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Lived Experiences of Novice Public School Adapted Physical Education Teachers: A Phenomenological Study

Joyce M. Sakai
Concordia University - Portland, jsakai@mail2.cu-portland.edu

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Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Doctorate of Education Program

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE CERTIFY
THAT WE HAVE READ AND APPROVE THE DISSERTATION OF

Joyce Mariko Sakai

CANDIDATE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Leslie Loughmiller, Ed.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Rinyka Allison, Ed.D., Content Specialist

Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Ed.D., Content Reader

Lived Experiences of Novice Public School Adapted Physical Education Teachers:

A Phenomenological Study

Joyce Mariko Sakai

Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Dissertation submitted to the Faculty of the College of Education

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education in

Transformational Leadership

Leslie Loughmiller, Ed.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Rinyka Allison, Ed.D., Content Specialist

Jacqueline Lookabaugh, Ed.D., Content Reader

Concordia University–Portland

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Abstract

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to investigate the lived experiences of novice public school adapted physical education (APE) teachers and how their experiences affected their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. This dissertation is an original independent research project that contributes to the field of educational practice and knowledge. Five male and five female APE teachers who have taught in public schools for three years or less within California represented the population of this study. Bandura's (1986) theory of self-efficacy and Knowles's (1984) theory of andragogy was the foundation for the conceptual framework of this study because they represent factors that contribute towards our feelings of self-efficacy as well as understanding how adults learn. Data collection for this study included semistructured interviews and Lived Experience Description Reflective Journals. The coding process revealed the following primary themes: challenges, teaching APE, and confidence. Within those themes, the following subthemes were identified: effective teaching behaviors, collaboration, managing paraeducators, leadership (administration), behavior management, time management, advocate/lawyer presence during IEP meetings, APE theory and methods, assessment, lesson planning, caseload management and documentation, lesson outcome, mentors, stressful work environment, and self-doubt. The findings from this study could be shared with university teacher preparation programs to focus preparation efforts on challenges identified. Results could also be shared with school districts to provide more effective mentors and train administrators to support novice APE teachers in public schools.

Keywords: adapted physical education, novice public school teacher, education, lived experience, self-efficacy, andragogy

Dedication

First, this dissertation is dedicated to my husband, children, family, and friends who have supported me throughout this journey. Next, I dedicate this dissertation to all my professors, adapted physical education, special education, and physical education colleagues who have mentored, inspired, and collaborated with me throughout my career. Finally, I dedicate this dissertation to the adapted physical education students and future researchers who will contribute to the profession and body of research.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to the Problem

The benefits of appropriate teacher preparation and student teaching experiences for novice teachers is widely supported by research (Ballinger & Bishop, 2011; Bieler, 2013; Clarke et al., 2012; Goodwin, Roegman, & Reagan, 2016; Griffin & Ayers, 2005; Masunaga & Lewis, 2011; Sayeski & Paulsen, 2012). However, limited research focus on novice public school Adapted Physical Education (APE) teachers' experiences during their first three years of teaching. By understanding how novice teachers' lived experiences cultivate self-efficacy is essential for increasing teacher retention and job satisfaction (Bandura, 1986; Wang, Hall & Rahimi, 2015).

Proper training and support have been found to help increase the self-efficacy of teachers (Moulding, Stewart, & Dunmeyer, 2014). Additionally, a strong sense of self-efficacy has been found to decrease quitting intentions, and teacher attrition of novice teachers (Wang et al., 2015). Thus, studying the lived experiences of novice public school, APE teachers will supplement existing research on the use of andragogy for teacher training and increasing self-efficacy of novice public school teachers in other fields (Brown, Lee, & Collins, 2015; Lauermaann & Konig, 2016; Masunaga & Lewis, 2011).

Background, Context, History, and Conceptual Framework for the Problem

The Adapted Physical Education National Standards (APENS; 2008) indicated that teacher preparation experience varies significantly between states owing to different endorsement and credentialing requirements. APE teacher preparation programs across the nation have different requirements for credit hours, fieldwork, and student teaching experiences for teaching APE in public schools. This inconsistency can contribute to a lack of preparation for

the challenges novice public school APE teachers might experience, which could impact their self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and teacher attrition (Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Moulding, Steward, & Dunmeyer, 2014; Wang et al., 2015).

According to the California Commission on Teacher Credentialing (CCTC, 2013), APE teachers in California (CA) are required to possess both physical education (PE) credentials and Adapted Physical Education Added Authorization (APEAA) to teach APE in public schools. APE teachers consult general PE and special education teachers to provide appropriate instructional modifications and adaptations for students with special needs (APENS, 2008). Thus, trained APE teachers receive extensive training in instructional differentiation to make the PE curriculum accessible to students with special needs. According to the APE Guidelines for California Schools published by the California Department of Education (CDE, 2012), the job responsibilities of APE teachers require a thorough understanding and ability to navigate special education law as it pertains to PE. APE teachers use assessment to appropriately place students with disabilities who also have significant gross motor deficiencies in the least restrictive environment to meet their individual needs (CDE, 2012).

Self-efficacy and job satisfaction can influence teacher attrition (Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Wang, et al., 2015). Understanding the lived experiences of novice APE teachers by reflecting on their past experiences is the foundation of their self-efficacy and job satisfaction (Jamil, Downer, & Pianta, 2012). Furthermore, understanding how adults learn best can help teacher preparation programs better prepare their teacher candidates for their jobs. Thus, research has shown that it is critical to provide successful mastery experiences for beginning teachers so that they can establish a positive self-efficacy, which will help them with challenges they will experience in the field (Brown et al., 2015; Hamman, Fives, & Olivarez, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

There is a lack of research on the lived experiences of novice APE teachers to enable examining how their perceptions of their preparation and abilities shape their self-efficacy. Self-efficacy beliefs are developed in the early stages of teaching and are unlikely to change once established (Bandura, 1993; Jamil et al., 2012). Research has demonstrated that teachers who feel unprepared are more likely to have lowered self-efficacy and job satisfaction, which contributes towards teacher attrition (Brown et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2015). Existing research in the field of education details the benefits of student teaching and fieldwork experiences during a teacher preparation program with respect to preparing and exposing novice teachers for challenges in their careers (Ayers & Griffin, 2005; Banville, 2006; Brown et al., 2015; Clarke et al., 2012; Cothran et al., 2008; Hamman et al., 2007; Kell & Forsberg, 2016; Maeda, 2001). More information is necessary to understand novice APE teachers' experiences and identify areas of further training and support.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to uncover the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers and explore how their experiences impact their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. A novice teacher's feelings of adequacy and competence significantly affect their self-efficacy, which increases job satisfaction and intent to stay during the first years of teaching (Wang et al., 2015). There are limited studies that explore the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers. Previous research conducted on highly qualified APE teachers was compared to novice public school APE teachers' perceptions and lived experiences with meeting professional expectations during their first three years of teaching. This study will contribute towards the body of scholarly research by understanding

how the novice public school APE teachers' lived experiences affect their self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this qualitative study:

1. What are the most common challenges that novice public school adapted physical education teachers' experience?
2. What specific knowledge, skills, and supports do novice APE teachers feel are the most important to have?
3. How might contextual factors impact the self-efficacy beliefs of novice public school adapted physical education teachers?

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study

APE is a subdiscipline of PE and falls within the category of special education (Winnick & Porretta, 2017). Although APE is a service provided through special education services, individual states control credential and licensing requirements for APE teachers (APENS, 2008). There is a lack of consistent endorsement, credentialing, and training requirements across the United States that contributes toward varying preparation levels of novice public school APE teachers (APENS, 2008). Furthermore, in CA, universities set criteria for meeting the required 13 APEAA standards (CCTC, 2013).

Consequently, inadequate and inconsistent preparation has been found to create novice teachers who tend to experience a lower self-efficacy than their well-prepared peers (Brown et al., 2015). Understanding the differences in APE teacher preparation is significant because APE exists within the field of special education, and the National Coalition on Personnel Shortages in Special Education and Related Services (NCPSSERS, 2017) found that special education

teachers notoriously have a higher attrition rate than general education teachers. Therefore, it is essential to identify factors that contribute to lower self-efficacy in novice public school APE teachers to help prevent teacher attrition and retain quality educators in the profession.

A case study on six experienced APE teachers in the field indicated self-reliance as a requirement for success due to the nature of the itinerant teaching position and lack of mentoring available on the job (Akuffo & Hodge, 2008). Akuffo and Hodge (2008) described being self-reliant as the ability to work independently to maintain job responsibilities without constant support. Itinerant APE teachers manage a caseload of students at multiple school sites each week and collaborating with other APE teachers could prove to be logistically challenging (Akuffo & Hodge, 2008; Obrusnikova & Kelly, 2009). Novice public school APE teachers need to have the necessary knowledge and skills to function independently with limited support (Akuffo & Hodge, 2008; Lytle, Lavay & Rizzo, 2013). The present study will contribute to the profession by (a) providing an understanding of the lived experiences of novice APE teachers during their first year(s) of teaching, (b) identifying common challenges to improve teacher training programs, and (c) guiding further research.

Definition of Terms

Adapted Physical Education (APE): Physical education that is adapted or modified so that it is as appropriate for a person with a disability as it is for a person without a disability (APENS, 2008).

Andragogy: The art and science of adult learning (Knowles, 1984).

General Physical Education: According to Shape America (2015), general physical education is an academic subject that provides “planned, sequential, K–12 standards-based

program of curricula and instruction designed to develop motor skills, knowledge and behaviors for active living, physical fitness, sportsmanship, self-efficacy and emotional intelligence” (p. 3).

Individualized Education Plan (IEP): The United States Department of Education (USDE, n.d.) describes an IEP as a legal document developed, reviewed, and revised by federal law for a child with a disability.

Itinerant Adapted Physical Education Teacher: An adapted physical education teacher who travels between multiple school sites each week to teach and provide services to students with disabilities (Akuffo & Hodge, 2007).

Lived Experience: Lived experiences are descriptions of an experience as one lived through in a moment and are retrospective recollections rather than introspective accounts of an experience (van Manen, 2016).

Novice Teacher: A teacher who has less than three years of teaching experience (Davis & Cearley-Key, 2016).

Paraeducator: Paraeducators are assistants who work alongside certified teachers to help students within the classroom (NEA, 2019). The National Education Association (2019) recommends that paraeducators have clearly defined roles and job responsibilities and should be trained and receive ongoing professional development.

Phenomenology: Qualitative research approach that focuses on the common phenomenon within a specific groups’ lived experiences (Creswell, 2013).

Self-Efficacy: Self-efficacy is one’s belief in one’s ability to be successful in specific situations or accomplish a task and plays a significant role in how a person approaches their goals, different tasks, and challenges (Bandura, 1986).

Teacher Attrition: Kelchtermans (2017) explains that “teacher attrition and retention refer to the need to prevent good teachers from leaving the job for the wrong reasons” (p. 961).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations of the Study

Assumptions

The intent of the study was to provide novice public school APE teachers a platform to describe their perceptions of confidence through their lived experiences in teaching APE in the public schools during their first three years of teaching. Assumptions that existed within this study included trusting the honesty and accuracy of responses obtained from the participants. Furthermore, it was assumed that all participants understood the Adapted Physical Education Added-Authorization (APEAA) standards and job responsibilities of an APE teacher. Since participants shared their accounts, opinions, and experiences during interviews and the Lived Experience Description (LED) reflective journals; thus, the assumptions of honesty and truth were used. Member checking was used to check for accuracy of interview transcriptions; thus, it was assumed that all information that was transcribed was correct and described their experiences. According to the information obtained through the interview process, all participants had received their APEAA per record. Due to graduating and meeting the APEAA standards to obtain their authorization, it was assumed that they had successfully demonstrated essential knowledge and skills to meet the job responsibilities of an APE teacher. However, obtaining the APEAA does not necessarily mean that they have demonstrated mastery in all areas of knowledge and skills necessary as an APE teacher.

