (RQ) Addressed
Theme 1: Gaps in Preservice Training	Lack of Focus on Socioeconomic Issues, Inadequate Cultural Competency Training, Limited Practical Experience	RQ1: Perceptions of Preservice Preparation Programs
Theme 2: Challenges in Classroom Application	Classroom Management Struggles, Resource Utilization Issues, Navigating External Barriers	RQ1: Perceptions of Preservice Preparation Programs
Theme 3: Preparation Programs to Support Low-SES Students	Curricular Modifications, Field Experiences, Mentorship Enhancements	RQ2: Enhancing Preservice Preparation Programs
Theme 4: Mental Health Challenges among Students	Emotional and Social Support Needs, Trauma-Informed Practices, Understanding External Stressors	RQ2: Enhancing Preservice Preparation Programs

Step 6: Reporting Findings

Findings were reported in paragraphs in the findings section below. Themes are used as sub-topics. This step involved presenting the identified themes in a structured and meaningful way. They are supported by direct quotes from participants. The goal was to ensure that the voices of participants were represented while aligning the findings with the research questions.

Findings

Theme 1: Gaps in Preservice Training

Lack of Focus on Socioeconomic Issues

Out of the various perceived gaps in pre-service training, the most significant gap in preservice teacher training was a specific focus on low-socioeconomic status issues. Most preservice programs included coursework on general pedagogical strategies, and very few included coursework that directly focused on the challenges faced by students from low-SES backgrounds. Many of the teachers indicated that, while they received many theoretical courses in training, a considerable amount of theory was inapplicable to the reality of teaching in schools with large percentages of low SES students. For example, Jane 1 said,

Honestly, I don't remember much about specific modules aimed at low-SES students. We covered theories, but there was very little practical focus on SES issues. Most of what I learned was on the job when I encountered these students and had to figure things out.

This represented one of the overarching themes from the interviews, where respondents felt particularly unprepared to address the unique needs of low-SES students and subsequently had to develop approaches after taking up teaching positions.

Similarly, John 2 also reiterated the general nature of the training, claiming, "Most of the training wasn't specific to low-SES students. We covered general theories that didn't translate well to this student population." His comment underlined the lack of connection between theoretical input and practical preparation in terms of tackling

challenges typical for these low-SES students. Most participants reported feeling unsupported, as their needs were not a concern of the training; thus, they were unprepared for the realities to be found in the classrooms.

Inadequate Cultural Competency Training

Another huge gap that participants cited concerning the training prior to service was a lack of cultural competency training on students' socioeconomic backgrounds. While most of the programs included some kind of general diversity training, this did not prepare them for the complex ways that the socioeconomic status of students drew on their academic performance and emotional well-being. Several of the participants described how, while diversity was discussed, they did not feel that they were given the means to comprehend or support the particular needs of low SES students. For example, Jane 1 said, "Cultural competency was a brief section, and it didn't really equip me with the nuanced understanding of socioeconomic factors that influence student behavior and learning." This quote depicted how, although cultural competency training existed, it mostly lacked depth in training on the intricate ways in which poverty would make a difference in the experiences students would have within the classroom.

John 2 reiterated this when he said, "We touched on diversity briefly, but I needed much more on the socioeconomic challenges these students face." His comment reflected the need for more comprehensive training on the intersection of cultural and socioeconomic factors, pointing out that the background of students from low-SES families cannot be understood with a general outline of diversity. Both of these

reflections, therefore, pointed to a greater emphasis that should be placed in preservice programs on the relationship between culture, poverty, and learning.

Limited Practical Experience

A third critical gap that emerged from the participants was the lack of pragmatic exposure to low-SES schools during their preservice training. Some participants revealed that their low-SES student teaching placement during preservice did not quite prepare them to deal with issues explicitly affecting low-SES students. Without experience in schools serving predominantly low-SES populations, many novice teachers seemed to struggle with how to take theoretical knowledge garnered during their coursework and apply it to real classrooms. As Jane 2 explained, "My student teaching placement did not expose me to low-SES situations. I was completely unprepared for the types of emotional and academic support these students needed." Her experience underscored the value of field placements in schools serving low-SES communities since such placement equips the teacher with an understanding of external factors affecting students' academic performance, such as poverty, trauma, and family instability.

Similarly, John 2 emphasized the difficulty of adjusting to a low-SES school without prior experience when he said, "I didn't get to work in a low-SES school for my practicum, so the adjustment was difficult. I lacked firsthand exposure to the challenges faced by low-SES students." This comment was a strong indication that preservice programs, such as Fischer et al. (2020), need to place aspiring teachers in various environments, including those that serve low-SES students. Practicum or student teaching should, therefore, include exposure to these settings as a prerequisite for building the skill

and sensitivity needed to meet such needs amongst low-SES students effectively. Hence, both of these responses pointed to the shortfalls of preservice training that does not make full provision for field experiences in schools that have a high population of low-SES students. The preservice programs can better prepare novice teachers for the unique challenges the students are facing if they offer more relevant field experiences.

Theme 2: Challenges Faced in Classroom Application

Classroom Management Struggles

One of the biggest issues that came out in the interviews had to do with classroom management, particularly when teaching low-SES students. Many novice teachers said that preservice training had not prepared them for the particular behavioral challenges presented by low-SES students. Teachers, in particular, noted that emotional regulation for themselves and establishing a predictable classroom environment were sometimes the most trying tasks, areas where training in trauma-informed practices was often lacking. As Jane 2 recalled, "Our management training felt basic. I quickly realized I needed different approaches for low-SES students but didn't know what those should be." This statement epitomized one sense of frustration felt by those teachers who believed general classroom management strategies did not translate well into complicated realities associated with teaching in schools serving low-SES students.

Further, these students, more often than not, have other added emotional or behavioral complications emanating from stressors. These stressors relate to family instability or trauma that those typical classroom management techniques do not resolve. John 2 voiced this frustration further when he said, "I felt my management skills were

inadequate because I hadn't been trained in techniques that might work better for students facing poverty-related challenges." This corroborated the view that even as novice teachers may possess a threshold level of knowledge on classroom management, they indeed lack the more advanced strategies to be in a position to handle the particular emotional needs presented by students from low-SES backgrounds. This may include how to recognize and act in response when behaviors are the result of trauma and the need perhaps for supportive, person-centered approaches to discipline. This lack of training in emotional regulation and trauma-informed practices emerged throughout the interviews.

Resource Utilization Issues

Another significant challenge discussed by participants was the lack of tailored resources for low-SES students. Many novice teachers felt that the resources provided during their preservice training were either too general or did not specifically address the needs of low-SES students. In this regard, teachers often had to devise their own strategies so as to make sure students' academic and emotional needs were adequately met. One such example is Jane 2, who identified, "We had no resources specifically geared towards low-SES students. I had to find my own tools, and it took time to realize what worked and what didn't." This, according to Khasawneh (2023), is one of the critical gaps in preservice preparation. Although novice teachers are equipped with common teaching strategies, they often lack specific strategies to overcome specific obstacles, including limited resources, lack of fluency in one or more languages, or inadequate academic support at home.

Jane 1 also acknowledged that the resources were, in fact, scarce for low-SES students' needs. She said, "We had some general resources on child psychology, but they weren't specific to low-SES students. I felt ill-equipped to support them academically or emotionally." Her experience captured a more general resource-utilization problem stemming from pre-service programs in that teachers acquire broad frameworks but do not have detailed means of actually applying these strategies in ways that can specifically address the needs of their students.

Navigating External Barriers

The final challenge identified by participants in this study was how to navigate external barriers that so often affect low-SES students, such as challenges in engaging families and the wider socioeconomic context in which these students live. Many novice teachers reported their frustration with the challenge of developing sound relationships with families and helping students with out-of-classroom issues, such as unstable housing situations, food insecurity, and other stressors. As Jane 3 explained,

In my practicum, I learned to be more resourceful, finding ways to bring materials and learning opportunities to the students. I also saw how vital it was to keep parents involved despite the barriers they might face in terms of time or resources.

This quote revealed what so many teachers struggle with in engaging families in the education of their children, especially when the parents are struggling due to poverty or circumstances beyond their control. Teachers often have to go above and beyond to establish communication and build trust with families facing significant personal challenges.

John 4 also commented on the challenge of working with families from low-SES backgrounds, stating, "What I learned was that low-SES students often lack a support network outside of school, which can make them feel isolated. I had to be very intentional about reaching out to families and building those connections." This poignantly pointed to the challenge of teaching the students themselves while trying to address such limitations outside the classroom that impede their academic achievements. These outside stressors can significantly impact a student's ability to focus on schoolwork or fully engage in the classroom.

Theme 3: Preparation Programs Needed to Support Low-SES Students

Curricular Modifications

Novice teachers had numerous recommendations for improving preservice teacher preparation, especially in attending to the challenges of teaching low-SES students. The primary recommendation included specific modules on the socioeconomic dynamics of classrooms. Teachers felt that although general diversity training had been included, it did not give enough attention to socioeconomic challenges affecting students' academic performance and emotional well-being. For example, Jane 3 suggested, "The curriculum should focus on low-SES dynamics in schools. Many teachers, like me, would benefit from modules dedicated to understanding the economic challenges students bring into the classroom." She further reiterated that any teaching approach needs to be tailored based on economic realities derived from students' backgrounds. To this effect, John 3 added, "Include specific modules on low-SES issues and how they affect students. That would have helped me understand what I was walking into." His suggestion underlined the

creation of more focused courses that would prepare teachers to deal with real-life issues that their low-SES students face, such as a lack of resources and emotional trauma.

Participants also suggested embedding trauma-informed practices in the curriculum. As one participant reiterated, "Socioeconomic awareness training should be mandatory. We need to learn more about the effects of poverty on students." This reflected a general sentiment from participants that preservice programs need to better equip teachers with knowledge about poverty to make more informed decisions concerning their impact on the behavior, engagement, and overall learning of their students.

Field Experiences

Other novice teachers recommended improving field experiences by placing the preservice teachers in schools containing a higher percentage of low-SES students. Teachers highlighted that practical experience within such an environment was crucial for understanding the challenges these low-SES students face. Overall, participants generally reported that their initial school student teaching placements rarely prepared them for teaching in high-poverty population schools; therefore, they had difficulty adjusting to the classroom realities. For example, Jane 3 said, "Placing more student teachers in low-SES schools could really open their eyes to what these students need and help us prepare better." Her comment was representative of the importance of placing preservice teachers in diverse educational settings to familiarize them with the myriads of issues low-SES students face.

John 3 also emphasized the need for placements in diverse fields when he stated, "Field experience in diverse schools is critical. I was placed in a setting that didn't

prepare me for what I face now. He indicated that his preservice experience in the middle-income school setting did not prepare him for some challenges he faced teaching in a low-SES environment. His lack of exposure to the challenges during preservice training made the transition more difficult for him to teach low-SES students.