Limitations

The first limitation of this study was the specific sample of 10 novice public school APE teachers. The sampling method used was both convenience and purposeful sampling, as opposed

to using a random sampling method. By only researching novice public school APE teachers in a specific demographic area, this created a minimal population sample. The limited number of participants could decrease transferability and generalization to other states due to the nature of the APE teaching position and APEAA requirements specific to this geographic area. A second limitation of this study was the lack of research specifically focused on novice public school APE teachers. Research was found regarding special education and physical education novice teachers; however, there was no specific research was available on the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers. Without other research on novice public school APE teachers to reference, the study provided generalized rather than concrete connections to previously published research without generalizations.

Delimitations

The following three boundaries delimit the study. First, the study included 10 participants. All 10 novice public school APE teachers graduated with their APEAA from universities within California. Second, the study delimited because the data collection period was 16 weeks. Thus, participants' availability due to their work and personal schedules was limited. Sticking to a strict timeline created less flexibility of time for interviews, transcription, member checking, and LED reflective journals. The interviews used a semistructured format using suggestions by Rabionet (2011) to target topics that related to the research questions. The LED reflective journal is a detailed written account of a participant's experiences in their own words (Vagle, 2014). A third delimitation was the instruments used was limited to semistructured interviews and LED reflective journals only.

Chapter 1 Summary

This phenomenological study represented a qualitative analysis of the perception of self-efficacy through the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers. Early detection of barriers and factors that contribute towards lower self-efficacy can help decrease the teacher's intention to quit and teacher attrition statistics (Wang et al., 2015). A novice teacher who exhibits a strong sense of self-efficacy demonstrates the ability to control their emotions and confidence when faced with challenging experiences (Bandura, 1993). Using andragogy and self-efficacy can assist universities and school districts in developing structured learning strategies promoting novice teacher learning (Bandura, 1993; Knowles, 1995).

The current chapter provided an overview of the phenomenological study by giving a background of the conceptual framework, problem statement, purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, definition of terms, and assumptions, limitations, and delimitations of the study. Previous studies highlight the necessity for appropriate teacher preparation, mentors, and support to increase self-efficacy and job satisfaction, decreasing teacher attrition (Vittekk, 2015). Literature regarding the experiences that novice public school APE teachers were limited. This study contributed to future examination by describing the specific experiences and reflections of this group of teachers.

This study sought to fill the gap in the existing research. Chapter 2 includes an in-depth description of the literature surrounding novice public school APE teachers, covering the conceptual framework in detail and examine previously published literature, including an overview of APE history, qualifications, and challenges. Chapter 3 reviews the methodology of the research study, including a description of the research design, questions, instrumentation, validity and reliability, data collection and analysis, and ethical factors that contribute to the

study. Chapter 4 details the data analysis procedures and results. Lastly, Chapter 5 provides a detailed discussion and conclusion including a summary of the results, discussion of the results, discussion of the results in relation to the literature, implications of the results for practice, policy, and theory, and recommendations for future research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This study focuses on the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers. In this chapter, existing research related to APE, self-efficacy, and teacher attrition provides a foundation for this study by discussing the different factors that contribute towards positive or negative lived experiences of novice APE teachers. Extensive examination of past research necessitated the investigation of novice public school APE teachers' lived experiences because of the limited research available on the topic.

The following components presented in this chapter include (a) conceptual framework, (b) literature review, (c) methodological issues, (d) synthesis of research findings, (e) critique of previous research, and (f) summary of findings. The conceptual framework created a blueprint to guide the study and contribute to the problem addressed (Creswell, 2013). The review of research literature and methodological literature provides evidence from the existing body of social science research to support the study. This review of literature includes (a) a brief history of APE and how the profession and professional responsibilities have changed over time, (b) characteristics of a highly qualified APE teacher, (c) teacher preparation and mentorship, (d) self-efficacy, and (e) teacher attrition. Next, the review of methodological issues presents the strengths and weaknesses of the methodological approaches used to conduct this research. Then, a critique of previous research analyzes the evidence, claims, and concepts found in the published research and compares it to those in this study. Finally, a summary is provided to support pursuing a research study on the lived experiences of novice APE teachers.

Conceptual Framework

The theory of self-efficacy and andragogy was applied to novice APE teachers' perceptions of their teaching ability to highlight the importance of understanding how adults

learn. Utilizing these theories, concurrently could provide an adequate understanding of teacher preparation, fieldwork, and student-teaching experiences. APE is a subdiscipline within the special education profession, and as mentioned previously, the NCPSSERS (2017) found that special education teachers quit the profession at almost double the rate of their general education counterparts. A lack of self-efficacy, low job satisfaction, and teacher burnout are primary reasons indicated by teachers in special education for leaving the profession (Jamil et al., 2012; Vittek, 2015). Utilizing andragogy during the teacher preparation program focuses instruction effectively towards adult learning throughout the program. Furthermore, increased self-efficacy due to mastery experiences and independence are essential parts of the andragogy philosophy (Jamil et al., 2012; Knowles, 1984).

Self-efficacy Theory

The self-efficacy theory has been used within education to measure individuals' confidence in themselves to be successful (Brown et al., 2015; Jamil et al., 2012; Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Wang et al., 2015). Albert Bandura (1986, 1993) is the originator of this psychological theory that posits that one's belief that they will be successful directly connects to our experiences. Bandura (1993) highlights four sources of information, including (a) mastery experiences, (b) vicarious experiences, (c) verbal persuasion or feedback, and (d) physiological arousal. These four sources of information of self-efficacy contribute toward an individual's confidence in and perception of their ability to produce positive outcomes (Bandura, 1986). Since self-efficacy is used to measure an individual's confidence in completing a task successfully, it can influence the way an individual approach a difficult situation. Bandura (1986) emphasized that a strong sense of self-efficacy can enhance human accomplishment and increase personal well-being through an individual's increased willingness to take on different

challenges with confidence and determination to master them. In contrast, having a weak or lowered sense of self-efficacy causes individuals to avoid challenges due to a fear of failure (Bandura, 1993).

Owing to the nature of the itinerant teaching position, where novice APE teachers need to become self-reliant without access to direct mentorship, a strong self-efficacy is beneficial (Akuffo & Hodge, 2008). During the teacher preparation program, pre-service APE teachers must have multiple opportunities to achieve success and mastery of different teaching experiences to increase self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993). Mastery experiences provide individuals with feedback based on their ability to perform successfully in each situation (Bandura, 1993). When a task is difficult, and an individual achieves success, it can positively influence their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). However, the opposite is also true, and repeated failures with difficult tasks can negatively impact self-efficacy. This negative spiral of emotions that can result from repeated failure and lowered self-efficacy can contribute to teacher attrition, decreased job satisfaction, or quitting intentions (Vittekk, 2015; Wang et al., 2015).

Transitioning in the first year of teaching has been identified as a challenging experience for most novice teachers (Moir, 2011). Pre-service teachers transition from having a cooperating teacher or fieldwork supervisor available to answer questions, provide verbal feedback, and model effective teaching behaviors to teaching on their own (Masunaga & Lewis, 2011). Thus, verbal persuasion and vicarious experiences are critical during the teacher preparation program and gaining fieldwork experiences (Bandura, 1993). Verbal persuasion encompasses the verbal feedback an individual receives regarding their abilities. Bandura (1993) discussed the benefits of receiving realistic assessments about self-efficacy through managing expectations. Vicarious experiences provide pre-service teachers an opportunity to learn behaviors through modeling

(Bandura, 1993). Effective teaching behaviors of cooperating teachers or fieldwork supervisors provide learning opportunities for pre-service teachers and a reference for the future when they transition into their careers (Moulding et al., 2014). An effective teacher model that provides various opportunities for vicarious learning experiences can positively influence self-efficacy for novice teachers (Bandura, 1993).

Even with proper training, novice teachers reported experiencing a rollercoaster of emotions, including a sense of anticipation, survival, disillusionment, rejuvenation, reflection, and anticipation, during their first year of teaching (Moir, 2011). Physiological arousal includes the physical and emotional reactions that the body produces when faced with a specific situation (Bandura, 1986). Experiencing a multitude of physical and emotional responses to situations influenced their perceived abilities and impacted self-efficacy (Wang et al., 2015). The severity of their interpretation of their physiological response affects whether it helps or hinders their self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993). Thus, novice teachers who have a strong self-efficacy have more confidence in their abilities to overcome challenges on their own, even when faced with physiological arousal.

Bandura (1986) warned that perceived self-inefficacy could lead individuals to approach threatening situations with anxiety and feelings of inadequacy to conquer these challenges. If a novice public school APE teacher feels unprepared or has a negative self-efficacy or self-inefficacy, the transition through Moir's (2011) phases during the first year of teaching could lead to a desire to quit (Vittekk, 2015; Wang et al., 2015). The lack of self-efficacy has been found to contribute to teacher attrition statistics, lower job satisfaction, and overall difficulty with coping (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2014; Bandura, 1986; Lauermann & Konig,

2016; Vittek, 2015; Wang et al., 2015). On the contrary, a strong self-efficacy is linked to teacher persistence, resilience, and retention (Jamil et al., 2012).

Andragogy

Utilizing andragogy as an additional theoretical framework for this study provided a critical understanding of the complexities involved with teaching adult learner's new knowledge and skills. Andragogy is the art and science of adult learning (Knowles, 1984; Pappas, 2013). Thus, understanding how adults learn and approach the learning process from the perspective of andragogy could maximize opportunities for adult learners to master skills independently and demonstrate readiness.

The central theorist associated with the theory of andragogy is Malcolm Knowles (1984), who identified five assumptions of adult learning: (a) self-concept, (b) adult learner experience, (c) readiness to learn, (d) orientation to learning, and (e) motivation to learn. Adults have been trained by their previous experiences in school to be dependent learners. However, in his work about andragogy, Knowles (1984) emphasized the need to create a more collaborative and interactive approach to learning by breaking previous perceptions of the learning experience and fostering more independence. Self-concept in andragogy is like Maslow's need for self-actualization, transitioning from dependency to self-direction (Knowles, 1984; McLeod, 2017). The teacher preparation program offers fieldwork and student teaching experiences to allow adult learners to experiment with different instructional and classroom management techniques (Masunaga & Lewis, 2011). Adult learners can mold their self-concept by transitioning from dependence to independence, executing instruction, and management on their own with the assistance of their cooperating teacher or fieldwork supervisor.

Knowles (1984) emphasized that individuals discover more meaning through experiences than from passive learning. Experience shapes individuals' perspective of the world around them, shapes their choices and impacts their self-identity (Knowles, 1984). Through APE fieldwork and student-teaching experiences, pre-service teachers learn through the process of teaching students in a real classroom (Lytle et al., 2010). Thus, these teachers gain valuable experiences and identify effective teaching practices through critical reflection (Masunaga & Lewis, 2011). Professors and cooperating teachers who used specific feedback with explanations of why and how things work operationally and functionally helped adult learners process and reflected upon future execution (Cothran et al., 2008; Killian & Wilkins, 2009).