Mentorship Enhancements

Novice teachers also expressed interest in more specialized mentorship programs regarding challenges associated with low-SES students. Most participants felt that they had indeed received general mentorship, but they lacked special guidance on how to address the unique needs of students from low-income backgrounds. Teachers indicated that more focused mentorship could have improved their ability to effectively support low-SES students in the classroom. Jane 3 shared, "Mentorship needs to be tailored to low-SES teaching challenges. That support would've been invaluable to me early on." This again pointed to the need for mentors experienced in working with low-SES students who could, therefore, offer guidance on the emotional, academic, and behavioral challenges that one may often face in these environments.

John 3 extended this by saying, "Focus mentorship programs more on specific challenges faced in low-SES environments to prepare teachers for the real issues they'll face." He mentioned that usually, advice from general mentorship was not enough when trying to surmount obstacles typical for teaching in high-poverty schools, which can include trauma management or building relationships with families.

Ongoing Professional Development

Finally, participants emphasized that ongoing professional development in the engagement of low-SES students is imperative. Many novice teachers felt that their preservice training had provided a good foundation, but once they began to gain experience in the classroom, additional support was still needed. Teachers recommended that continued professional development opportunities regarding low-SES engagement would keep them informed and sharpen their practices over time. Jane 3 implored, "Continuous training on low-SES student engagement is essential. Workshops or courses could help teachers stay informed and supported." While she learned a great deal through experience, additional formal training would have been beneficial during her initial years. John 3 also emphasized the importance of ongoing PD, stating, "Offering continuous professional development on low-SES support could make a huge difference. I feel like I am learning and could use more structure." This was, of course, in line with the general tendencies of novice teachers reporting that, although they are gradually improving their practice, more formal professional development opportunities would help to work out the various complexities associated with teaching low-SES students.

Theme 4: Mental Health Challenges Among Students

Mental health challenges among low-SES students were significant barriers to both their emotional well-being and academic success. Many of these students faced stress due to factors such as housing instability, food insecurity, and family-related issues, which contributed to feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation. These emotional burdens often prevent students from fully engaging in their learning. Educators

increasingly adopted trauma-informed practices to help mitigate the negative impact of these mental health challenges. For example, positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and proactive behavior management techniques created a safe and predictable classroom environment that helped students feel more secure. These practices also allowed teachers to address behaviors rooted in trauma and stress, which were shared among low-SES students. Teachers like those that Jane 5 mentioned emphasized in building trust with students, as it played a critical role in trauma-sensitive teaching.

Trauma-Informed Practices

Trauma-informed practices play a pivotal role in addressing the needs of students whose lives are shaped by adverse experiences, particularly in low-SES contexts. Jane 5's observations highlighted the importance of proactive strategies like positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and behavior management techniques in creating a safe, predictable classroom environment. These practices aim to reduce stress and stabilize students struggling with uncertainty and fear. "Positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and proactive behavior management techniques were crucial for creating a safe and predictable classroom environment," Jane 5 explained, emphasizing fostering environments where students feel valued and understood.

These methods go beyond simply managing disruptive behavior; they help students develop healthier coping mechanisms and rebuild their trust in authority figures, which is often eroded by trauma. Teachers noted that behaviors rooted in traumas such as withdrawal, aggression, or difficulty concentrating—require understanding rather than punitive measures. By employing trauma-sensitive approaches, educators can identify

and address the underlying causes of such behaviors effectively. Building trust with students is a cornerstone of trauma-informed teaching, as it creates a relational foundation where students feel secure enough to share their experiences and focus on learning. Jane 5 reflected, "My mentor teacher taught me how to implement trauma-informed practices, which were incredibly important in helping these students stay engaged." This mentorship teaches the value of professional development in equipping teachers with the skills to support vulnerable students. Trauma-informed practices create classroom environments where students can thrive despite their challenging circumstances. When teachers adopt these approaches, they acknowledge and address the lasting effects of trauma, helping students navigate their emotional hurdles.

External Stressors

External stressors such as housing instability, food insecurity, and family-related challenges profoundly influence the mental health and academic performance of low-SES students. These factors often remain invisible in traditional classroom settings, leaving educators ill-equipped to address the root causes of their students' struggles. John 2 emphasized the importance of recognizing these challenges, sharing, "Knowing that many low-SES students deal with external stressors like housing instability or food insecurity helped me approach my teaching with more sensitivity and care." Recognizing these external pressures requires educators to look beyond conventional teaching methods and engage with the socioeconomic contexts their students navigate daily. Teachers often serve as a bridge between students and essential resources, connecting families to food banks, housing assistance programs, or counseling services. These actions demonstrate a

holistic commitment to student well-being. John 4's observation that Low-SES students often lack a support network outside of school, which can make them feel isolated underscored educators' critical role in addressing gaps in support systems.

Furthermore, tailoring classroom practices to accommodate these challenges is essential. Teachers might adjust homework policies, provide snacks, or allow extra time for assignments to help students overcome barriers to learning. Educators who adopt this approach report improvements not only in students' academic outcomes but also in their emotional resilience and sense of belonging. These insights illustrate the need for teacher preparation programs to include training on understanding and addressing external stressors, equipping future educators to foster inclusive environments where low-SES students can thrive despite their circumstances.

Emotional and Social Support Needs

Educators working with low-SES students consistently highlighted the critical role of emotional and social support in fostering academic success. Many noted that unstable home environments often leave students grappling with anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation, which act as significant barriers to learning. John 2 reflected, "It was eye-opening to see how many of these students dealt with anxiety, depression, or other mental health challenges, likely due to stressors at home." Mental health difficulties are intertwined with the academic experiences of low-SES students. The lack of social support networks outside school further compounds these challenges. Teachers described how some low-SES students faced chronic isolation, which hindered their ability to form meaningful connections with peers.

The comment by John 4, Low-SES students often lack a support network outside of school, which can make them feel isolated, showed the burden these students face: limited resources at home and an absence of external social connections. This lack of a safety net often manifests as chronic isolation, leaving students without the emotional anchor provided by a stable support system. Without such connections, students may struggle to build meaningful relationships, both within and outside the classroom, which are crucial for emotional well-being and academic engagement.

Isolation exacerbates the mental health challenges that many low-SES students already face due to socioeconomic stressors such as poverty, unstable housing, or family dynamics. Without external networks friends, extended family, or community organizations—these students lack outlets to express their emotions or seek guidance, which compounds feelings of loneliness and helplessness. This state of isolation often leads to disengagement from learning as students grapple with unmet emotional needs. As John 4 further explained, "Many of these students needed emotional and social support before they could even focus on academics," emphasizing that emotional well-being is a prerequisite for effective learning. Teachers who recognize this connection advocate for creating a supportive environment within schools to counterbalance the lack of external networks. This might involve fostering strong teacher-student relationships, promoting peer connections through group activities, and integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) into the curriculum.

Teachers strongly believed that preservice training should include specific components focused on understanding and addressing low-SES students' emotional and

social struggles. They proposed adding training in social-emotional learning (SEL) and trauma-informed practices to help future educators recognize and respond to the mental health challenges these students face. Mary 5 suggested, "Workshops on mental health literacy would help teachers identify signs of emotional distress and provide the right support." Teachers also emphasized the value of creating opportunities for students to build social connections through group projects, clubs, and mentoring programs. These initiatives reduce isolation and empower students to develop skills essential for personal and academic success.

Programs that involve parents and caregivers were also highlighted as crucial to building a support system for low-SES students. "We need to connect with families to understand their struggles and provide a bridge between home and school," noted Jane 6. Such initiatives could strengthen the overall support network available to students, making schools a central point of stability. These insights suggested that a multi-faceted approach is essential to meet low-SES students' emotional and social needs effectively.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Several measures to ensure this study was trustworthy and rigorous were used. Trustworthiness implies the research findings are credible and dependable, whereas rigor refers to the accuracy and thoroughness of the study process (Shufutinsky, 2020). The measures included conducting member checks with all study participants to ensure that the data collected reflected the participants' perceptions and experiences. The member-checking process involved me presenting the study findings to the research participants to ensure that the data were accurate and authentic (Rose & Johnson, 2020). Member

checking enhanced the reliability and validity of the research findings by allowing participants to review and provide feedback on the collected data.

To ensure trustworthiness, the study used credibility, transferability, and confirmability. Using data from multiple sources through triangulation improved the dependability of conclusions (Dźwigoł, 2020). Methodological rigor was maintained throughout the analysis with these stages. To ensure dependability, I meticulously documented data analysis decision-making procedures. Keeping meticulous records and using triangulation helps to confirm findings (Amin et al., 2020). This method increased research dependability.

I maintained an audit trail to indicate all decisions made throughout the research process. The audit trail included the research questions, the interview protocol, the data collection and evaluation procedures, and other modifications made during the research process. The audit trail facilitates accountability and transparency of the study process and allows other researchers to replicate the research findings in the future (Amin et al., 2020). Third, two free-spirited researchers were used to handle the data analysis process to improve the dependability and accuracy of the research. I independently coded the data collected and compared the findings to determine whether there were any inconsistencies or discrepancies. All arising disagreements were discussed and resolved through consensus. This process increased the validity and reliability of the research findings.

In addition, triangulation is important to verify the consistency of the themes uncovered across the entirety of the data sources (transcripts and field notes) obtained through the Zoom meetings. Triangulation involves using multiple methods or data

sources to confirm the findings (Dzwigol, 2020). In my study, I used triangulation by comparing the themes identified in the interview transcripts with the themes identified in the field notes. This process helped ensure the themes' consistency and accuracy across the data sources. Finally, I kept a reflexive journal noting reflections on the research procedure and any potential assumptions or biases, including those biases and assumptions related to the zooms. Reflexivity allowed me to reflect on my role in the research process and document any acts that may have influenced the research findings (Dodgson, 2019). I kept a reflective journal documenting thoughts, processes, and decision-making throughout the process. This enhanced the transparency and credibility of the study results.

Summary

Chapter 4 presented the study's findings. The analysis revealed four main themes. The first key theme, gaps in preservice training, revealed that preservice teacher training programs often fail to address the specific needs of low-SES students in areas such as cultural competency, practical experience, and understanding the socio-economic factors affecting student behavior. Teachers reported insufficient training on handling low-SES students' challenges, such as managing classroom behavior and providing adequate emotional and academic support. The second theme, challenges in classroom application, explored teachers' difficulties in classroom settings, including inadequate resources and support for low-SES students. Teachers often lack the tools and strategies to manage classrooms with these students effectively, and external barriers, such as limited parental involvement and community support, further complicate their ability to foster academic

success. Teachers also pointed out the mental health challenges among students, noting that many low-SES students struggle with mental health issues due to stressors like housing instability and food insecurity. The chapter concluded with teachers recommending improvements in teacher preparation programs to better support low-SES students. These included the theme of preparation programs to support low-SES students, which advocated for incorporating specific modules on socioeconomic issues. Teachers suggested providing more field experiences in low-SES schools, offering tailored mentorship, and ensuring ongoing professional development focused on the unique needs of low-SES students.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

In this chapter, I discuss the findings from the research, drawing on the themes identified in Chapter 4. The purpose of this chapter is to interpret the findings in the context of existing literature, provide conclusions, and offer practical recommendations for addressing the challenges faced by low-SES students in educational settings. I also explore the implications of these findings for future research and the improvement of preservice teacher training programs, as well as the development of more effective strategies for supporting low-SES students both academically and emotionally.

Interpretation of the Findings

Theme 1: Gaps in Preservice Training

Lack of Focus on Socioeconomic Issues

Out of the various perceived gaps in pre-service training, the most significant gap in preservice teacher training was a focus on low-socioeconomic status issues. Most preservice programs included coursework on general pedagogical strategies, and very few included coursework that directly focused on the challenges faced by students from low-SES backgrounds (Kushon, 2024; Marttinen et al., 2020). Many of the teachers indicated that, while they received many theoretical courses in training, a considerable amount of theory was inapplicable to the reality of teaching in schools with large percentages of low SES students.

Participants underlined the lack of connection between theoretical input and practical preparation in terms of tackling challenges typical for these low-SES students.

Most participants reported feeling unsupported, as their needs were not a concern of the training; thus, they were unprepared for the realities to be found in the classrooms. Many researchers have emphasized the gap between general pedagogical theory and the practical needs of low-SES students (Marttinen et al., 2020; Pansé-Barone et al., 2024). While preservice programs often provide extensive theoretical knowledge about teaching, this does not necessarily translate into effective strategies for handling the specific socio-economic challenges students face (Dudek et al., 2024). The findings from this study, where Jane and John both described feeling that their training was too theoretical and not sufficiently practical for low-SES students, resonate with the concern that teacher preparation programs are often not responsive enough to the diverse needs of the student population teachers will encounter (Cacciattolo et al., 2024; Marttinen et al., 2020). There is often a lack of focus on the socio-economic factors that influence student learning, such as poverty, parental involvement, and lack of access to educational resources (Marttinen et al., 2020).

Traditional teacher education programs focus heavily on theoretical frameworks and models of pedagogy that do not always account for the realities of teaching in diverse classrooms (Marougkas et al., 2023). Teachers often report feeling ill-prepared to address real-world challenges like student engagement, classroom management, and addressing social and emotional needs. This gap can result in teachers feeling unprepared or unsupported in their efforts to meet the needs of their students (Shank & Santiago, 2022).

The absence of specific content related to socio-economic factors is another common criticism in teacher preparation programs. According to the literature, low-SES students often face challenges such as unstable home environments, food insecurity, and limited access to technology (Lewis, 2023; Marttinen et al., 2020). However, preservice teacher training often overlooks these issues or only provides superficial coverage, leaving teachers to navigate these challenges on their own once they begin teaching. As evidenced by the participants in this study, who expressed that their training did not adequately prepare them to address the socio-economic disparities they encountered, this lack of preparation can lead to feelings of inadequacy and frustration (Marttinen et al., 2020).

Another key issue emerging from this study was the feeling of lack of support expressed by the participants. Literature in teacher preparation and support systems suggests that novice teachers often struggle without adequate mentoring and guidance. Lack of support in the early years of teaching is a major factor in teacher attrition in schools serving disadvantaged populations (Berger et al., 2021; Shanks et al., 2022).

Inadequate Cultural Competency Training

Another gap that participants cited concerning the training prior to service was a lack of cultural competency training on students' socioeconomic backgrounds. While most of the programs included some kind of general diversity training, this did not prepare them for the complex ways that the socioeconomic status of students draws on their academic performance and emotional well-being (Marttinen et al., 2020; Shanks et al., 2022). Several of the participants described how, while diversity was discussed, they

did not feel that they were given the means to comprehend or support the needs of low SES students. Jane 1 said, "Cultural competency was a brief section, and it didn't really equip me with the nuanced understanding of socioeconomic factors that influence student behavior and learning."

The participant depicted how, although cultural competency training existed, it mostly lacked depth in training on how poverty would make a difference in the experiences students would have within the classroom. John 2 reiterated this when he said, "We touched on diversity briefly, but I needed much more on the socioeconomic challenges these students face."

While many teacher preparation programs provide some form of diversity training, they often fall short in addressing the impact of socioeconomic status on students' academic performance and emotional well-being (Shanks et al., 2022). Literature suggests that diversity training in preservice programs tends to be generic, primarily focusing on racial and ethnic diversity without deeply engaging with the complexities of socioeconomic disparities (Alvarez-Romero et al., 2021). This general approach leaves teachers unprepared for the realities of working with students from low-SES backgrounds facing challenges such as food insecurity, lack of academic resources, and unstable home environments that can profoundly affect their learning (Lewis, 2023). Cultural competency training must go beyond superficial discussions and include a more detailed exploration of how poverty intersects with culture to influence student behavior and achievement (Mayfield, 2020).

The participants in this study echoed these concerns; while cultural competency training was part of their program, it lacked the depth needed to understand and support low-SES students. As Jane highlighted, the brief and general nature of the training did not provide her with a "nuanced understanding" of the specific ways in which poverty affects students in the classroom. Teachers need more understanding of the social and economic factors that shape the lives of their students (Alvarez-Romero et al., 2021; Mayfield, 2020). Without this understanding, teachers may struggle to connect with their students or respond effectively to the challenges they face. Furthermore, as John pointed out, while diversity was discussed, the intersection between cultural diversity and the socioeconomic challenges of students was not sufficiently addressed, leaving him underprepared to engage with the low-SES students in his classroom (Chew & Cerbin, 2021).

More comprehensive cultural competency training that addresses the complexities of socioeconomic backgrounds is crucial in preparing teachers to support low-SES students effectively. As the literature suggests, preservice programs should not only address racial and ethnic diversity but also emphasize the social, economic, and psychological factors that can influence student outcomes (Daum et al., 2022). Expanding cultural competency training to include a focus on the intersectionality of culture and socioeconomic status would enable teachers to better understand the challenges faced by low-SES students. This also fosters positive relationships and creates supportive learning environments (Chew & Cerbin, 2021).

Limited Practical Experience

A third critical gap that emerged from the participants was the lack of pragmatic exposure to low-SES schools during their preservice training (Marttinen et al., 2020). Some participants revealed that their low-SES student teaching placement during preservice did not quite prepare them to deal with issues affecting low-SES students. Without experience in schools serving predominantly low-SES populations, many novice teachers seemed to struggle to take theoretical knowledge garnered during their coursework and apply it to real classrooms (Kushon, 2024). As Jane 2 explained, "My student teaching placement did not expose me to low-SES situations. I was completely unprepared for the types of emotional and academic support these students needed." Similarly, John 2 emphasized the difficulty of adjusting to a low-SES school without prior experience when he said, "I didn't get to work in a low-SES school for my practicum, so the adjustment was difficult. I lacked firsthand exposure to the challenges faced by low-SES students."

Lack of practical exposure to low-SES schools is a pervasive issue in teacher preparation programs. Practical experience, especially in diverse and low-SES schools, is crucial for developing teachers' cultural awareness and pedagogical skills. Novice teachers who do not experience the socioeconomic challenges their students face may struggle to translate the theoretical knowledge gained in coursework into effective classroom strategies (Marttinen et al., 2020). Without hands-on training in such environments, teachers are often unprepared to handle the emotional, social, and academic complexities that come with teaching low-SES students. The absence of

targeted, practical experience in low-SES settings left them feeling unprepared for the reality of teaching these students. The gap in real-world exposure limits novice teachers' ability to apply their theoretical knowledge (Toquero, 2021).

Theme 2: Challenges Faced in Classroom Application

Classroom Management Struggles

Participants said that preservice training had not prepared them for the behavioral challenges presented by low-SES students. Teachers noted that emotional regulation for themselves and establishing a predictable classroom environment were sometimes the most trying tasks, areas where training in trauma-informed practices was often lacking. As Jane 2 recalled, "Our management training felt basic. I quickly realized I needed different approaches for low-SES students but didn't know what those should be." This statement epitomizes one sense of frustration felt by those teachers who believed general classroom management strategies did not translate well into complicated realities associated with teaching in schools serving low-SES students.

Further, these students, more often than not, have other added emotional or behavioral complications emanating from stressors. These are the stressors relating to family instability or trauma that typical classroom management techniques do not resolve (Husna & Kuswoyo, 2022). John 2 voiced this frustration further when he said, "I felt my management skills were inadequate because I hadn't been trained in techniques that might work better for students facing poverty-related challenges." Even as novice teachers may possess a threshold level of knowledge on classroom management, they lack the more advanced strategies to be in a position to handle the emotional needs

presented by students from low-SES backgrounds. This may include how to recognize and act in response when behaviors are the result of trauma and the need perhaps for more supportive, person-centered approaches to discipline (Husna & Kuswoyo, 2022).

The literature suggests that teachers who have not received training in trauma-informed practices or specific strategies for addressing the emotional needs of low-SES students often struggle to maintain an effective classroom environment. According to Husna and Kuswoyo (2022), trauma and stressors like family instability can significantly affect students' behavior and learning. This requires teachers to implement specialized approaches to classroom management. Effective classroom management in low-SES contexts requires a deeper understanding of how external stressors influence student behavior, which preservice programs often fail to adequately address. Traditional disciplinary techniques, such as simple rewards or consequences, may not be effective for students dealing with trauma or other emotional challenges linked to poverty. The lack of training in trauma-informed approaches left them feeling unprepared for managing the complex emotional and behavioral issues low-SES students often present.

Resource Utilization Issues

Resource utilization issues were a key challenge for novice teachers in supporting low-SES students, as highlighted by the study participants. Many teachers felt that the resources provided in their preservice training were not tailored to address the needs of low-SES students. As Jane 2 pointed out, the lack of targeted resources meant that teachers had to develop their own strategies to meet students' academic and emotional

needs. Preservice training often provides general teaching strategies but neglects to equip teachers with specific tools to address challenges faced by low-SES students.

While general resources on child psychology were provided, they were not specifically tailored to the needs of low-SES students. This leaves teachers feeling unprepared to address these students' academic and emotional challenges effectively. Preservice programs often focus on broad theoretical frameworks rather than equipping teachers with concrete, practical resources that address the challenges of working with low-SES students. These gaps in resource provision can have serious implications for teachers' ability to effectively support their students, as they are left to either create their own materials or rely on trial-and-error strategies.