Readiness and orientation to learn assumptions shift learning from theory to practice using problem-centered and performance-centered frames of mind (Knowles, 1984). Fieldwork and student-teaching experiences required during the teacher preparation program provide an opportunity for learners to apply theory into practice with support. States that do not require student teaching specifically in the field of APE force novice teachers to generalize theory in their first year of teaching without practice or mastery within a real-life setting (Lytle et al., 2010). In contrast, states and preparation programs that assign pre-service teachers to APE-specific fieldwork and student teaching provide adult learners with better opportunities to practice readiness and orientation to learn assumptions (Knowles, 1984).

The relationship and mentoring ability of the cooperating teacher or fieldwork supervisor will foster the motivation to learn assumptions (Knowles, 1984). APE cooperating teachers, fieldwork supervisors, and educational leaders who model a strong motivation to learn act as role models to novice APE teachers continuously. Furthermore, the mentoring committee of an APE cooperating teacher or fieldwork supervisor during teacher preparation not only benefits the

student teacher but also challenges the cooperating teacher to grow professionally through knowledge sharing (Choi, French, & Silliman-French, 2013). In practice, andragogy is essential to a novice APE teacher's development, as it recognizes the inherent differences between teaching adults versus teaching children (Knowles, 1984). As teachers who usually teach children, being capable of switching roles and mentoring adult learners instead is essential to be an effective cooperating teacher or fieldwork supervisor (Smith, 2013). A thorough understanding of andragogy principles can provide preservice teachers with profoundly meaningful and learner-centered experiences to help prepare them for their teaching careers (Chan, 2010).

Review of Research and Methodological Literature

Historical Perspective of APE

Winnick and Porretta (2017) asserted that APE is a comprehensive subdiscipline within the field of PE. The APE curriculum includes (a) physical and motor fitness, (b) fundamental motor skills and patterns, (c) aquatics, (d) dance, and (e) individual and group games. APE in the United States has evolved over the past century in public schools. APE began with a medically focused model, then shifted to a sports-orientated perspective, and now focuses on the individuals with an emphasis on physical activity and lifetime movement (Winnick & Porretta, 2017).

In the 1960s, significant events centered on President Kennedy, his family, and their foundation impacted the lives of people with disabilities and APE in the United States (Wessel & Dummer, 1999). In 1963, President Kennedy stated, "We must promote—to the best of our ability and by all possible and appropriate means—the mental and physical health of all our citizens" (Kennedy, 1963, para. 2). During 1965 through 1968, the Joseph P. Kennedy

Foundation made significant contributions to helping people with disabilities and, consequently, APE throughout the United States (Wessel & Dummer, 1999). First, it provided generous financial grants awarded by the American Alliance for Health, Physical Education, Recreation and Dance (AAHPERD) currently known as Shape America to create the Project on Recreation and Fitness for the Mentally Retarded, which grew to include all special populations (Winnick & Porretta, 2017). In 1967, federal legislation was passed to support training within PE so that students with disabilities could be provided appropriate services, enabling universities to develop majors within APE to prepare teachers (Wessel & Dummer, 1999). These graduate-level programs helped prepare leaders within APE, who subsequently impacted the training and preparation of APE teachers across the country. In 1968, the Kennedy Foundation, with the leadership of Eunice Kennedy Shriver, established the Special Olympics that support the inclusion of people with intellectual disabilities in sports (Special Olympics, 2018). Currently, the Special Olympics supports APE by hosting and financially supporting school-based sports programs for students with disabilities within public schools (Special Olympics, 2018).

Various critical federal laws have also contributed to the creation of the APE profession. In 1973, the Rehabilitation Act was designed to prevent discrimination against people with disabilities, including their participation in any programs or activities that received federal monetary assistance (U.S. Department of Education, 2017). Since schools receive federal funding, this act created a foundation for the creation of the Education for All Handicapped Children Act (P.L. 94–142) of 1975. The Act was designed to ensure that all children with disabilities have access to a free and appropriate public education (FAPE) to meet their unique needs, including special education, related services, and PE (Winnick & Porretta, 2017). After the Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975, APE was implemented within public

education. According to Roth, Zittel, Pyfer, and Auxter (2017), this law recognized PE as a direct educational service mandating the creation of an Individual Education Program (IEP) for students with disabilities, where they receive access to FAPE in the least restrictive environment, including PE.

The Individuals with Disabilities Act (IDEA) has undergone several changes that have affected APE since it replaced the original Education for All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (Winnick & Porretta, 2017). IDEA defines PE and describes how it pertains to students with special needs. IDEA Part B, Subpart A, Section 300.39 special education states the following:

(2) Physical education means—(i) The development of—(A) Physical and motor fitness; (B) Fundamental motor skills and patterns; and (C) Skills in aquatics, dance, and individual and group games and sports (including intramural and lifetime sports); and (ii) Includes special physical education, adapted physical education, movement education, and motor development (US Department of Education, 2004, “Sec. 300.39 Special education,” para. 2).

Also, PE services, as described by IDEA Part B Section 300.108 states the following:

The State must ensure that public agencies in the State comply with the following:

(a) General. Physical education services, specially designed if necessary, must be made available to every child with a disability receiving FAPE unless the public agency enrolls children without disabilities and does not provide physical education to children without disabilities in the same grades. (b) Regular physical education. Each child with a disability must be afforded the opportunity to participate in the regular physical education program available to nondisabled children unless—(1) The child is enrolled full time in a separate facility; or (2) The child needs the public agency responsible for the education of

that child must provide the services directly or make arrangements for those services to be provided through other public or private programs. (d) Education in separate facilities. The public agency responsible for the education of a child with a disability who is enrolled in a separate facility must ensure that the child receives appropriate physical education services in compliance with this section. (U.S. Department of Education, 2004, “Sec. 300.108 Physical education,” para. 1)

IDEA now clearly defines PE and holds public agencies accountable for providing the least restrictive environment within PE for students with disabilities. By first establishing a definition for PE, IDEA provided a means for APE to be more clearly defined and executed in the public schools. The American Association for Physical Activity and Recreation (AAPAR, 2010) published a position statement explaining APE eligibility criteria according to IDEA, including information regarding PE for children with special needs. A clear definition of APE eligibility across the United States does not exist. Therefore, different states offer their definitions and eligibility criteria for APE, and eligibility can even change amongst different counties and districts within the same state (AAPAR, 2010). APE teachers must be knowledgeable about the spectrum of services and support available within PE to be able to provide the most appropriate recommendations for modifications and help students with disabilities access the PE curriculum (CCTC, 2013).

In 2004, IDEA was reauthorized and required special education teachers to conform to high qualification standards, and they could not teach with an emergency or temporary license (Winnick & Porretta, 2017). This affected APE because teachers had to be highly qualified to teach APE in public schools. However, in 2015, the federal government amended the “highly qualified” requirements for teachers in the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA; U.S. Department

of Education, 2015). Within ESSA, appropriate certification is required, but the law does not use language specifying certification requirements any longer as compared to the No Child Left Behind (National Education Association, 2015). States can now determine appropriate credentialing requirements for their teachers rather than follow the strict, highly qualified teacher requirements that were set by No Child Left Behind (National Education Association, 2015).

Currently, only 14 states, including CA, require a specific endorsement in APE to teach in public schools (APENS, 2008). Teachers who teach APE in public schools in non-endorsement states can voluntarily test for a national APE certification, demonstrating their knowledge and proficiency in the national standards for APE (APENS, 2008). The National Council on Teacher Quality's Teacher Prep Review (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2018) stated that, currently, teacher preparation programs in special education fail to prepare candidates to be proficient in all areas of the curriculum. Special education certification widely encompasses multiple grade levels; often, teachers can teach students from kindergarten through twelfth grade (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2018). This large grade span makes it difficult for all candidates to be proficient in, let alone master, all areas of the curriculum for all grade levels within their certification (National Council on Teacher Quality, 2018). APE teachers can teach children from preschool through age 21 as per IDEA (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The ramifications of the ESSA on teacher preparation and training of novice teachers are not documented. However, the National Council on Teacher Quality (2018) recommends more rigorous teacher preparation for special education teachers, given the span of knowledge required. This also impacts APE teachers because they teach such a wide variety of students who possess different abilities and age ranges

Highly Qualified APE Teachers

The Adapted Physical Education National Standards (APENS, 2008) defined APE as “physical education which has been adapted or modified so that it is as appropriate for the person with a disability as it is for a person without a disability.” Highly qualified APE teachers must possess the knowledge and skills of a highly qualified general PE teacher and enable teaching PE to children with disabilities (Lytle, et al., 2010). In CA, the CA Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CCTC, 2013) requires teachers to have both a K–12 Physical Education or Special Education credentials and APE Added-Authorization (APEAA) to teach APE in public schools. Lytle, et al. (2010) specified the comprehensive content knowledge and skills that a highly qualified APE teacher must possess, including (a) PE content knowledge and skills; (b) safety, especially regarding contraindicated exercises for individuals with disabilities; (c) comprehensive knowledge in disability studies as recognized by the IDEA; (d) comprehensive assessment knowledge for qualification and instructional planning; (e) special education law and IEP requirements; (f) individual teaching and learning styles; (g) ability to make content accessible to all learners through appropriate adaptations and modifications; (h) implementation of behavior management; (i) collaboration and consultation with other professions; (j) advocacy and inclusion practices; (k) community and family resources; (l) assistive technology; and (m) professional leadership.

As mentioned previously, in the United States, only 14 states offer a comprehensive credentialing program for APE. Other states only offer introductory coursework or master’s programs to train teachers for APE positions (APENS, 2008). The lack of consistent credentialing across the nation poses problems for state officials and leaders, as many fail to understand what APE is, how it is beneficial for individuals with disabilities, and what

knowledge and skills APE teachers need to have (APENS, 2008). Thus, a national standard for APE was developed to create Certified APE (CAPE) teachers. Currently, in all other states that do not have credential or endorsement programs, PE or special education teachers can demonstrate their qualifications by taking the APE national certification exam, which assesses their knowledge of the 15 APE National Standards, including (a) human development, (b) motor behavior and exercise science, (c) measurement and evaluation, (d) history and philosophy, (e) unique attributes of learners, (f) curriculum theory and development, (g) assessment, (h) instructional design and planning, (j) teaching, (k) consultation, (l) staff development, (m) student and program evaluation, (n) continuing education, (o) ethics, and (p) communication (APENS, 2008).

CA requires comprehensive APEAA credentialing for APE teachers who teach in public schools. Like the National Standards, the APEAA focuses on a set of 13 standards of knowledge, skills, and experiences necessary to teach APE in public schools (CCTC, 2013). These areas include: (a) program design, rationale, and coordination; (b) professional, legal, and ethical practices; (c) educating diverse learners; (d) effective communication and collaboration partnerships; (e) assessment of students; (f) using educational and assistive technology; (g) transition and transitional planning; (h) field experience in a broad range of service delivery options; (i) assessment of candidate performance; (j) characteristics of students in APE; (k) motor behavior as applied to APE; (l) scientific principles of human behavior; and (m) instructional strategies and adaptation (CCTC, 2013).

Lytle et al. (2010) further identified four criteria for training highly qualified APE teachers as follows: (a) bachelor's degree in PE teacher education and state license to teach PE; (b) 12 semester hours addressing the educational needs of students with disabilities, including a

minimum of nine semester hours specific to APE; (c) completing a minimum of 150 practicum hours; and (d) participating in a professional preparation program based on state and national standards for APE.