Navigating External Barriers

Literature highlights that family engagement is crucial for student success, yet it remains a persistent challenge for educators. Preservice programs often fail to equip teachers with strategies to build these relationships effectively. Instead, teachers are left to learn through experience how to overcome barriers such as limited parental time, lack of access to resources, or distrust in educational institutions. This gap in training leaves novice teachers underprepared to address the broader socioeconomic factors impacting their students' ability to succeed academically and emotionally.

Furthermore, external barriers such as housing instability and food insecurity compound the challenges faced by both students and teachers. John 4's reflection was that students from low-SES backgrounds often lack a support network, which is a dual burden on educators who need to teach while addressing external factors that hinder student

performance. Students living in poverty are more likely to experience stressors that impede academic engagement and achievement. These challenges necessitate a multifaceted approach that includes equipping teachers with strategies to engage families effectively and resources to address external barriers. Research highlights that teachers must be prepared to navigate these dynamics proactively (Chew & Cerbin, 2021). Students receive comprehensive support to bridge the gap between their external realities and academic potential.

Theme 3: Preparation Programs Needed to Support Low-SES Students

Curricular Modifications

Novice teachers highlighted the inadequacy of current training in equipping them with the knowledge and skills required to understand and respond effectively to the needs of students from low-SES backgrounds. This discussion situates the findings within the existing literature. Students from low-SES backgrounds often contend with challenges that hinder their cognitive development and academic performance. However, many preservice teacher preparation programs inadequately address these realities, leaving teachers unprepared to recognize and address the underlying causes of behavioral and academic struggles. Research shows that incorporating socioeconomic awareness into the curriculum helps teachers move beyond deficit-based assumptions about low-SES students, instead empowering them to develop practices that acknowledge and build on students' strengths (Berger et al., 2021).

The recommendation to include trauma-informed practices reflects growing evidence of the link between poverty and exposure to adverse childhood experiences.

Trauma-informed teaching involves creating safe, supportive, and predictable environments that allow students to thrive academically and emotionally despite external challenges. Teachers untrained in trauma-sensitive approaches may misinterpret trauma-related behaviors, such as withdrawal or aggression, as disobedience or lack of motivation. Embedding trauma-informed practices into teacher preparation programs equips educators with strategies to foster resilience and mitigate the adverse effects of poverty-induced trauma. Training in recognizing trauma triggers and de-escalating conflict enables teachers to build trust and engagement among low-SES students.

How Curricular Modifications Improve Teaching Effectiveness

Integrating these recommendations into teacher preparation programs addresses key gaps in preservice training, ensuring educators are better equipped to work in high-poverty schools. Understanding students' socioeconomic contexts enables teachers to develop more empathetic and effective teaching practices. Additionally, tailored training improves teacher retention rates in low-income schools, as educators feel more prepared and supported in managing the associated challenges (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015). By addressing poverty-specific issues, teachers can implement differentiated instruction tailored to the diverse needs of low-SES students. For instance, Tomlinson (2014) emphasized effective differentiation such as providing targeted scaffolding or using culturally relevant materials that relies on a deep understanding of students' backgrounds and experiences (LeGere, 2023).

Gaps in Existing Curricula

Current preservice programs often provide general diversity training but fail to delve deeply into the nuances of socioeconomic disparities. Participants' calls for mandatory socioeconomic awareness training align with Pardo et al.'s (2024) argument that teacher education must move beyond surface-level multiculturalism to engage with systemic inequalities affecting students' learning opportunities. Embedding modules on poverty, coupled with hands-on experience in low-SES schools, can bridge this gap by providing teachers with both theoretical and practical tools to address inequities.

Field Experiences

Teachers suggested that preparation programs must prioritize diverse field placements in their curricula. Immersive experiences in high-poverty schools enable preservice teachers to observe and adapt strategies to low-SES students. Culturally relevant pedagogy, essential for engaging low-SES students, is best learned through direct exposure to these communities (Marttinen et al., 2020). Programs can enhance teacher preparedness by expanding partnerships with low-SES schools, mandating placements in high-poverty settings, and encouraging reflective practices during field experiences. Such measures ensure that novice teachers are equipped to support the academic and emotional needs of low-SES students. They also foster confidence and effectiveness in addressing educational inequities.

Mentorship Enhancements

Novice teachers expressed a strong desire for mentorship programs, specifically regarding the challenges associated with teaching low socioeconomic status (SES)

students. While general mentorship was available, participants felt it lacked the guidance needed to address the emotional, academic, and behavioral challenges prevalent in low-SES classrooms (Odum, 2024). This specialized mentorship could help teachers gain practical strategies to support their students, especially when dealing with issues like poverty-related trauma or lack of engagement, which are often common in low-SES environments.

The need for more focused mentorship was echoed by John 3, who emphasized that generic advice was insufficient in helping him address the specific hurdles of teaching in a low-SES school. Mentors with expertise in high-poverty schools can offer more relevant support to novice teachers. The mentorship enables them to develop effective practices for working with diverse and underserved student populations. In fact, mentorship programs tailored to the challenges teachers face in low-SES contexts can significantly improve teacher retention and student outcomes. By pairing new teachers with mentors who understand the socio-economic issues affecting students, preservice programs can ensure that novice teachers are better prepared to handle the real-life challenges they will face (Khasawneh, 2023).

Ongoing Professional Development

Finally, participants emphasized that ongoing professional development in the engagement of low-SES students is imperative. Many novice teachers felt that their preservice training had provided a good foundation, but once they began to gain experience in the classroom, additional support was still needed. Teachers recommended that continued professional development opportunities on low-SES engagement would

keep them informed and sharpen their practices over time (Herman, 2024). While the participants learned a great deal through experience, additional formal training would have been beneficial during initial years.

Theme 4: Mental Health Challenges among Students

Mental health challenges among low-SES students were significant barriers to both their emotional well-being and academic success. Many of these students faced stress due to factors such as housing instability, food insecurity, and family-related issues, which contributed to feelings of anxiety, depression, and isolation. These emotional burdens often prevent students from fully engaging in their learning. Educators increasingly adopted trauma-informed practices to help mitigate the negative impact of these mental health challenges. For example, positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and proactive behavior management techniques created a safe and predictable classroom environment that helped students feel more secure (Nanyele, 2024). These practices also allowed teachers to address behaviors rooted in trauma and stress, which were shared among low-SES students.

Trauma-Informed Practices

Trauma-informed practices play a pivotal role in addressing the needs of students whose lives are shaped by adverse experiences, particularly in low-SES contexts. Research has shown the importance of proactive strategies like positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and behavior management techniques in creating a safe, predictable classroom environment. These practices aim to reduce stress and stabilize students struggling with uncertainty and fear. According to literature, positive reinforcement,

restorative practices, and proactive behavior management techniques are crucial for creating a safe and predictable classroom environment. These methods go beyond simply managing disruptive behavior; they help students develop healthier coping mechanisms and rebuild their trust in authority figures, which is often eroded by trauma. Behaviors in trauma—such as withdrawal, aggression, or difficulty concentrating—require understanding rather than punitive measures (Ura & d’Abreu, 2022). Trauma-informed practices create classroom environments where students can thrive despite their challenging circumstances. When teachers adopt these approaches, they acknowledge and address the lasting effects of trauma, helping students navigate their emotional hurdles. Educators empower students to build resilience and reconnect with their academic potential by emphasizing relational strategies on consistent communication, empathy, and collaborative problem-solving (Zaky, 2024).

External Stressors

External stressors such as housing instability, food insecurity, and family-related challenges profoundly influence the mental health and academic performance of low-SES students. These factors often remain invisible in traditional classroom settings, leaving educators ill-equipped to address the root causes of their students’ struggles (Zaky, 2024). Teachers often serve as a bridge between students and essential resources, connecting families to food banks, housing assistance programs, or counseling services. These actions demonstrate a holistic commitment to student well-being (Ura & d’Abreu, 2022). Furthermore, tailoring classroom practices to accommodate these challenges is essential. Teachers might adjust homework policies, provide snacks, or allow extra time for

assignments to help students overcome barriers to learning. Educators who adopt this approach report improvements in students' academic outcomes as well as in their emotional resilience and sense of belonging.

Emotional and Social Support Needs

Educators working with low-SES students highlighted the role of emotional and social support in fostering academic success. Many noted that unstable home environments often leave students grappling with anxiety, depression, and feelings of isolation, which act as significant barriers to learning. Mental health difficulties are intertwined with the academic experiences of low-SES students. The lack of social support networks outside school further compounds these challenges. Teachers described how some low-SES students faced chronic isolation, which hindered their ability to form meaningful connections with peers (Mishra, 2020).

The lack of a safety net often manifests as chronic isolation, leaving students without the emotional anchor provided by a stable support system (Mishra, 2020). Without such connections, students may struggle to build meaningful relationships, both within and outside the classroom. Isolation exacerbates the mental health challenges that many low-SES students already face due to socioeconomic stressors such as poverty, unstable housing, or family dynamics. Without external networks, friends, extended family, or community organizations, these students lack outlets to express their emotions or seek guidance, which compounds feelings of loneliness and helplessness. This state of isolation often leads to disengagement from learning as students grapple with unmet emotional needs (Mishra, 2020).

Teachers who recognize this connection advocate for creating a supportive environment within schools to counterbalance the lack of external networks. This might involve fostering strong teacher-student relationships, promoting peer connections through group activities, and integrating social-emotional learning (SEL) into the curriculum. Teachers strongly believed that preservice training should include specific components focused on understanding and addressing low-SES students' emotional and social struggles. They proposed adding training in social-emotional learning and trauma-informed practices to help future educators recognize and respond to the mental health challenges these students face. Teachers also emphasized the value of creating opportunities for students to build social connections through group projects, clubs, and mentoring programs. These initiatives reduce isolation and empower students to develop skills essential for personal and academic success (Mishra, 2020). Programs that involve parents and caregivers were also highlighted as crucial to building a support system for low-SES students. Such initiatives could strengthen the overall support network available to students, making schools a central point of stability.

Limitations of the Study

This study had several limitations that may have influenced the interpretation and generalizability of its findings. Reliance on self-reported data through semistructured interviews may have led to socially desirable responses or unintentional omissions, affecting the authenticity of the findings. The use of virtual data collection methods may have limited rapport-building and the observation of nonverbal cues, potentially impacting the richness of the data. Time constraints, as the study captured participants'

experiences at a single point in time, further restricted the ability to understand evolving perspectives. While these limitations were acknowledged, the study's rigorous approach to data collection and analysis was taken to enhance its credibility. Future research with larger, more diverse samples and longitudinal designs could address these limitations and expand understanding in this area.

Qualitative data hindered the study, although biases were addressed.