APE is a related service within special education and requires appropriate certification and subject matter competency to legally contribute to the IEP (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The California Department of Education (2012) published the *APE Guidelines in California Schools* and defined related services as “Developmental, corrective and other supportive services designed to enable a child with a disability to receive a free appropriate public education” (p. 124). According to Zhang’s (2011) quantitative study, there is a shortage of APE teachers, as demonstrated by market-based calculations and prevalence-based projection models created to determine the necessity for APE teachers across the nation. The prevalence-based number of APE teaching positions determined for all students who can be eligible for APE services across the country differed significantly from the market-based number of APE teacher positions available (Zhang, 2011). Zhang (2011) determined that there were two main reasons for this. The number of APE teacher positions funded by each state and the supply of qualified APE teachers was too small, which is also demonstrated by the fact that caseload sizes and types of delivery vary significantly across the United States (Obrusnikova & Kelly, 2009; Zhang, 2011). Census data gathered from the 27th Annual Report to Congress published by the U.S. Department of Education (2007) emphasized that there was a need for qualified APE teachers to graduate from teacher education programs and work with children with disabilities who cannot safely and successfully participate in general PE without additional assistance and support (Zhang, 2011). Thus, to fill the market-based need, Zhang (2011) suggested that universities should continue preparing APE teachers through quality teacher preparation programs.

Ensuring quality teacher preparation programs with highly qualified APE cooperating teachers and fieldwork supervisors provides novice public school APE teachers an opportunity to learn through observation and discern strategies for applying theory into practice (Liu, 2012). Furthermore, information on what qualities highly qualified APE teachers possess could also be used by university and teacher preparation programs to align APE coursework to APE national and state standards to better prepare students for the realities they will face.

Challenges in the APE Profession

Identifying challenges specific to APE can aid in program evaluation and teacher preparation (Rizzo, 2013). Many challenges exist within any profession, and APE is a very specific and unique sub-profession within PE and special education (Winnick & Porretta, 2017). The characteristics of highly qualified APE teachers, APE National Standards, and APEAA requirements coincidentally represent many of the top challenges identified by APE professionals within the field (APENS, 2008; CCTC, 2013; Lytle et al., 2010; Rizzo, 2013). A pilot study surveyed 120 APE professionals who are teach in public schools and 10 issues that challenge the APE profession were identified, including (a) practicing effective teaching behaviors; (b) inclusion, (c) assessment, (d) collaboration with other professionals, (e) transition, (f) response to intervention, (g) certification, (h) leadership, (i) behavior management, and (j) evidence-based teaching (Rizzo, 2013). Most of these challenges coincide with the skills and knowledge that APE teachers must possess to be considered highly qualified APE teachers (APENS, 2008; Lytle et al., 2010). Specific challenges addressed in the literature include APE assessment and evidence-based practices, professional collaboration, and the role of an APE teacher in the general physical education (GPE) setting.

APE assessment and evidence-based practices. One of the most prevalent challenges in the APE profession is the use of gross motor ability assessment for children with special needs (CDE, 2012). Assessment within special education is essential due to the federal requirements surrounding the IEP, according to which, APE teachers must assess students with disabilities to determine whether they qualify for APE services funded by the government. A limited number of standardized assessments are available to assess gross motor abilities and are often specific to students who are ambulatory and do not have low-incidence disabilities, such as orthopedic impairments and visual impairments (CDE, 2012; Rizzo, 2013). However, for the IEP, all students who receive APE services are re-assessed on a triennial basis (CDE, 2012). Assessment in the form of a standardized test, a developmental test based on norm-referenced or criterion-referenced items, summative end of unit skill assessments, or formative assessments is used.

APE teachers gather information from multiple sources to provide the most accurate information regarding students' gross motor abilities and needs. APE teachers can struggle with choosing the right assessment for a wide range of abilities, translating the standardized assessment results into IEP goals and objectives, and using assessment for evidence-based practices (Horvat, Kelly, Block & Croce, 2018). Having extensive knowledge of assessment practices within APE is a necessary skill, as data from assessments is used to determine which students are recommended for receiving APE services and to what extent (Horvat et al., 2018). However, it is important to remember that APE is a service and not a placement (AAPAR, 2010). Thus, the recommendation to receive APE services is ultimately a decision made by the multidisciplinary IEP team. Without proper training and practice of different forms of assessment, an APE teacher will have a difficult time defending and supporting assessment results and recommendations to the IEP team. Lacking confidence and knowledge in assessment

was a challenge identified by a pilot study of APE teachers across the nation (Rizzo, 2013). Furthermore, lack of mastery and confidence in assessment could also negatively impact self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993).

Frey, Schmitt, and Allen (2012) suggested the use of authentic assessment because skills develop in more natural and real-world settings. Authentic Assessment is beneficial for APE teachers because transitioning gross motor skills will enable a person with a disability to be active for a lifetime, thus providing significant health benefits (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2015). Information gathered through authentic assessment could help teachers choose more functional tasks, require a higher level of thinking and concept application, and allow students to demonstrate achievements in a variety of situations (Frey et al., 2012). The authentic assessment could be beneficial to APE teachers because it provides accurate student information based on what they can perform and whether they can generalize skills with their nondisabled peers (Block, Lieberman, & Connor-Kuntz, 1998). Furthermore, embedding assessment into the curriculum and using formative assessment or informal assessment to track progress to make informed decisions for instructional planning are highly recommended (Block et al., 1998; Lavay, Sakai, Ortiz, & Roth, 2015; Stephens, Silliman-French, Kinnison, & French, 2010).

Professionals in the field have (Horvat et al., 2018; Jin & Yun, 2010; Lavay et al., 2015) emphasized a need for evidence-based strategies and assessment practices for teaching APE students because it empowers teachers to have more effective teaching and problem-solving skills. Furthermore, federal legislation emphasizes the importance of promoting evidence-based practice strategies within education (CEC, 2014; Jin & Yun, 2010). However, using evidence-based practices consistently has been identified as a challenge that APE teachers struggle with

(Jin & Yun, 2010). Evidence-based practices help an APE teacher to create, disseminate, and implement evidence in their teaching. Evidence-based practices are beneficial for planning learning opportunities for students to ensure that their needs are met and are continually making improvements (Jin & Yun, 2010). Lavay et al. (2015) recommended the use of tablet technology to help streamline and monitor PE IEP goals and benchmarks and reinforce evidence-based teaching practices for assessment because tablet-technology could be used for recording student progress and demonstrate evidence-based practices when assessing a student's present level of performance. The collected information is disseminated to parents, general PE teachers, and IEP team members. Furthermore, evidence-based practices align with the university requirements for student teachers, current trends in public school districts that use technology to record student progress and input IEP information (CEC, 2014; CSULB, 2018; Lavay et al., 2015). Therefore, when university programs place novice teachers with cooperating teachers and fieldwork supervisors proficient in these practices, it will train their teacher candidates to become proficient in informal assessment techniques through training during their fieldwork experiences.

APE professional collaboration. APE professionals typically have itinerant positions and have little to no interaction with other APE teachers every week (Akuffo & Hodge, 2008). Due to a lack of regular interaction, collaboration with and observation of other effective APE teaching behaviors and practices do not occur consistently. Therefore, an APE professional's only opportunity to observe other professionals' model effective teaching behaviors is during fieldwork, student teaching, and at professional conferences where knowledge sharing occurs (Choi et al., 2013). Novice public school APE teachers must be self-sufficient and seek out professional collaboration opportunities or attend professional conferences on their own to receive this support (Akuffo & Hodge, 2008).

The lack of mentorship and observational opportunities available after obtaining employment also necessitates that universities only select professionals to serve as APE cooperating teacher mentors and fieldwork supervisors for student teachers who exhibit mastery in all areas (Goodwin et al., 2016).

In addition to collaborating professionally with other APE teachers, APE teachers should collaborate and supervise paraeducators in addition to their other job responsibilities (Lytle, Lieberman, & Aiello, 2007). Lytle et al. (2007) explained the valuable role that paraeducators offer to help students with disabilities in an inclusive classroom, but they require proper supervision, instruction, and support because their role is often complex. Novice public school APE teachers should clearly state their expectations and guide to help paraeducators assist students in the APE or inclusive GPE classroom setting because the inability to provide concrete direction can create frustration between the novice public APE teacher and the paraprofessional (Lytle et al., 2007).

Role of APE in general physical education collaboration. APE teachers provide recommendations for the least restrictive environment in the PE setting (Stephens et al., 2010). Least restrictive environment recommendations include the use of inclusion strategies, Response to Intervention (RtI), and collaboration and consultation with the general PE teacher or teacher providing PE to the student with a disability. Inclusion in PE is an IEP team recommendation based on the least restrictive environment and is an area of concern that directly impacts the profession (Rizzo, 2013). A goal for APE teachers is to help foster an inclusive PE culture that supports all students to learn how to lead a healthy and active lifestyle throughout their lifetime regardless of their ability level (Tripp, Rizzo & Webbert, 2007). However, a big challenge with inclusion is the spectrum of APE service delivery options available based on the individual needs

of the students during PE (Tripp et al., 2007). Thus, consistent face to face interaction and support from an APE teacher for the inclusion of all students with disabilities with the general PE teacher may not occur because of the lack of significant gross motor needs of the students in each class (CDE, 2012). Tripp et al. (2007) suggested that each recommendation for inclusion evaluates the student's ability to access the PE content standards and national standards and create an inclusive classroom, which looks beyond individual and group achievement to measure success.

APE professionals (Tripp et al., 2007; Umhoefer, Vargas, & Beyer, 2012) have found that APE teachers struggle with PE teacher buy-in and confidence about including students with disabilities in their classes. Inclusion is difficult for general physical educators because they have minimal requirements in their teacher preparation program that focuses on inclusion. Umhoefer et al. (2012) conducted a quantitative study using surveys that were given to 120 general PE teachers to determine the effect that different types of APE service approaches had on general PE teachers' confidence when working with students with disabilities. They discovered that many physical educators who received minimal training or support from specialists, such as APE teachers, felt more frustrated and inadequate regarding managing the individual needs of students with disabilities in their classrooms, especially students with severe disabilities and physical limitations.

These findings are important for APE teachers and teacher training programs at universities, as researchers (Stephens et al., 2010; Tripp et al., 2007; Umhoefer et al., 2012; Wilson & Colombo-Dougovito, 2015) have consistently explained that APE teachers must effectively collaborate with general physical educators at their assigned schools to successfully include students with disabilities in these classrooms. These same researchers found that

multiple variables impacted the general PE teacher's efficacy, such as success with modifications, previous good modeling of APE practices and services, and training specific to working with students with disabilities. Thus, for inclusion to be successful during general PE, general PE teachers need to feel supported either through direct contact or consultation – methods that were found to increase the general PE teacher's self-efficacy in teaching students with disabilities in their classes (Umhoefer et al.,2012).

Depending on the caseload, a large portion of APE teachers' job responsibilities involves collaborating with other professionals to successfully implement the PE program recommendations on a student's IEP, including RtI recommendations (CDE, 2012; Stephens et al., 2010; Tripp et al., 2007). Since not all students with disabilities qualify for APE services, many receive their PE instruction and modifications directly from their PE teacher (Stephens et al., 2010).

APE teachers who are well versed in utilizing RtI strategies during PE can educate and optimally assist PE teachers about their legal responsibilities and implementing necessary modifications on their own without additional support (CDE, 2012; Stephens et al., 2010). Implementing RtI effectively in a PE setting requires teachers to understand that RtI is a fluid process, consisting of four tiers representing the levels of support a student needs to be successful during PE. Stephens et al. (2010) identified four tiers in the RtI pyramid of support for students with special needs. The first three tiers occur specifically during general PE; however, as the tier number increases, the level of support for the student increases (CDE, 2012; Stephens et al., 2010). The student may also receive APE co-teaching or consultation during PE to be successful, and this level is where the most collaboration between the APE and general PE teacher occurs. The RtI tier level is dependent on the students' performance, and progress is

measured using both summative and continuous formative data to evaluate the success of instructions or interventions (CDE, 2012; Stephens et al., 2010).

Once hired, APE teachers are considered experts in the use of instructional strategies and adaptations to meet the unique needs of students with disabilities during PE (CCTC, 2013). Therefore, APE teachers also need to be proficient in the use of the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach to assist general PE teachers with instructional strategies to promote inclusion seamlessly (Lieberman, Lytle, & Clarcq, 2008). Training general PE teachers on UDL strategies can teach them how to proactively plan for the inclusion of all students, increasing learning, and providing access to the PE curriculum. Lieberman et al. (2008) recommended the use of a functional approach to modify movement experiences (FAMME) when choosing the appropriate modifications to use because FAMME follows a four-step process, where the teacher must (a) analyze the underlying components of the skills performed, (b) assess student capabilities, (c) the teacher matches the modifications to the students' needs, and (d) the teacher evaluates if the modifications were successful (Lieberman et al., 2008). PE teachers must be trained by APE teachers to understand that modifications could be made in multiple areas, including equipment, rules, and instruction, to help include students with disabilities in their lessons (Umhoefer et al., 2015). While some students may only need one of these modifications to be successful, others may require modifications in all three areas.

Collaboration and knowledge sharing are essential job responsibilities of highly qualified APE teachers (Choi et al., 2013; Lytle et al., 2010). The necessity for APEAA programs to teach students how to collaborate and consult with a variety of professionals is critical (CDE, 2012; Lytle et al., 2010). Effective collaboration and consultation require specific knowledge and behavior, such as demonstrating respect to colleagues, strong communication skills, and the

ability to work well with other professionals (Lytle et al., 2010). Being an effective collaborator requires organization and skill. However, due to the nature of the APE itinerant position, it can be challenging to align schedules for regular face-to-face interactions with all public and private agencies, teachers, and related service providers (Umhoefer et al., 2012).

APE teacher preparation and certification. The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE, 2006) stated that “well-prepared teachers produce higher student achievement; well-prepared teachers are more likely to remain in teaching, and teacher preparation help candidates develop the knowledge and skill they need.” Effective teachers are versed in educational theory and have had adequate practice in transforming educational theory into practical and observable teaching behaviors (Masunaga & Lewis, 2011). A new teacher’s proficiency in APE knowledge and skills occurs when they can effectively apply theory into practice during their fieldwork and student teaching requirements demonstrated through student teaching performance assessments and APE exit requirements (CSULB, 2018). Lytle et al. (2010) discussed the need for training qualified APE teachers through practicum experiences totaling a minimum of 150 hours during their program and requiring mandatory practicum experiences to provide student teachers with a meaningful and relevant way to apply the educational theory.

Student teaching is the culminating experience of a teacher preparation program where students experience teaching daily within a controlled environment under the mentorship of a cooperating teacher (Moulding et al., 2014). Researchers have indicated that student teaching is the most important and influential part of the teacher preparation program (Ayers & Griffin, 2005; Ballinger & Bishop, 2011; Banville, 2006; Brown et al., 2015; Clarke et al., 2012; Kell & Forsberg, 2016; Moulding et al., 2014). Student teaching is essentially the gateway teaching

profession. In CA, without passing their student teaching requirements, student teachers are not eligible to earn the necessary credentials to obtain a full-time teaching position in public schools. Without an emergency or internship credential (CCTC, 2017). Student teacher evaluations assess whether a student can teach independently in their classroom without the assistance of a supervisor overseeing their abilities (Masunaga & Lewis, 2011).

Effective APE cooperating teacher characteristics. Research on cooperating teacher characteristics found that mentoring, experience, content expertise, and feedback were effective for student teachers (Ayers & Griffin, 2005; Clarke et al., 2012; Cothran et al., 2008; Glenn, 2006; Goodwin et al., 2016; Hobson, Harris, Buckner-Manley, & Smith, 2012; Kell & Forsberg, 2016; Killian & Wilkins, 2009).

In a mixed-method study conducted on 13 cooperating teachers from five different schools, Killian and Wilkins (2009) researched cooperating teacher characteristics and found that the most effective cooperating teachers had (a) a midrange of teaching experience (5–10 years), (b) supervised more than five other student teachers, and (c) closely collaborated with the university supervisor. In addition to experience in teaching and supervising student teachers, Glenn (2006) emphasized that a mentor cooperating teacher was more effective than a teacher who was a good role model. Mentoring student teachers has been an essential effective cooperating teacher characteristic (Ayers & Griffin, 2005; Ballinger & Bishop, 2011; Bieler, 2013; Clarke et al., 2012; Cothran et al., 2008; Goodwin, et al., 2016; Gumble, 2011; Hobson et al., 2012; Kell & Forsberg, 2016; Sayeski & Paulsen, 2012; Spangler, 2012). Mentors help mentees grow by developing their skills and knowledge in an environment that supports and encourages their learning (Ballinger & Bishop, 2011). Ballinger and Bishop (2011) explained that within PE, a mentor was vital because they used goal setting, modeling, feedback, and

systematic assessment to help student teachers progress throughout the semester. The student-teaching experience is an evaluation of the teaching readiness and evaluates teacher preparation program effectiveness (Masunaga & Lewis, 2011). Thus, careful selection of the cooperating teacher is essential to ensure that a mentor is chosen to help novice teachers' transition into their first year of teaching (Ballinger & Bishop, 2011).

Mentoring does not automatically occur (Hobson et al., 2012). In a mixed-methods study on mentoring of 39 teachers, Hobson et al. (2012) found that cooperating teachers often remain in the role of a supervisor rather than providing mentoring to student teachers. Although Hobson et al. (2012) and Sayeski and Paulsen (2012) recommend that an ideal pre-service teacher education program must provide mentoring and familiarization with cooperating teachers before starting student teaching, this does not consistently happen. Sayeski and Paulsen (2012) explained that incorporating early contact between cooperating teachers and student teachers before the experience allowed each party to decide whether their relationship would be a good fit. Introducing mentors or cooperating teachers before beginning the student-teaching experience is the typical method used in teacher education programs across the country (Sayeski & Paulsen, 2012). Exposing novice teachers to mentors who are the best examples of professionals in the field is beneficial. Sayeski and Paulsen's (2012) study of 400 student teachers surveyed accentuates the importance of university teacher education programs carefully selecting mentors and cooperating teachers to support their student teachers and students.

Cothran et al. (2008) found in a qualitative study of 15 mentor teachers, that mentors and protégés consistently reported that “contextualized subject matter knowledge and experience, as well as communication skills, were key characteristics of effective mentors” (p. 245). When mentors communicated and defined the roles and expectations of the protégé, there were no

surprises (Cothran et al., 2008). Ballinger and Bishop (2011) further suggested that for the student-teaching experience to be effective, communication was essential and needed to be open, productive, and consistently provided to the student teacher, and the supervisor should use systematic assessment to guide conversations.

The characteristics of communication, assessment, feedback, and strong content knowledge, along with mentoring were the most beneficial to student teachers during their student teaching experience (Goodwin et al., 2016). A quantitative study conducted on 46 mentor teachers found that they felt educative mentoring “rests on an explicit vision of good teaching and understanding of teacher learning” (Goodwin et al., 2016, p. 1200). Furthermore, the cooperating teachers felt they were successful and effective mentors when they saw their mentees begin to independently work towards leading instruction (Goodwin et al., 2016). Goodwin et al.’s (2016) study aligned with Knowles’ (1984) theory of andragogy because the researchers discovered that cooperating teachers needed to be effective teachers and understand how pre-service teachers learned.

Novice Teacher Self-efficacy

There are limited research studies specifically aimed at discovering self-efficacy perceptions in novice public school APE teachers. High levels of self-efficacy are an important factor in new teachers’ and veteran teachers’ success and willingness to stay within the profession and lowering instances of burnout (Wang et al., 2015). Thus, self-efficacy within education is beneficial to understand and foster all stages of a teacher’s career—pre-service as a student teacher, as a novice and beginning teacher, and as an experienced professional (Brown et al., 2015; Hamman et al., 2007; Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Wang et al., 2015).

Teacher preparation fieldwork experiences and mentoring have been found to impact self-efficacy during the culminating student teaching experience (Brown et al., 2015; DeAngelis, Wall, & Che, 2013; Hamman et al., 2007). Brown et al. (2015) found in their mixed methods study that self-efficacy significantly increased when student teachers had the opportunity for hands-on teaching, the opportunity to observe experienced teachers, and a positive relationship with their cooperating teacher. In addition, Bieler (2013), DeAngelis et al. (2013), Hamman et al. (2007), Moulding et al. (2014), and Pfitzner-Eden (2016) found that the role of mentoring (investing in the professional development of the student teacher, providing specific feedback, using reflective sessions to discuss challenges, being available for emotional support) provided by the cooperating teacher helped student teachers have a stronger self-efficacy than those who did not receive such support and lowered the intention to quit. Mentors can provide student teachers with experiences that foster mastery in teaching skills through practice while incorporating listening, reflecting, and inquiring about instructional and management choices, which help increase the student teacher's autonomy (Moulding et al., 2014). As a holistic mentor, cooperating teachers can support the individual needs of the adult learner and increase teaching self-efficacy before they begin their first year of teaching (Bieler, 2013). Furthermore, mentoring provides pre-service and novice teachers support, which has been indicated to help prevent burnout (EdDigest, 2008).

A strong teacher preparation program is recommended to increase self-efficacy (Moulding et al., 2014). In APE, an effective teacher preparation foundation is necessary for success in student teaching and beyond. Lytle et al. (2010) found that a quality APE teacher preparation program should provide candidates with twelve semester hours dedicated to working with children with disabilities, with nine hours specifically in APE, and a minimum of 150

supervised fieldwork hours. Moreover, the APE teacher preparation program aligns with the state or national APE standards (APENS, 2008; Lytle et al., 2013). If challenges exist after preparation and during fieldwork and student teaching, it can impact a novice teacher's self-efficacy negatively (Moulding et al., 2014). Rizzo's (2013) pilot-study surveys identified that experienced APE professionals continue to struggle with their mastery of necessary skills to be considered a highly qualified APE teacher; thus, beginning teachers will require training in these areas during student teaching, as they will have a difficult time navigating these challenges in their first job. When APE novice teachers experience perceived failure due to a lack of preparation, they will have a lower self-efficacy in their ability to be an effective APE teacher (Bandura, 1993). Masunaga and Lewis (2011) discovered that negative self-efficacy was more prevalent in student teachers who faced more instructional and management challenges, had less support from their cooperating teacher and received lower evaluation ratings during student teaching. Bandura (1986) warned that possessing a negative self-efficacy could prevent individuals from taking on future challenges because of increased anxiety when presented with situations they do not feel confident of overcoming.

Student teachers express that participating in the student teaching component was effective in preparing them for their future career (Brown et al., 2015; Masunaga & Lewis, 2011). In a mixed-methods research study including 71 student teachers, Brown et al. (2015) found that student teachers felt they benefited from their student teaching experiences regarding their perceptions, preparedness, and efficacy in teaching students on their own. To a pre-service teacher, the student-teaching experience was the most beneficial because it "provided the opportunity for hands-on teaching, the opportunity to observe experienced teachers, and the relationship with their cooperating teacher" (Brown et al. 2015, p. 77). These experiences had a

positive impact because they improved their teaching skills and self-efficacy. Improving teaching skills while increasing self-efficacy coincide with Knowles' (1984) andragogy theory for adult learners and Bandura's (1986) self-efficacy theory by highlighting the significance of the student-teaching component within a teacher preparation program. Brown et al. (2015) also found that student teachers who reported having a positive experience felt more prepared for their first year of teaching and had a higher self-efficacy. On the contrary, student teachers who did not have a positive relationship with their cooperating teacher were often not given opportunities for hands-on teaching or feedback (Brown et al., 2015). Due to the negative relationship, these student teachers also did not observe experienced teachers to collaborate with other professionals and hence, experienced a lower-self efficacy (Masunaga & Lewis, 2011).