Triangulation procedures were employed to address limitations and improve the reliability of the findings (Dźwigoł, 2020). Despite qualitative research's limitations, this increased the study's validity. I comprehended qualitative research's subjective interpretations. However, triangulation and reflective journaling increased trustworthiness and reduced biases (Amin et al., 2020). These measures boosted the study's credibility despite its shortcomings.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions drawn from this study, several recommendations are proposed to improve the support systems for low-SES students and to enhance the effectiveness of teacher preparation programs:

1. Teacher preparation programs should integrate comprehensive courses and training on socio-economic challenges, cultural diversity, trauma-informed practices, and mental health awareness. These revisions should ensure that teachers enter the classroom with the tools necessary to meet the complex needs of low-SES students.

2. Schools should offer continuous professional development opportunities focused on the specific needs of low-SES students. Teachers should be equipped with practical strategies and resources to address the academic and emotional challenges faced by these students. Ongoing training should include topics like socio-emotional learning, conflict resolution, and strategies for engaging families.
3. Schools should allocate additional resources to classrooms serving low-SES students, including teaching aids, support staff (such as counselors and social workers), and access to community-based programs. A collaborative approach with local community organizations could strengthen the network of support for students and their families.
4. Schools should foster stronger partnerships with families and community organizations to create a supportive network that addresses external factors such as food insecurity, housing instability, and mental health challenges. Regular communication with parents, as well as outreach programs, can ensure a more holistic support system for students.
5. Schools should prioritize adopting trauma-informed practices to ensure that students who have experienced adversity feel safe, valued, and supported. Teachers should be trained in recognizing signs of trauma and how to respond appropriately to create an emotionally supportive learning environment.
6. Further studies are needed to assess the long-term impact of trauma-informed practices and socio-emotional learning on the academic performance and mental

health of low-SES students. This research can help identify best practices and provide evidence for policy changes in education.

Implications

The implications of these findings are far-reaching and suggest significant changes in how educators are trained and supported. The gaps in preservice teacher training highlighted the need for a paradigm shift in how teachers are prepared to address the diverse needs of their students. By emphasizing socio-economic issues, cultural diversity, and mental health awareness in teacher preparation programs, future educators will be better equipped to create inclusive, supportive learning environments that promote the academic and emotional growth of all students, particularly those from disadvantaged backgrounds. Teachers and school leaders must recognize the profound impact that socio-economic stressors can have on students' well-being and academic performance. Adopting a trauma-informed approach can help students feel safe and supported. It can also contribute to improved academic outcomes and overall success. Finally, the need for stronger school-community partnerships indicates that educational institutions cannot operate in isolation. Collaboration with families, local organizations, and community resources is essential for creating a comprehensive support network for low-SES students. Schools must work beyond the classroom to address the broader socio-economic challenges that affect their students' lives.

Conclusion

In this study I highlighted critical gaps in the training and support available to educators working with low-SES students. While teachers expressed a strong

commitment to addressing the needs of these students, many felt inadequately prepared to tackle the socio-economic and emotional challenges they face. The findings emphasized the importance of revising teacher preparation programs to include training on socio-economic factors, trauma-informed practices, and strategies for engaging with families and communities. Additionally, schools must ensure that teachers are supported with adequate resources, professional development, and a network of community-based services to help low-SES students succeed. Addressing the challenges faced by low-SES students requires a multi-approach involving changes to teacher preparation, ongoing professional development, resource allocation, and stronger community engagement. Through these efforts, educators will be better equipped to meet the complex needs of their students and ensure that every child has the opportunity to reach their full potential.

References

- Abel, H., Glazier, J., Mallous, R., Boyd, A., Bell-Hughes, K., & Eaker-Rich, D. (2018). Reconnect and recharge: Plugging new teachers into support outlets. *Action in Teacher Education*, 40(2), 203–219.
<https://doi.org/10.1080/01626620.2018.1424048>
- Al Darwish, S., & Sadeqi, A. A. (2016). Microteaching impact on student teacher's performance: A case study from Kuwait. *Journal of Education and Training Studies*, 4(8), 126–134. <https://doi.org/10.11114/jets.v4i8.1677>
- Allais, S., Cooper, A., & Shalem, Y. (2019). Rupturing or reinforcing inequality? The role of education in South Africa today. *Transformation: Critical Perspectives on Southern Africa*, 101(1), 105–126. <https://doi.org/10.1353/trn.2019.0039>
- AL Naimi, S. R., Romanowski, M. H., & Du, X. (2019). Novice teachers' challenges and coping strategies in Qatari governmental schools. *International Journal of Learning, Teaching and Educational Research*, 19(9), 118–142.
<http://hdl.handle.net/10576/17466>
- Alvarez-Romero, C., Bonilla-Rodríguez, V. E., López de Méndez, A., Vega-Milán, E., Marrero, E., & Torres-Villela, L. A. (2021). Preservice teachers' diversity competency and its implications for teacher preparation programs. *International Journal of Learner Diversity & Identities*, 28(1). <https://doi.org/10.18848/2327-0128/CGP/v28i01/77-91>
- Amin, M. E. K., Nørgaard, L. S., Cavaco, A. M., Witry, M. J., Hillman, L., Cernasev, A., & Desselle, S. P. (2020). Establishing trustworthiness and authenticity in

- qualitative pharmacy research. *Research in Social and Administrative Pharmacy*, 16(10), 1472–1482. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.sapharm.2020.02.005>
- Archambault, I., Pascal, S., Tardif-Grenier, K., Dupéré, V., Janosz, M., Parent, S., & Pagani, L. S. (2020). The contribution of teacher structure, involvement, and autonomy support on student engagement in low-income elementary schools. *Teachers and Teaching*, 26(5–6), 428–445. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13540602.2020.1863208>
- Azzarello, C. B., & Bergstrom, C. (2021). Comparative analysis of literature and narratives regarding teaching practices in low SES school districts. *International Journal of Childhood Education*, 2(3), 27–38. <https://doi.org/10.33422/ijce.v2i3.115>
- Baek, S., Dyson, B., Howley, D., & Shen, Y. (2024). Promoting an equity-based approach for social and emotional learning in physical education teacher education: International teacher educators' perspectives. *Sport, Education and Society*, 29(1), 74–88. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13573322.2022.2107504>
- Bandura, A. (2001). Social cognitive theory: An agentic perspective. *Annual review of psychology*, 52(1), 1-26. <https://www.annualreviews.org/content/journals/10.1146/annurev.psych.52.1.1.;?crawler=true&mimetype=application/pdf>
- Bar-Tal, S., Chamo, N., Ram, D., Snapir, Z., & Gilat, I. (2020). First steps in a second career: Characteristics of the transition to the teaching profession among novice teachers. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(5), 660–675.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2019.1708895>

Berger, R., Strasser, D., & Woodfin, L. (2021). *Management in the active classroom*. EL Education.

Berkowitz, R., Moore, H., Astor, R., & Benbenishty, R. (2017). A research synthesis of the associations between socioeconomic background, inequality, school climate, and academic achievement. *Review of Educational Research*, 87, 425–469.

<https://doi.org/10.3102/0034654316669821>

Bertram, C. (2023). A systems approach to understanding novice teachers' experiences and professional learning. *Journal of Education (University of KwaZulu-Natal)*, (90), 11–31. <http://dx.doi.org/10.17159/2520-9868/i90a01>

Bondie, R. S., Dahnke, C., & Zusho, A. (2019). How does changing “one-size-fits-all” to differentiated instruction affect teaching? *Review of Research in Education*, 43(1), 336–362. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X18821130>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2022). Conceptual and design thinking for thematic analysis. *Qualitative Psychology*, 9(1), 3–26.

<https://psycnet.apa.org/doi/10.1037/qup0000196>

Broer, M., Bai, Y., Fonseca, F., Broer, M., Bai, Y., & Fonseca, F. (2019). A review of the literature on socioeconomic status and educational achievement. *Socioeconomic Inequality and Educational Outcomes: Evidence from Twenty Years of TIMSS*, 7–

17. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-11991-1_2

- Burton, M., & Campbell, A. (2018). Fostering equitable school contexts: Preparing novice teachers for careers in high-needs rural schools. *Journal of Teacher Education, 70*(4), 357–370.
- Cacciattolo, M., Carroll, J., Muscat, A., Pelosi, L., & Thomas, M. (2024). Remote teaching practicum in low-SES schools: NETDS preservice teacher perceptions and social justice in teacher education (pp. 359-375). Springer International Publishing.
- Campos, C., & Kearns, C. (2022). The impact of neighborhood school choice: Evidence from Los Angeles' zones of choice. *Available at SSRN, 3830628*.
<https://www.nber.org/papers/w31553>
- Cancino, M., Durán, M., & Solorza, C. (2020). What learning can do to teaching: Assessing the impact of apprenticeship of observation on preservice teachers' beliefs. *English Teaching and Learning, 44*(3), 1–16.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s42321-019-00044-z>
- Carothers, D., Aydin, H., & Houdyshell, M. (2019). Teacher shortages and cultural mismatch: District and university collaboration for recruiting. *Journal of Social Studies Education Research, 10*(3), 39–63.
<https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1229410.pdf>
- Casey, J. E., Pennington, L. K., & Mireles, S. V. (2020). Technology acceptance model: Assessing preservice teachers' acceptance of floor-robots as a useful pedagogical

tool. *Technology, Knowledge, and Learning*, 26(3), 499–514.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10758-020-09452-8>

Chatterji, R., Campbell, N., & Quirk, A. (2021). Closing advanced coursework equity gaps for all students. *Center for American Progress*.