Self-efficacy is recognized by Wang et al. (2015) and Lauermann and Konig (2016) as an indicator for practicing teachers to determine job satisfaction, psychological health, physical health, and lower levels of quitting intentions. Wang et al. (2015) discovered that higher levels of self-efficacy were an important predictor of psychological and physical health in teachers and that such teachers had higher job satisfaction and lowered quitting intentions than their low-level self-efficacy peers. Teachers with higher levels of self-efficacy had stronger beliefs in their ability to provide instruction, use classroom management, and engage students (Wang et al., 2015).

On the other hand, Lauermann and Konig's (2016) quantitative study on teachers' professional competence and wellbeing revealed that of the 119 in-service teachers who had stronger general pedagogical knowledge had higher teaching-specific self-efficacy had a lower indication of burnout or emotional exhaustion. General pedagogical knowledge includes the instructional process, student motivation and learning, classroom management, lesson planning,

and differentiating instruction, within three categories – instructional processes, student learning, and assessment (Lauermann & Konig, 2016). General pedagogical knowledge is beneficial because it emphasizes the necessity for a strong pedagogical foundation that develops throughout a teacher’s career. Teachers who have a higher teaching-specific self-efficacy will be less likely to burnout during their professional lifespan.

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition is a concern within the educational field. The National Commission on Teaching America’s Future (2007) estimated that the financial burden of teacher attrition across the country was over seven billion dollars per year. Exit attrition, where a teacher completely leaves the field of education altogether, is a problem because it shrinks the teacher workforce (Vitteck, 2015).

Within special education, teachers are more likely to leave the profession at twice the rate of general education teachers (NCPSSERS, 2017). In a qualitative multiple case study on 40 current and former tenured special education teachers, Nance and Calabrese (2009) found that the continuous increase in legal requirements, which took time away from working with students, and increased paperwork responsibilities are some reasons many special education teachers experience poor job satisfaction, thus leaving the profession. The tenured special education teachers said that the legal requirements for documentation and assessment impacted their jobs operationally because it increased their workloads and impacted their instructional practices (Nance & Calabrese, 2009). The APE profession lies within the special education field; and Akuffo and Hodge (2008), Obrusnikova and Kelly (2009), and Rizzo (2013) explained that since APE teachers are itinerant, they face a variety of challenges that require perseverance and self-direction, unlike other traditional teachers, and manage a caseload of 50 or more

students at multiple school sites. Some of the challenges include making modifications to lessons and activities for each student; traveling from each school site, transporting equipment and materials for each lesson; staying organized to manage IEPs, assessments, and data for each student's progress monitoring; and collaborating with multiple professionals for each student at each school site (Akuffo & Hodge, 2008; Rizzo, 2013).

Well-prepared teachers are more likely to stay in the profession, and strong teacher education programs help new teachers learn how to navigate personal, professional, and environmental challenges (Ensign & Woods, 2016; NCATE, 2006). Thus, a strong APE teacher preparation program will help equip novice teachers with the tools necessary to tackle their first year of teaching (Lytle et al., 2010). Lauermaann and Konig (2016) further suggested that teacher education programs should focus on equipping teacher candidates with stronger general pedagogical knowledge before graduating, based on their findings that teachers who had stronger general pedagogical knowledge had stronger self-efficacy and lower instances of burnout.

In addition to teacher preparation, field placements of student teachers have been found to have a significant impact on the future performance of a teacher (Ronfeldt, 2012). EdDigest (2008) explained that challenging environments increased the likelihood of teacher attrition and providing teachers proper supports are critical to increasing their success in raising students' academic achievements. Ronfeldt (2012) rationalized that student teachers placed in schools with low teacher turnover have more success because better supports are in place, the school has more organized leadership, and the students pose fewer challenges. Brown and Schainker (2008) noted that new teachers are often placed in the least desirable areas, teaching more challenging student populations. Teachers who student teach in a school with high teacher turnover and did

not provide the supports to promote self-efficacy and confidence, consequently led to higher teacher attrition (Ronfeldt, 2012).

A lack of preparation and certification, which is prevalent in special education, has been attributed to teacher turnover (NCPSSERS, 2017). A qualitative study of data from the Schools and Staffing Survey and Teacher Follow-up Survey analyzing the turnover rate of special education teachers found that many special education positions are filled by personnel who are not fully certified (Connelly & Graham, 2009). The lack of available certified special education teachers to fill teaching positions increases the number of uncertified and partially trained teachers who are hired to fill these positions (NCPSSERS, 2017). However, Connelly and Graham (2009) examined the schools and staffing surveys (SASS) and the teacher follow-up survey (TFS) and found that special education teachers who have had better pre-service preparation are less likely to leave the profession because student teaching provides valuable experiences that can help prepare new special education teachers to face the realities of the job. Owing to this need to prepare these teachers and a shortage in special education, alternative certification is an unfortunate reality (NCPSSERS, 2017).

The U.S. Department of Education (USDE, 2015) conducted a beginning teacher longitudinal study (BTLS) on all beginning teachers from 2007–2012 and found that an increasing number of teachers left the field within the first five years. However, the USDE (2015) found a significant difference in the percentage of beginning teachers who were given a mentor in their first year stayed as compared to those who did not receive any additional support. This information suggests that mentorship can help prevent attrition and turnover because beginning teachers have the required support to be successful. A study identifying specific APE

cooperating teacher characteristics that are perceived to be most effective and beneficial could help contribute towards preventing exit attrition and turnover in APE.

Furthermore, researchers have found that mentoring is desired by most new teachers and has been attributed to increased self-efficacy (Bieler, 2013; Goodwin et al., 2016; Hamman et al., 2007; Hobson et al., 2012; Moulding et al., 2014; Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). In addition to the challenges of being an itinerant teacher, it is unlikely that districts will pair a novice APE teacher with a high-quality APE teacher who can mentor them as well as perform their responsibilities within the same district (Akuffo & Hodge, 2008). This type of environment that provides novice teachers with less support has been found to increase the likelihood for teacher attrition within education (EdDigest, 2008).

Review of Methodological Issues

Proper teacher preparation is important to increase self-efficacy and prevent teacher attrition and burnout (Ensign & Woods, 2016; NCATE, 2006; Wang et al., 2015). Since limited research has been conducted specifically on the lived experiences of novice APE teachers, the research collected was predominately within the field of special education, general education, and PE. Professional information regarding APE gathered from peer-reviewed journals were written by experts in the field. However, most literature was informational and did not include qualitative or quantitative studies regarding highly qualified APE teacher characteristics and skills. Most of the research on teacher preparation, mentoring student teachers, self-efficacy, and teacher attrition was conducted using qualitative and mixed-method studies, utilizing surveys and interviews for data collection. The qualitative and mixed-method research was best suited for these types of study because researchers were trying to determine why these issues exist and how understanding these issues would benefit teacher education programs in the future. Thus, very

few quantitative or longitudinal studies were conducted to evaluate the effects of self-efficacy and novice teachers (Lauermann & Konig, 2016). A study focusing on the lived experiences of novice APE teachers and their self-efficacy would fill these gaps discovered within the research.

The research studies included repeated examples of specific limitations, recommendations for future extended research, and urgent calls for approaching the interpretation of data and recommendations with caution (Brown et al., 2015; Cothran et al., 2008; Goodwin, et al., 2016; Moulding et al., 2014). First, the sample sizes were small (less than 100 participants in most studies) or limited to specific geographic areas and districts. Therefore, the information found in these studies may not transfer seamlessly to other geographic areas or states. Additionally, very few studies collected longitudinal data on teacher attrition and self-efficacy to determine how self-efficacy changes over time. Most studies recommended the use of larger sample size and incorporating longitudinal studies or follow-up research to analyze the effects of program implementation on teacher self-efficacy (Brown et al., 2015; Masunaga & Lewis, 2011; Moulding et al., 2015; Wang et al., 2015).

Synthesis of Research Findings

The methodology within this literature review was mainly qualitative or used a mixed-method research design, specifically focusing on special education, general physical education, and adapted physical education student teachers and novice teachers. These methodologies provided different perspectives, and the findings could help to address the research questions because they provide essential background information for my inquiry on novice public school APE teachers' lived experiences and how their self-efficacy affects their job satisfaction. Furthermore, the findings support the gap within the research on novice public school APE teachers.

The common factors found in the research to help novice teachers be successful and have a stronger self-efficacy were: a strong teacher education program, mastery of knowledge and skills; and having quality mentors during fieldwork and student teaching (Bieler, 2013; Brown et al., 2015; Hamman et al., 2007; Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Wang et al., 2015). In California, the CCTC (2013) requires that all APE teachers obtain an APEAA in addition to a primary credential in physical education or special education to teach APE in the public schools. To receive an APEAA, 13 standards must be met (CCTC, 2013).

However, amongst the different universities that have APEAA programs, different coursework and fieldwork hour requirements exist (Azusa Pacific University, 2018; Cal Poly Pomona, 2018; California State University Long Beach, 2018; Fresno Pacific University, 2018; Point Loma Nazarene University, 2018). The discrepancy in teacher preparation in APE can create teachers who are not considered highly qualified APE teachers (Lytle et al., 2013). Research has shown that teachers who are well prepared had a stronger self-efficacy and are more likely to stay in the profession (Brown et al., 2015; Ensign & Woods, 2016; Masunaga & Lewis, 2011; Moulding et al., 2014; NCATE, 2006). Strong self-efficacy has been found to increase job satisfaction and decrease quitting intentions and attrition (Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Wang et al., 2015).

Overcoming challenges and mastering knowledge and skills have also been found to impact self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993) positively. There were 10 specific challenges identified by experienced APE teachers that consist with the APE national standards and highly qualified APE teacher characteristics (APENS, 2008; Lytle et al., 2010; Rizzo, 2013). Struggling to master challenges decreases self-efficacy and job satisfaction while increasing quitting intentions, which can lead to attrition (Bandura, 1993; EdDigest, 2008).

Akuffo and Hodge (2008) expressed the necessity of being self-reliant as an APE teacher in the field because consistent collaboration and support were difficult with an itinerant schedule. Mentors and strong cooperating teachers have also been found to benefit novice teachers (Bieler, 2013; Hamman et al., 2007; Moulding et al., 2014; Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). Mentors from the same subject can also provide critical support through feedback to help further develop novice teachers' skills and overcome weaknesses (Bieler, 2013; DeAngelis et al., 2013).

Critique of Previous Research

The synthesis of information regarding highly qualified APE teachers, challenges they face in the field, APE teacher preparation, self-efficacy, and teacher attrition align with recommendations made in the literature. Patterns identified within the research are consistent with the conceptual framework of both self-efficacy theory and andragogy. Reviewing the literature gained a thorough understanding of the skills and knowledge novice APE teachers need to possess to effectively teach in the public schools (Lytle et al., 2010). APE novice teachers' self-efficacy will be significantly impacted based on their perceived sense of readiness for their responsibilities after completing their teacher preparation program (Bandura, 1986; Masunaga & Lewis, 2011).