Chen, C. Y. C., Byrne, E., & Vélez, T. (2022). Impact of the 2020 pandemic of COVID-19 on families with school-aged children in the United States: Roles of income level and race. *Journal of Family Issues*, 43(3), 719–740.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0192513X21994153>

Chew, S. L., & Cerbin, W. J. (2021). The cognitive challenges of effective teaching. *The Journal of Economic Education*, 52(1), 17–40.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00220485.2020.1845266>

Choi, T., & Chiu, M. M. (2022). Toward equitable education in the context of a pandemic: Supporting linguistic minority students during remote learning. *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development*, 23(1), 14–22. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijced-10-2020-0065>

Clever, M., & Miller, K. S. (2019). “I understand what they’re going through”: How socioeconomic background shapes the student service-learning experience. *Teaching Sociology*, 47(3), 204–218.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0092055X19832646>

Cochran-Smith, M., Villegas, A. M., Abrams, L., Chavez-Moreno, L., Mills, T., & Stern, R. (2015). Critiquing teacher preparation research: An overview of the field, part II. *Journal of Teacher Education*, 66(2), 109–121.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487114558268>

- Collet, V. S. (2020). Blogging as online reflection during student teaching. In *Effective practices in online teacher preparation for literacy educators* (pp. 24–44). IGI Global perspectives. *Sport, Education and Society*, 29(1), 74–88.
- <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-7998-0206-8.ch002>
- Copes, J. (2022). *A grounded theory study from the perspective of new teachers on their preparedness to teach in at risk schools in the United States* (Doctoral dissertation, Delaware State University).
- Creswell, J. W., & Creswell, J. D. (2018). *Research design* (5th ed.). SAGE Publications.
- Creswell, J. W., & Poth, C. N. (2016). *Qualitative inquiry and research design: Choosing among five approaches*. SAGE Publications.
- Cunninghame, I., Vernon, L., & Pitman, T. (2020). To be seen and heard: Enhancing student engagement to support university aspirations and expectations for students from low socioeconomic status backgrounds. *British Educational Research Journal*, 46(6), 1487–1506. <https://doi.org/10.1002/berj.3659>
- Cuzzo, O. (2024). *The impact of mentoring on novice teachers*. College of Saint Elizabeth.
- Daum, D. N., Marttinen, R., & Banville, D. (2022). Service-learning experiences for pre-service teachers: Cultural competency and behavior management challenges when working with a diverse low-income community. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 27(4), 396–408. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2021.1891210>
- Destin, M., Hanselman, P., Buontempo, J., Tipton, E., & Yeager, D. (2019). Do student

mindsets differ by socioeconomic status and explain disparities in academic achievement in the United States? *AERA Open*, 5(3), 233285841985770.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858419857706>

Dodgson, J. E. (2019). Reflexivity in qualitative research. *Journal of Human Lactation*, 35(2), 220–222. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0890334419830990>

Dudek, C. M., Bronstein, B., Reddy, L. A., Fingerhut, J., Wiggs, N. B., & Glover, T. A. (2024). Teachers' perceived relationships with paraprofessionals who support students with challenging behaviors. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 1–14.

<https://doi.org/10.1007/s40688-024-00529-0>

Dunst, C., Hamby, D., Howse, R., Wilkie, H., & Annas, K. (2019). Metasynthesis of preservice professional preparation and teacher education research studies. *Education Sciences*, 9(1), 50. <https://doi.org/10.3390/educsci9010050>

Dvir, N., & Schatz-Oppenheimer, O. (2020). Novice teachers in a changing reality. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 43(4), 639–656.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2020.1821360>

Dynarski, S., Libassi, C. J., Michelmore, K., & Owen, S. (2021). Closing the gap: The effect of reducing complexity and uncertainty in college pricing on the choices of low-income students. *American Economic Review*, 111(6), 1721–1756.

<https://doi.org/10.3102/0091732X18821130>

Dzwigol, H. (2020). A methodological and empirical platform of triangulation in strategic management. *Academy of Strategic Management Journal*, 19(4), 1–8.

Edwards, D. S. (2021). Just out of reach? Unrestrained supply, constrained demand, and

- access to effective schools in and around Detroit. *Educational Evaluation and Policy Analysis*, 43(3), 391–418. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0162373721996738>
- Eppich, W., Gormley, G., & Teunissen, P. (2019). Semi structured one-on-one interviews. *Healthcare Simulation Research: A Practical Guide*, 85–91. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-26837-4_12
- Etikan, I., Musa, S., & Alkassim, R. S. (2016). Comparison of convenience sampling and purposive sampling. *American Journal of Theoretical and Applied Statistics*, 5(1), 1–4. https://www.academia.edu/download/55796997/Comparison_Convenience_and_Purposive_Sampling-2016_4p.pdf
- Fischer, C., Fishman, B., Levy, A., Eisenkraft, A., Dede, C., Lawrenz, F., Jia, Y., Kook, F. J., Frumin, K., & McCoy, A. (2020). When do students in low-SES schools perform better-than-expected on a high-stakes test? Analyzing school, teacher, teaching, and professional development characteristics. *Urban Education*, 55(8–9), 1280–1314. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0042085916668953>
- Freeman, J., Simonsen, B., Briere, D. E., & MacSuga-Gage, A. S. (2013). Preservice teacher training in classroom management. *Teacher Education and Special Education: The Journal of the Teacher Education Division of the Council for Exceptional Children*, 37(2), 106–120. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0888406413507002>
- Gagnon, D. J., & Mattingly, M. J. (2016). Advanced placement and rural schools. *Journal of Advanced Academics*, 27(4), 266–284.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/1932202X16656390>

Gaikhorst, L., Beishuizen, J., Roosenboom, B., & Volman, M. (2017). The challenges of beginning teachers in urban primary schools. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, 40(1), 46–61. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02619768.2016.1251900>

García, E., & Weiss, E. (2019). Challenging working environments ("school climates"), especially in high-poverty schools, play a role in the teacher shortage. The fourth report in "The Perfect Storm in the Teacher Labor Market" series. *Economic Policy Institute*. <https://epi.org/162910>

Garza, R., & Smith, S. F. (2015). Preservice teachers' blog reflections: Illuminating their growth and development. *Cogent Education*, 2(1), 1066550. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2331186x.2015.1066550>

Gisewhite, R. A., Jeanfreau, M. M., & Holden, C. L. (2021). A call for ecologically based teacher-parent communication skills training in pre-service teacher education programmes. *Educational Review*, 73(5), 597–616. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2019.1666794>

Glock, S., & Kleen, H. (2020). Preservice teachers' attitudes, attributions, and stereotypes: Exploring the disadvantages of students from families with low socioeconomic status. *Studies in Educational Evaluation*, 67, 100929. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2020.100929>

Hasan, N., Rana, R. U., Chowdhury, S., Dola, A. J., & Khan Rony, M. K. (2021). Ethical considerations in research. *Journal of Nursing Research, Patient Safety and Practice*, 1–4. <https://doi.org/10.55529/jnrpsp.11.1.4>

- Herman, B. E. (2024). *Teacher perceptions of the leadership style of school principals, and their impact on predicted teacher retention* (Doctoral dissertation, Yeshiva University).
- Hilton, J. T., & McCleary, M. (2019). Preconceived notions about poverty held by preservice teachers. *Journal of Teacher Education and Educators*, 8(2), 95–114.
- Höl, Ş. (2024). Teacher agency of novice teachers: A scoping review. *Manisa Celal Bayar Üniversitesi Eğitim Fakültesi Dergisi*, 12(1), 190–218.
<https://doi.org/10.52826/mcbuefd.1361625>
- Horsley, M., Newell, S., & Stubbs, B. (2004). The prior knowledge of global education of pre-service teacher education students. *Citizenship, Social and Economics Education*, 6(3), 137–155. <https://doi.org/10.2304/csee.2004.6.3.137>
- Husna, F. S., & Kuswoyo, H. (2022). The portrayal of post-traumatic stress disorder as seen in the main character in the *Woman in the Window* novel. *Linguistics and Literature Journal*, 3(2), 122–130.
https://jim.teknokrat.ac.id/index.php/linguistics_and_literature/article/view/2073/668
- Jacobs, J., & Burns, R. W. (2021). *(Re) Designing programs: A vision for equity-centered, clinically based teacher preparation*. IAP.
- Jones, R. C., & Saye, J. W. (2018). Preservice preparation and other potential influences on in-service beliefs and practices: A tale of two secondary social studies teachers. *The Journal of Social Studies Research*, 42(1), 81–94. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jssr.2017.03.004>

- Kaçar, I. G. (2020). Blogging in an autonomous, constructivist and blended learning environment: A case study of Turkish EFL pre-service teachers. *Technology and the Psychology of Second Language Learners and Users*, 145–174.
https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-34212-8_6
- Kaniuka, T., & Kanuika, A. R. (2019). Exploring the moderated mediation of student demographics and teacher turnover on teacher working conditions effect on student achievement in North Carolina. *Journal of Applied Educational and Policy Research*, 4(1). <https://journals.charlotte.edu/jaepr/article/view/842>
- Khasawneh, Y. (2023). An investigation of pre-service teacher preparation programs in teacher education and co-teaching models. *Information Sciences Letters*, 12(7), 2849–2857. <http://dx.doi.org/10.18576/isl/120714>
- Knight, C., Balatti, J., Haase, M., & Henderson, L. (2010). Preservice teacher stressors and their reactions to those stressors: Resilient responses.
<https://researchonline.jcu.edu.au/16471/>
- Koball, A. M., Domoff, S. E., Klevan, J., Olson-Dorff, D., Borgert, A., & Rasmussen, C. (2021). The impact of adverse childhood experiences on healthcare utilization in children. *Child Abuse & Neglect*, 111, 104797.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.chiabu.2020.104797>
- Kocabas, C., & Deniz, Ü. (2023). Turkish novice teachers' struggles for teaching and learning to teaching. *GIST Education and Learning Research Journal*, 26, 29–56.
<https://doi.org/10.26817/16925777.1588>
- Kostere, S., & Kostere, K. (2021). *The generic qualitative approach to a dissertation in*

the social sciences: A step by step guide. Routledge.

Kushon, S. D. (2024). *Teachers' perspectives on the socioemotional and academic needs of students from low-socioeconomic backgrounds* (Doctoral dissertation, National University).

Labinjo, T. (2021). The use of zoom video conferencing for qualitative data generation: A reflective account of a research study. *Open Access Journal of Biogenic Science and Research*, 10(2). <https://doi.org/10.46718/jbgsr.2021.10.000238>

Lange, A. A., Robertson, L., Tian, Q., Nivens, R., & Price, J. (2022). The effects of an early childhood-elementary teacher preparation program in STEM on pre-service teachers. *Eurasia Journal of Mathematics, Science and Technology Education*, 18(12), em2197. <https://doi.org/10.29333/ejmste/12698>

LaVan, C. (2019). *A transcendental phenomenological study of novice teachers administrative support experiences in high-poverty high-minority rural South Carolina schools* (Liberty University).

Lavy, S., & Ayuob, W. (2019). Teachers' sense of meaning associations with teacher performance and graduates' resilience: A study of schools serving students of low socio-economic status. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 10, Article 823. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2019.00823>

LeGere, L. (2023). *Perceptions of teachers regarding instructional strategies for low SES students* (Doctoral dissertation, Walden University).

Lew, M. M., & Nelson, R. F. (2016). New teachers' challenges: How culturally responsive teaching, classroom management, & assessment literacy are

- intertwined. *Multicultural Education*, 23, 7–13. <http://www.caddogap.com>
- Li, L. (2020). Novice teachers' discursive construction of their identity: Insights from foreign language classrooms. *Iranian Journal of Language Teaching Research*, 8(3), 57–76.
[https://ore.exeter.ac.uk/repository/bitstream/handle/10871/124568/IJLTR_Volume%208_Issue%203%20\(Special%20Issue\)_Pages%2057-76.pdf?sequence=2](https://ore.exeter.ac.uk/repository/bitstream/handle/10871/124568/IJLTR_Volume%208_Issue%203%20(Special%20Issue)_Pages%2057-76.pdf?sequence=2)
- Lochmiller, C. (2021). Conducting thematic analysis with qualitative data. *Qualitative Report*, 26(6), 2029–2044. <https://doi.org/10.46743/2160-3715/2021.5008>
- Madler, A. M., Anderson, S. K., LeMire, S. D., & Smith, K. (2022). Perceptions of teacher preparation for classroom diversity. *Mid-Western Educational Researcher*, 34(1), 4.. <https://scholarworks.bgsu.edu/mwer/vol34/iss1/4/>
- Mäkelä, K., Hirvensalo, M., & Whipp, P. R. (2014). Should I stay or should I go? Physical education teachers' career intentions. *Research Quarterly for Exercise and Sport*, 85(2), 234–244. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02701367.2014.893052>
- Manasia, L., Pârvan, A., & Macovei, M. (2020). Towards a model of teacher well-being from a positive emotions' perspective. *European Journal of Investigation in Health, Psychology and Education*, 10(1), 469–496. <https://doi.org/10.3390/ejihpe10010035>
- Marttinen, R., Daum, D. N., Banville, D., & Fredrick, R. N. (2020). Pre-service teachers learning through service-learning in a low SES school. *Physical Education and Sport Pedagogy*, 25(1), 1–15. <https://doi.org/10.1080/17408989.2019.1670153>
- Mayfield, V. (2020). *Cultural competence now: 56 exercises to help educators*

understand and challenge bias, racism, and privilege. Ascd.

McGee, G. W. (2021). Closing the achievement gap: Lessons from Illinois' golden spike high-poverty high-performing schools. In *Closing the achievement gap* (pp. 97–125). Routledge.

McMahan, S. K., & Garza, R. (2016). Fostering preservice teachers development: Engagement in practice and learning. *Current Issues in Education, 19*(3).
<https://cie.asu.edu/ojs/index.php/cieatasu/article/view/1562>

Merga, M. K. (2020). “Fallen through the cracks”: Teachers’ perceptions of barriers faced by struggling literacy learners in secondary school. *English in Education, 54*(4), 371–395. <https://doi.org/10.1080/04250494.2019.1672502>

Milner, H. R., & Laughter, J. C. (2015). But good intentions are not enough: Preparing teachers to center race and poverty. *The Urban Review, 47*, 341–363.
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s11256-014-0295-4>

Mishra, S. (2020). Social networks, social capital, social support and academic success in higher education: A systematic review with a special focus on ‘underrepresented’ students. *Educational Research Review, 29*, 100307.
<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2019.100307>

Mundy, C. A., & Leko, M. M. (2015). Uncovering and informing preservice teachers’ prior knowledge about poverty. *Networks, 17*(1), 1–10.
<https://doi.org/10.4148/2470-6353.1035>

Nanyele, S. (2024). Innovative approaches to classroom management: Bridging theory and practice. *Convergence Chronicles, 5*(1), 326–333.

<https://doi.org/10.53075/Ijmsirq/6554566546>

- Napanoy, J., Gayagay, C., & Tuazon, J. (2021). Difficulties encountered by preservice teachers: Basis of a preservice training program. *Universal Journal of Educational Research*, 9(2), 342–349. <https://doi.org/10.13189/ujer.2021.090210>
- Nardi, W., Harrison, A., Saadeh, F., Webb, J., Wentz, A., & Loucks, E. (2020). Mindfulness and cardiovascular health: Qualitative findings on mechanisms from the mindfulness-based blood pressure reduction (MB-BP) study. *PLoS One*, 15(9), e0239533. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239533>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2020). *Characteristics of public and private elementary and secondary school teachers in the United States: Results from the 2017-18 national teacher and principal survey first look a publication of the National Center for Education Statistics*.
<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2020/2020142.pdf>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2022). *COE - Concentration of public-school students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch*. Nces.ed.gov.
<https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/indicator/clb/free-or-reduced-price-lunch>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (2024). Teacher turnover: Stayers, movers, and leavers. https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/2024/slc_508c.pdf
- Nelson, M., & Voithofer, R. (2022). Coursework, field experiences, and the technology beliefs and practices of preservice teachers. *Computers & Education*, 186, 104547. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2022.104547>

- Nguyen, T., Pham, L., Crouch, M., & Springer, M. (2020). The correlates of teacher turnover: An updated and expanded meta-analysis of the literature. *Educational Research Review, 31*, 100355. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.edurev.2020.100355>
- Nigar, N. (2020). Hermeneutic phenomenological narrative enquiry: A qualitative study design. *Theory and Practice in Language Studies, 10*(1), 10–18. https://www.academia.edu/download/66001387/A_Qualitative_Study_Design_N_N_01_2020.pdf
- Odum, D. (2024). *Teacher perceptions of African American socioeconomically disadvantaged students and high school completion* (Doctoral dissertation, Tennessee State University).
- Orland-Barak, L., & Wang, J. (2021). Teacher mentoring in service of preservice teachers' learning to teach: Conceptual bases, characteristics, and challenges for teacher education reform. *Journal of Teacher Education, 72*(1), 86–99. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022487119894230>
- Pansé-Barone, C., VanLone, J., George-Puskar, A., & Ziegler, L. (2024). Preservice preparation practices to increase family-professional collaboration: A mixed-methods systematic review.
- Pardo, R., García-Pérez, D., & Panadero, E. (2024). Shaping the assessors of tomorrow: How practicum experiences develop assessment literacy in secondary education pre-service teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 152*, 104798. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2024.104798>
- Paris, D., & Alim, H. (Eds.). (2017). *Culturally sustaining pedagogies: Teaching and*

learning for justice in a changing world. Teachers College Press.

- Parutis, V., & Howson, C. (2020). Failing to level the playing field: Student discourses on graduate employability. *Research in Post-Compulsory Education*, 25(4), 373–393. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13596748.2020.1846312>
- Peterson-Ahmad, M., Hovey, K., & Peak, P. (2018). Preservice teacher perceptions and knowledge regarding professional development: Implications for teacher preparation programs. *Journal of Special Education Apprenticeship*, 7(2), 1–16.
- Poon, K. (2020). The impact of socioeconomic status on parental factors in promoting academic achievement in Chinese children. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 75, 102175. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2020.102175>
- Redding, C., & Henry, G. T. (2019). Leaving school early: An examination of novice teachers' within- and end-of-year turnover. *American Educational Research Journal*, 56(1), 204–236. <https://doi.org/10.3102/0002831218790542>
- Rodriguez-Segura, D., Campton, C., Crouch, L., & Slade, T. S. (2021). Looking beyond changes in averages in evaluating foundational learning: Some inequality measures. *International Journal of Educational Development*, 84, 102411. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijedudev.2021.102411>
- Roksa, J., & Kinsley, P. (2019). The role of family support in facilitating academic success of low-income students. *Research in Higher Education*, 60, 415–436. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s11162-018-9517-z>
- Romijn, B., Slot, P., & Leseman, P. (2021). Increasing teachers' intercultural competences in teacher preparation programs and through professional

development: A review. *Teaching and teacher education*, 98, 103236.

<https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2020.103236>

Rose, J., & Johnson, C. (2020). Contextualizing reliability and validity in qualitative research: Toward more rigorous and trustworthy qualitative social science in leisure research. *Journal of Leisure Research*, 51(4), 432–451.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/00222216.2020.1722042>

Saleem, A., Gul, R., & Dogar, A. A. (2021). Effectiveness of continuous professional development program as perceived by primary level teachers. *Ilkogretim Online*, 20(3), 53–72. <https://doi.org/10.17051/ilkonline.2021.03.06>

Saribas, D., Kucuk, Z., & Ertepinar, H. (2016). Implementation of an environmental education course to improve preservice elementary teachers' environmental literacy and self-efficacy beliefs. *International Research in Geographical and Environmental Education*, 26(4), 311–

326. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10382046.2016.1262512>

Scales, P., Van Boekel, M., Pekel, K., Syvertsen, A., & Roehlkepartain, E. C. (2020). Effects of developmental relationships with teachers on middle-school students' motivation and performance. *Psychology in the Schools*, 57(4), 646–677.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/pits.22350>

Shank, M. K., & Santiago, L. (2022). Classroom management needs of novice teachers. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues, and Ideas*, 95(1), 26–34. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00098655.2021.2010636>

Shufutinsky, A. (2020). Employing the use of self for transparency, rigor,

trustworthiness, and credibility in qualitative organizational research

methods. *Organization Development Review*, 52(1), 50–58.

https://www.academia.edu/download/93118095/UoS_in_Research_Final_Publish_edODR_V52_No1_Shufutinsky.pdf

Song, J., Sharma, U., & Choi, H. (2019). Impact of teacher education on pre-service regular schoolteachers' attitudes, intentions, concerns, and self-efficacy about inclusive education in South Korea. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 86, 102901. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2019.102901>

Sovansophal, K. (2020). Family socioeconomic status and students' choice of STEM majors. *International Journal of Comparative Education and Development*, 22(1), 49–65. <https://doi.org/10.1108/ijced-03-2019-0025>

Stites, M. L., Rakes, C. R., Noggle, A. K., & Shah, S. (2018). Preservice teacher perceptions of preparedness to teach in inclusive settings as an indicator of teacher preparation program effectiveness. *Discourse and Communication for Sustainable Education*, 9(2), 21–39. <https://doi.org/10.2478/dcse-2018-0012>

Stolz, S. (2019). New pathways to the profession and teacher identity development. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, 47(2), 183–186. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/26912672>

Suna, H. E., Tanberkan, H., Gür, B., Perc, M., & Özer, M. (2020). Socioeconomic status and school type as predictors of academic achievement. *Journal of Economy Culture and Society*, (61), 41–64. <https://doi.org/10.26650/JECS2020-0034>

Sundler, A. J., Lindberg, E., Nilsson, C., & Palmér, L. (2019). Qualitative thematic

analysis based on descriptive phenomenology. *Nursing Open*, 6(3), 733–739.

<https://doi.org/10.1002/nop2.275>

Takashiro, N., & Clarke, C. H. (2020). Low-socioeconomic status students turn their academic failure to success: A synthesis of qualitative research. *Mistakes, Errors and Failures across Cultures: Navigating Potentials*, 363–382.

https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-35574-6_19

Tardif, M. (2001). Pre-service teacher training programs: Outcomes of recent reforms and new trends towards effective professional training. In *Pan Canadian Education Research Program Symposium*. <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/46923489.pdf>

Taylor, R., Yeborah, A. K., & Ringlaben, R. P. (2015). Preservice teachers' perceptions towards multicultural education and teaching of culturally and linguistically diverse learners. *International Journal for Innovation Education and Research*, 3(9), 75–87.

<https://doi.org/10.31686/ijer.vol3.iss9.434>

Tomlinson, C. A. (2014). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Ascd.