Furthermore, from an andragogy perspective, when novice APE teachers' mentors, cooperating teachers, and fieldwork supervisors understand how adults learn, they can provide appropriate experiences to increase proficiency in specific skills and knowledge (Knowles, 1984). Killian and Wilkins (2009) emphasized the need to ensure the effectiveness of cooperating teachers and mentors through the careful selection and formal training because they have a profound influence on the professional development of novice teachers. Effective

cooperating teachers and fieldwork supervisors help novice teachers' transition from dependence to independence as they master new skills and expand their teaching repertoire (Glenn, 2006).

A higher self-efficacy is beneficial because it provides individuals with the confidence, they need to attempt challenging tasks without fear or anxiety (Bandura, 1986). Self-efficacy has also been identified by researchers (Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Wang et al., 2015) as an indicator to determine whether a teacher will stay in the profession over time or leave. Novice teachers are more likely to leave the profession if they are unprepared and unsupported, especially when faced with difficult and challenging situations (EdDigest, 2008; Ensign & Woods, 2017; NCATE, 2006). Thus, negative self-efficacy perceived by novice APE teachers could not only impact their job satisfaction but ultimately also lead to them pursuing other careers within teaching or leaving the profession altogether (Pfitzner-Eden, 2016). On the contrary, positive self-efficacy gained through extensive teacher preparation and mentorship can prepare novice teachers for approaching potential challenges with confidence (Brown et al., 2015; Moulding et al., 2014).

The methodologies employed in previous research largely consisted of qualitative and mixed-method approaches. Surveys and interviews were used in these studies. Quantitative approaches were utilized in some studies to compare variables and identify possible relationships in the data. Notably, few studies focused on the lived experiences of novice APE teachers and their self-efficacy and readiness to begin their teaching careers. Most studies focused on special education and PE teachers.

Chapter 2 Summary

There is a market-based shortage of qualified APE teachers (Zhang, 2011). Thus, preparing more APE teachers to be highly qualified is valuable to the APE profession and the

students they serve (Zhang, 2011). The literature review exposed the realities of improper teacher preparation and how it impacts the self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and teacher attrition of novice special education teachers (Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Moulding et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2015). The impact of novice APE teachers' lived experiences on their self-efficacy has not been explored in previous research. An understanding of these experiences can be used to improve teacher education program evaluation and implementation as well as APE cooperating teacher, mentor, and fieldwork supervisor training.

Scholars have recommended further research concerning mentoring novice teachers, university programming aligning with practice, and cooperating teacher and fieldwork supervisor training to help improve novice teacher self-efficacy (Killian & Wilkins, 2009; Wang et al., 2015). The considerable gap in the knowledge and research will be addressed in this study and is associated with both the study's purpose and research questions. Chapter 3 will provide further details regarding the method used to achieve the study's purpose and addresses the gap established within this chapter.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Numerous qualitative and mixed-methods studies have identified what novice teachers wished they had learned from their university, cooperating teacher, or district to prepare them for their first years of teaching (Ballinger & Bishop, 2011; Brown et al., 2015; Clarke et al., 2012; Cothran et al., 2008; Hobson et al., 2012; Kell & Forsberg, 2016; Moulding et al., 2014). Additional studies focusing on novice teachers have also shown that teacher preparation increases self-efficacy and job satisfaction while decreasing quitting intentions (Lauermann & Konig, 2016; Moulding et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2015). However, limited studies have focused on the lived experiences of novice adapted physical education (APE), teachers. Therefore, further research is needed to describe the daily, lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers to understand better how these experiences impact their self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

In this study, a phenomenological research design was used to explore the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers. A qualitative research design was used because it can provide detailed and deep descriptions of the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers through semistructured interviews and a Lived Experience Description (LED) reflective journal (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Vagle, 2014; van Manen, 2016). Hermeneutic phenomenology was specifically used because it focuses on the subjective experiences of the novice public school APE teachers to unveil and discover the commonalities they have experienced through their lived experiences (Kafle, 2011).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the daily lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers and if their experiences impact their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. This

chapter describes the research questions, purpose, design, and explains why a qualitative phenomenological method was used. This chapter also describes the research population, sampling method, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis methods. Additionally, this chapter identifies attributes, as well as limitations and delimitations of the research design and expected findings. Lastly, it discusses strategies that will support the validity, dependability, and ethics of this study.

Design of the Study

A qualitative phenomenological approach was used to examine the lived-experiences of novice public school APE teachers. Marshall and Rossman (2010) explained that qualitative research is conducted to empower individuals to share their stories and voices and understand contexts in which participants in the study address the problem or issue presented. Although there are multiple definitions of qualitative research, the consensus is that qualitative researchers are interested in discovering meaning and understanding, specifically on how and why people interpret, construct, and attribute their experiences into their worldview (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). This qualitative study will add to the current research by providing a voice for novice public school APE teachers. These novice public school APE teachers had the opportunity to express their experiences candidly, including sharing their successes and challenges, through semistructured interviews and a LED reflective journal in a safe environment (Vagle, 2014; van Manen, 2016).

To describe and understand the nature of the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers, the researcher used the qualitative research design of phenomenology because it is the most applicable approach to address the research questions (van Manen, 2016). Vagle (2014) explained that phenomenologists could study the connectiveness of a phenomenon and the

intentional relationships that manifest and signify how we are all meaningfully connected to the world around us. Phenomenological research, according to van Manen (1997), “asks, ‘What is this or that kind of experience like?’ It differs from almost every other science in that it attempts to gain insightful descriptions of the way we experience the world pre-reflectively” (p. 9). Since this study attempted to uncover the essence of lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers, the qualitative research design of phenomenology was the most appropriate approach.

Three qualitative research designs of (a) ethnographic, (b) case-study, and (c) phenomenological were considered; however, a phenomenological approach was chosen because it was the most appropriate design to explore the research questions. An ethnographic research design describes a group or cultural group (Creswell, 2013). Since APE teachers are a unique group of people, understanding shared meanings and behaviors necessary to be successful within that group. However, the focus of this study was to understand the lived experiences of these individuals and not observe their practices or construct shared meanings within their group. Thus, the ethnographic research design was rejected for this study because it did not align with the intentions of the study.

The qualitative research design of a case study was also considered because it is “an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) within its real-life context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be evident” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 39). This study used a smaller number of participants, who would not be studied over an extended period using multiple sources of information. The case study research design was not selected because it did not align with the intentions of this study either.

This study intended to discover and understand the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers using a phenomenological research design. Due to a lack of research on the

lived-experiences of novice public school APE teachers, this study contributed to the research by providing this group with an opportunity to help future teachers be more successful through sharing how their experiences affected their self-efficacy.

Research Questions

The following research questions was addressed in this qualitative study:

1. What are the most common challenges that novice public school adapted physical education teachers' experience?
2. What specific knowledge, skills, and supports do novice APE teachers feel are the most important to have?
3. How might contextual factors impact the self-efficacy beliefs of novice public school adapted physical education teachers?

Research Population and Sampling Method

A purposeful sampling method should be used in qualitative studies so that the researcher can discover, understand, and learn the most from the sample chosen (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton 2015). Purposeful sampling was beneficial for this study because the cases chosen provided rich information on the purpose of the research (Patton, 2015). Purposeful sampling was also used because it helped to identify phenomena shared by the specific group of participants to answer the research questions (Creswell, 2013). The sample size consisted of 10 novice public school APE teachers with less than three years of teaching experience and possess an APE added authorization (APEAA) through the California Commission on Teaching Credentialing (CCTC, 2013). Each of the participants taught APE in public schools within California.

In qualitative research, the power of information produced determines the sample size and Malterud, Siersma, and Guassora (2015) suggest “that the size of a sample with sufficient information power depends on (a) the aim of the study, (b) sample specificity, (c) use of established theory, (d) quality of dialogue, and (e) analysis strategy” (p. 1753). Thus, the sample size of 10 participants was enough to convey the impact of the participants’ experiences and how their experiences have molded their self-efficacy and job satisfaction if they provide detailed and rich descriptions of their experience to answer the research questions (Vagle, 2014).

Instrumentation

Creswell (2013) emphasized that careful and purposeful selection of instrumentation is necessary to conduct thorough and rigorous data collection for a research study. It is common in phenomenological research to use interviews, observations, artifacts (video, pictures, and objects), narratives, or journal entries to gather data (Creswell, 2013). For this phenomenological study, interviews were the primary instrument used to gather the most in-depth information about the participants’ lived experiences with the phenomenon being investigated. Additional instruments included a Lived Experience Description (LED) reflective journal entry.

Interviews

Interviews allow individuals to talk openly about topics through either structured, semistructured, or nonstructured interview methods (Creswell, 2013). A semistructured interview protocol was used to allow participants to answer questions related to specific topics that are guided by the research questions. Semistructured interviews are flexible and robust to “capture the voices and the ways people make meaning of their experiences” (Rabionet, 2011, p.

563). The interviews allowed participants to expand on information and provide a more in-depth description of their lived experiences regarding the different phenomenon as they feel necessary.

The semistructured interview protocol was developed by the researcher asking specific questions to address the research questions of the study and support the conceptual framework. The semistructured interviews lasted between 40 minutes to one hour, depending on the length of individual responses and participant time constraints. An interview schedule was compiled once all participants responded and volunteered to participate in the study. Upon receipt of consent, interviews were scheduled within 14 days. Participants had the option to choose to interview via video conference or over the phone. Reminders were sent via text message and e-mail one week and one day before the scheduled interview time.

Lived Experience Descriptions (LED)

An LED reflective journal protocol was sent to participants via e-mail after interview member checking was completed (Vagle, 2014; van Manen, 2016). Participants had 14 days to complete their LED reflective journal and e-mail it back to the researcher. A reminder phone call or e-mail was sent one week before the 14-day deadline, if responses had not been received. The LED is a method that can be used by participants to describe and reflect on how they perceived a lived experience in their own words. There were six suggestions for producing a lived-experience description that adapted into the LED reflective journal for this study:

1. Describe the experience as you lived it,
2. Describe the experience from the inside including feelings and emotions,
3. Focus on a specific example of the experience,
4. Focus on an example of that experience that stands out the most vividly,
5. Attend to how your senses reacted to the experience,

6. Avoid trying to make the account fancy (van Manen, 2016, p. 64).

Van Manen (2016) warned that writing forces a person to become reflective, which may not provide a free and unreserved interpretation of their experiences as they may have produced during an interview. Thus, providing an example helped participants to understand expectations and determine if they preferred this method over an interview based on their comfort in writing (see Appendix D).

The LED reflective journal also limited the necessity for clarity checks of transcribed interview responses because each participant can reflect and write down information in their own words they have time to think about what they write compared to an interview that requires them to think about their answers on the spot (Vagle, 2014). However, member checking was used for further clarification to ensure that the interpretation of the answers by the researcher was accurate. When this occurred, participants had seven days to respond via phone or e-mail to provide clarification and verification of information.

Data Collection

For this study, data was collected from the following two sources: semistructured initial interviews and a LED reflective journal entry. Each participant participated in one interview and one LED reflective journal. Qualitative data was documented through words describing a participant's experiences and consisted of audio recording transcriptions and written entries (Vagle, 2014). The phenomenological interview process and LED reflective journal were used to gain a deeper understanding of the lived experiences of the novice public school APE teachers and answered my research questions. To ensure participant privacy, a generic pseudonym (NAPE 1, NAPE 2, etc.) was provided to each novice public school APE teacher. A label with each novice public school APE teacher's pseudonym was created and placed on their individual

audio files, transcription documents, and LED reflective journal entry. These documents were stored on my personal computer using a password-protected folder.