Toquero, C. M. (2021). Emergency remote education experiment amid COVID-19 pandemic. *IJERI: International Journal of Educational Research and Innovation*, (15), 162–176. <https://doi.org/10.46661/ijeri.5113>

Triventi, M., Skopek, J., Kulic, N., Buchholz, S., & Blossfeld, H. P. (2020). Advantage 'finds its way': How privileged families exploit opportunities in different systems of secondary education. *Sociology*, 54(2), 237–257.

<https://doi.org/10.1177/0038038519874984>

Trotman, J., & Kerr, T. (2001). Making the personal professional: Pre-service teacher education and personal histories. *Teachers and Teaching*, 7(2), 157–171.

<https://doi.org/10.1080/13540600120054955>

Ura, S. K., & d'Abreu, A. (2022). Racial bias, social–emotional competence, and teachers' evaluation of student behavior. *Children & Schools*, 44(1), 17–26.

<https://doi.org/10.1093/cs/cdab028>

U.S. Census Bureau. (2023). *National poverty in America awareness month: January 2023*. Census.gov. <https://www.census.gov/newsroom/stories/poverty-awareness-month.html#:~:text=Official%20Poverty%20Measure>

U.S. Department of Education. (2021). Teacher training to meet diverse student needs before entering the classroom: Teacher preparation in 2017–2018.

<https://nces.ed.gov/pubs2021/2021046/index.asp>

Vadivel, B., Alam, S., Nikpoo, I., & Ajanil, B. (2023). The impact of low socioeconomic background on a child's educational achievements. *Education Research International*, 2023(1), 6565088. <https://doi.org/10.1155/2023/6565088>

Vadivel, B., Namaziandost, E., & Saeedian, A. (2021). Progress in English language teaching through continuous professional development—teachers' self-awareness, perception, and feedback. In *Frontiers in Education* (Vol. 6, p. 757285). Frontiers Media SA. <https://doi.org/10.3389/feduc.2021.757285>

Van Eycken, L., Amitai, A., & Van Houtte, M. (2024). Be true to your school? Teachers' turnover intentions: The role of socioeconomic composition, teachability

- perceptions, emotional exhaustion and teacher efficacy. *Research Papers in Education*, 39(1), 24–49. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02671522.2022.2089208>
- Warren, C. (2018). Empathy, teacher dispositions, and preparation for culturally responsive pedagogy. *J. Teach. Educ.*, 69(2), 169–183. <https://doi:10.1177/0022487117712487>
- Wilson, M. L., Ritzhaupt, A. D., & Cheng, L. (2020). The impact of teacher education courses for technology integration on preservice teacher knowledge: A meta-analysis study. *Computers & Education*, 156, 103941. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.compedu.2020.103941>
- Wolff, C. E., Jarodzka, H., & Boshuizen, H. P. (2021). Classroom management scripts: A theoretical model contrasting expert and novice teachers' knowledge and awareness of classroom events. *Educational Psychology Review*, 33(1), 131–148. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10648-020-09542-0>
- Yin, R. K. (2014). *Case study research: Design and methods* (Fifth edition). SAGE Publications.
- Yuan, T., & Jiang, H. (2019). Culturally responsive teaching for children from low-income, immigrant families. *Young Exceptional Children*, 22(3), 150–161. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096250618756897>
- Zaky, H. (2024). Adult education and empathy: The impact of empathy development on students' academic competencies and classroom engagement post Covid-19. *International Journal of Curriculum Development and Learning Measurement (IJCDLM)*, 5(1), 1–18. <https://doi.org/10.4018/IJCDLM.339913>

Zhukova, O. (2018). Novice teachers' concerns, early professional experiences and development: Implications for theory and practice. *Discourse and communication for sustainable education*, 9(1), 100-114. <https://sciendo.com/pdf/10.2478/dcse-2018-0008>

Zuhairi, A., Karthikeyan, N., & Priyadarshana, S. T. (2020). Supporting students to succeed in open and distance learning in the Open University of Sri Lanka and Universitas Terbuka Indonesia. *Asian Association of Open Universities Journal*, 15(1), 13–35. <https://doi.org/10.1108/AAOUJ-09-2019-0038>

Appendix A: Interview Protocol

Interview Protocol for RQ1

1. ***Training Effectiveness:*** Which specific training modules or courses did you find most effective in preparing you to support low-SES students?
2. ***Practical Experiences:*** How did your student teaching or practicum experiences help you in understanding and addressing the needs of low-SES students?
3. ***Resource Utilization:*** What resources provided during your preservice training were most helpful in supporting low-SES students?
4. ***Cultural Competency:*** How well did your preservice training prepare you to understand and address the cultural and socioeconomic backgrounds of low-SES students?
5. ***Mentorship and Support:*** How effective were the mentorship and support systems in your preservice program in preparing you to work with low-SES students?
6. ***Classroom Management:*** What classroom management strategies taught during your preservice training have been most effective in supporting low-SES students?

Interview Protocol for RQ2

1. ***Curriculum Improvements:*** What changes would you suggest to the curriculum to better prepare preservice teachers for working with low-SES students?
2. ***Additional Resources:*** What additional resources or materials do you think should be included in preservice programs to support low-SES students?
3. ***Field Experience:*** How can field experiences be improved to better prepare preservice teachers for the challenges of working with low-SES students?

4. ***Cultural Training:*** What types of cultural competency training would you recommend to enhance the preparation of preservice teachers for working with low-SES students?
5. ***Mentorship Programs:*** How can mentorship programs be improved to provide better support for preservice teachers working with low-SES students?
6. ***Ongoing Professional Development:*** What ongoing professional development opportunities should be offered to preservice teachers to ensure they are well-prepared to support low-SES students throughout their careers?

Appendix B: Initial Themes

Initial themes	Codes	Direct Quotes
Lack of Focus on Socioeconomic Issues	SES modules	"Honestly, I don't remember much about specific modules aimed at low-
	General theories	SES students. We covered theories, but
	On-the-job learning	there was very little practical focus on
	Lack of focus	SES issues." (Jane 1)
Inadequate Cultural Competency Training	Limited application	"Most of the training wasn't specific to low-SES students. We covered general theories that didn't translate well to this student population." (John 2)
	Brief training	"Cultural competency was a brief section, and it didn't really equip me with the nuanced understanding of socioeconomic factors that influence student behavior and learning." (Jane 1)
	Diversity focus	"We touched on diversity briefly, but I needed much more on the socioeconomic challenges these students face." (John 2)
	SES challenges	
Limited Practical Experience	Cultural competency	
	Limited understanding	
	Lack of exposure	"My student teaching placement didn't expose me to low-SES situations. I was completely unprepared for the types of emotional and academic support these students needed." (Jane 2)
	Teaching placement	
	No SES exposure	
Unpreparedness		
Limited insight		

		"I didn't get to work in a low-SES school for my practicum, so the adjustment was difficult. I lacked firsthand exposure to the challenges faced by low-SES students." (John 2)
Classroom Management	Basic management	"Our management training felt basic. I
Struggles	Ineffective techniques	quickly realized I needed different
	Inadequate skills	approaches for low-SES students but
	Poverty challenges	didn't know what those should be."
	Need for strategies	(Jane 2)
		"I felt my management skills were
		inadequate because I hadn't been
		trained in techniques that might work
		better for students facing poverty-
		related challenges." (John 2)
Resource Utilization Issues	Lack of resources	"We had no resources specifically
	General tools	geared towards low-SES students. I had
	SES resources	to find my own tools, and it took time to
	Ill-equipped	realize what worked and what didn't."
	Resource gap	(Jane 2)
		"We had some general resources on
		child psychology, but they weren't
		specific to low-SES students. I felt ill-
		equipped to support them academically
		or emotionally." (Jane 2)

Navigating External Barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parent involvement Support network Community connections External barriers Resourcefulness 	<p>"In my practicum, I learned to be more resourceful, finding ways to bring materials and learning opportunities to the students. I also saw how vital it was to keep parents involved, despite the barriers they might face in terms of time or resources." (Jane 3)</p> <p>"What I learned was that low-SES students often lack a support network outside of school, which can make them feel isolated. I had to be very intentional about reaching out to families and building those connections." (John 4)</p>
Curricular Modifications	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Low-SES focus SES training Economic challenges Curriculum modules Socioeconomic awareness 	<p>"The curriculum should include a focus on low-SES dynamics in schools. Many teachers, like me, would benefit from modules dedicated to understanding the economic challenges students bring into the classroom." (Jane 3)</p> <p>"Include specific modules on low-SES issues and how they affect students. That would've helped me understand what I was walking into." (John 3)</p> <p>"Socioeconomic awareness training should be mandatory. We need to learn</p>

		more about the effects of poverty on students." (Participant)
Field Experiences	Diverse placements	"Placing more student teachers in low-
	Low-SES schools	SES schools could open their eyes to
	Practical exposure	what these students need and help us
	Real-world learning	prepare better." (Jane 3)
	Field placements	"Field experience in diverse schools is
		critical. I was placed in a setting that
		didn't prepare me for what I face now."
		(John 3)
Mentorship Enhancements	Tailored mentorship	"Mentorship needs to be tailored to low-
	Low-SES challenges	SES teaching challenges. That support
	Practical support	would've been invaluable to me early
	Early mentorship	on." (Jane 3)
	Focused guidance	"Focus mentorship programs more on
		specific challenges faced in low-SES
		environments to prepare teachers for the
		real issues they'll face." (John 3)
Ongoing Professional Development	Continuous training	"Continuous training on low-SES
	Regular workshops	student engagement is essential.
	PD programs	Workshops or courses could help
	Structured professional development	teachers stay informed and supported."
		(Jane 3)
	Ongoing learning	"Offering continuous professional
		development on low-SES support could
		make a huge difference. I feel like I'm

		learning as I go and could use more structure." (John 3)
Emotional and Social Support Needs	Mental health	"It was eye-opening to see how many of these students dealt with anxiety, depression, or other mental health challenges, likely due to stressors at home." (John 2)
	Social support	
	Emotional needs	
	Stressors	
	Anxiety issues	
		"Low-SES students often lack a support network outside of school, making them feel isolated. Many of these students needed emotional and social support before they could even focus on academics." (John 4)
Trauma-Informed Practices	Trauma-sensitive	"Positive reinforcement, restorative practices, and proactive behavior management techniques were crucial for creating a safe and predictable classroom environment." (Jane 5)
	Restorative practices	
	Trust building	
	Classroom management	
	Sensitivity to stress	
		"My mentor taught me how to implement trauma-informed practices, which were incredibly important in helping these students stay engaged." (Jane 5)
Understanding External Stressors	Housing instability	"Knowing that many low-SES students deal with external stressors like housing instability or food insecurity helped me
	Food insecurity	
	External stressors	

Sensitive approach	approach my teaching with more
Academic care	sensitivity and care." (John 2)