Field Testing

Before conducting interviews with participants, a field test was performed with experts within the field of APE. Three professional APE teachers who have more than 10 years of public-school teaching experience were used to field test the protocols but were not included in participant data for this study. Janghorban, Latifnejad, and Tafhipour (2014) explained that a pilot study is a pretest for the research instrument and can be used to find problems in participant recruitment and assess the acceptability of the interview protocol data collection and analysis process. Performing a pilot study on the interview questions helped to refine the interview protocol, test questions, and provided practice before conducting the real interviews on participants. I used the feedback from the field test to make modifications before conducting the interviews with participants. Field testing also served to bracket or exclude the researcher's prejudice regarding phenomenon and participants' experiences through documentation of ideas, feelings, and thoughts to "maintain the centrality of epoch and to establish unbiased exploration of the phenomenon" (Janghorban et al., 2014, p. 5).

Interviews

Creswell (2013), Merriam and Tisdell (2016), and Vagle (2014) recommend the use of interviews for phenomenological research as a method to gather comprehensive data. Interviews provide a richer source of information pertaining to feelings, attitudes, opinions, and knowledge from a smaller number of people (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Thus, for this study, semistructured interviews were conducted to allow for open ended answers from the participants.

The first part of the interview focused on the novice public school APE teacher's experiences from their teacher preparation program. The second part of the interview focused on the novice public school APE teacher's experiences during their first three years of teaching. Interview questions were carefully generated based on Patton's (2015) six types of "why" questions recommended to stimulate responses from the participants. These include: (a) experience and behavior questions, (b) opinion and values questions, (c) feelings questions, (d) knowledge questions, (e) sensory questions, and (f) background/demographic questions (Patton, 2015). The more detailed and descriptive the participant responses are, the more meaningful the data would be.

The interview protocol refinement (IPR) framework was utilized to strengthen the reliability of my interview protocol and increase the quality of data obtained through the interview process (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). The four phases of the IPR framework include: (a) ensuring all interview questions align with my research questions, (b) constructing the inquiry-based conversation, (c) receiving feedback on the interview protocols, and (d) piloting the interview protocol (Castillo-Montoya, 2016, p. 812). After all, data was collected, a detailed and thorough analysis using manual coding and NVivo 12 coding software to identify themes and potential phenomenon. Themes and phenomenon identified provided a deeper understanding of the public-school novice APE teachers lived experiences.

The interview protocol was consistent for each participant (see Appendix C). Questions for the first part of the interview begins with background questions related to the participant's basic information and teacher preparation program and a brief introduction to my personal experience as an APE teacher in the public schools. These first questions and personal experience sharing allowed participants to become acquainted with the interview process and

build rapport between the participants and the researcher. Next, several descriptive questions were asked to encourage participants to provide detailed information about their lived experiences in their teacher preparation program. Several fundamental questions were asked to gather the information that describes participants' understanding of the phenomenon of teaching APE in public schools. Then, questions that explored how the participants lived experiences during their teacher preparation program shaped their self-efficacy as a teacher were asked. For the second part of the interview, questions requested participants to share additional information regarding their daily lived experiences as a novice public school APE teacher. These additional questions allowed participants to discuss any changes regarding their self-efficacy since they began teaching in the public schools comparatively with their teacher preparation program.

The interview protocol and all conversations were recorded to ensure accuracy and authenticate the data collected. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained that a semistructured interview is used to provide a more flexible process where specific information is gathered from the participants. In the semistructured interviews, topics were narrowed down to identify information that needs to be addressed to answer the research questions. Probing questions were utilized when participants failed to provide information specific to the question (Rabionet, 2011). Semistructured interviews would offer the participants an opportunity to define and describe their individual lived experiences. Direct quotations from participants was used to identify their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge obtained through interviews and extracted from documents (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The 10 interviews were transcribed within eight weeks after completion, and transcription documents were saved electronically.

Follow-up interview. If necessary, a follow-up interview was conducted to clarify transcribed answers or request additional information for a specific question. Follow up

interviews were determined within 14 days after the initial semistructured interview was conducted and transcribed. If more information or clarification was deemed necessary, a follow-up interview was scheduled and conducted via phone or video conference. Follow-up interviews lasted up to 15 minutes. Transcripts were created from the recorded follow-up interviews and sent to participants to verify within seven days via e-mail.

Lived Experience Description (LED) Reflective Journal

The LED reflective journal prompt (see Appendix D) was e-mailed to the participants after the interviews and transcription verification has been completed. Upon receipt of the LED protocol, the researcher instructed participants to complete the LED reflective journals within two weeks. The LED reflective journal allowed novice public school APE teachers reflect on and describe a specific lived experience during their first three years of teaching. The novice public school APE teachers were asked to write and describe a specific time when they recognized and reflected on their teaching ability or proficiency during their first three years of teaching APE. This method is beneficial because the participant reflected on and describe their lived-experiences (van Manen, 2016). The researcher contacted the participants via email and phone one week before the deadline if the document. These documents were saved and placed in a password-protected electronic folder containing all other interview transcripts and audio for that participant.

Member Checking

Interview transcripts was e-mailed to the participants to verify authenticity so that any necessary corrections were made. Creswell (2013) emphasized the necessity to protect the participants, and be respectful of their privacy, respect any potential power imbalances, avoid collecting any harmful information, and avoid deception. This process of verification is called

member checking (Vagle, 2014; van Manen, 2016). Participants were instructed to verify the transcript accuracy within seven days. A phone or e-mail reminder was sent to participants two days before the seven-day deadline if the confirmation was not sent. LED reflective journals that required clarification or additional questions were e-mailed to the participants, and the participants were instructed to provide additional information within seven days. Again, a phone or e-mail reminder was sent to participants two days before the seven-day deadline if the confirmation was not sent. All interview transcripts, LED reflective journal documents, and audio files were stored in a password protected folder. Furthermore, all printed materials were stored in a locked cabinet that only the researcher has access to.

Identification of Attributes

The consistent attribute in this study was the novice public school APE teachers. Other attributes in this study included the novice public school APE teachers' resulting attitudes or feelings of self-efficacy and job satisfaction. APE teachers in the public schools share similar experiences teaching physical education to children with disabilities and completing teacher preparation programs to earn credentials in physical education and an additional authorization to teach APE. Additional considerations include their higher education degree obtained, demographic data (i.e., age, gender, years on the job, years at their current schools, and itinerant vs. non-itinerant teaching position, and leadership support. Two universities (one public and one private university) were chosen for this study because they are within the same geographic area in California.

The baseline for the research questions posed to participants was consistently followed to obtain the most detailed information to address the research questions and support the conceptual framework of the study. The questions posed follow a semistructured interview style to provide

a baseline question that can lead to additional probing, subject-specific questions depending on the participant's responses. Furthermore, the LED reflective journal provided a detailed description of what specific lived experience impacted their resulting attitude and feelings of self-efficacy. Once data collection was completed, the data analysis uncovered common themes and phenomenon that were experienced by the novice public school APE teachers. This information can help to improve current APE teacher training and create targeted APE teacher professional development.

Data Analysis Procedures

Data analysis is used to make sense of the data and identify emergent patterns of phenomenon present (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). In this study, interviews were used as the primary instrument to gather data with rich and detailed descriptions from participants. Creswell (2013) emphasized that the product of a phenomenological study presents essential information, so the reader would have a better understanding of what it is like to experience what the participants experienced. Thus, upon completion of interviews and LED reflective journals, whole-part-whole analysis was used to focus on intentionality and to thoroughly identify themes and search for areas that require further clarification (Vagle, 2014). Using a whole-part-whole analysis requires the researcher to follow these steps: (a) review all documents before making any notes; (b) review each piece individually, breaking it apart, searching for and identifying initial meanings; and (c) review notes, creating follow-up questions for each participant to clarify any concerns before conducting a second line-for-line reading. Vagle (2014) explained that during the second line-for-line reading, the researcher begins “articulating meanings, based on the markings, margin notes, and the follow-up questions with

the participants” (p. 99). Lastly, subsequent readings were conducted across all the participants’ data, looking for, and verifying identified themes.

Vagle (2014) discussed that after thoroughly combing through each of the participant's responses and information, cross analysis between teachers could be conducted to identify themes that are present amongst different individuals. To identify themes, the research questions were referenced and relevant information in list form was notated. The sentences or cluster of sentences from the transcripts of data gathered were analyzed to reveal phenomenon or experiences that were described by the participants. Vagle (2014) explained that by using the Van Kaam-Style method of phenomenological data analysis, the phenomenologist analyzes data by:

1. “Listing descriptive expressions, their preliminary grouping into categories, and ranking categories by frequency of occurrence
2. Reducing descriptive expressions to more precise terms
3. Eliminating irrelevant expressions or elements
4. Formulating a hypothetical identification of the phenomenon
5. Applying the hypothetical description to randomly chosen cases of the sample
revising the hypothetical description in the light of this testing and retesting on further samples.
6. Finally, identifying the description” (pp. 102-3).

The analysis was conducted using manual procedures initially, then using a computer software program NVivo 12 (QSR International, n.d.) to organize data gathered. NVivo 12 is a software program explicitly used for qualitative and mixed-methods research and can help “organize, analyze and find insights in unstructured, or qualitative data like interviews, open-

ended survey responses, articles, social media and web content” (QSR International, n.d.). This coding system was used to organize specific themes across all documents and audio files. Coding is a system to categorize data and identify common descriptions or themes (Creswell, 2013). NVivo 12 was chosen because it is the number one coding system used for academics for qualitative research and claims to deliver the most “robust and defensible findings” (QSE International, n.d.). Transcripts were reviewed and read in totality a minimum of three times to gain a thorough understanding of the individual lived experiences of the novice public school APE teachers. Actively reflecting on information gathered from participants would help to begin understanding the lived experiences of the novice APE teachers in public schools (van Manen, 2016).

Limitations of the Research Design

One notable limitation of this study involves the select group of participants from the same state who graduated from two separate university programs that credential APE teachers. This population represents only a select demographic from a very specific geographic region in the United States. Thus, results from this study may not be transferable to other teachers in other parts of the country that deal with other challenges and factors that contribute to their feelings of self-efficacy and job satisfaction. A second limitation of my study is the minimal time available for collecting data during the holiday months. Many of this study’s participants were on vacation, and scheduling of time was rushed or limited. Flexibility with scheduling and methods of receiving data (LED versus interview) must be made available to gather the most amount of data from the participants. Third, the interview protocol was developed by myself utilizing suggestions by Rabionet (2011) to target topics that the researcher wants to address but also to provide flexibility to allow participants to share their individual stories.

Validation

Internal validity is known as credibility in qualitative research studies (Creswell, 2013; Vagle, 2014). The use of prolonged and persistent engagement, member checks, negative case analysis, progressive triangulation, and external auditing are suggested to increase validity and credibility (Creswell, 2013; Mertens, 2015). Triangulation of data across multiple sources is used to increase the validity of themes, assertions, categories, or claims posed by qualitative researchers (Creswell, 2013; Vagle, 2014). In qualitative research, triangulation is a research strategy to test for validity due to the existence of converging themes and helps to develop an understanding of phenomena (Carter, Bryant-Lukosius, DiCensco, Blythe, & Neville, 2014).

Using participants who meet specific criteria and have experience with the topic studied would make the study more believable and trustworthy to the reader (Patton, 2015). Conducting in-depth interviews and providing detailed and descriptive responses of the 10 novice APE teachers teaching in California public schools can give the readers a more realistic example of shared experiences amongst the participants. Ensuring that all data collected is accurate and that participants verify the authenticity and accuracy of dictated interviews through member checking can provide readers with confidence in the data presented. Triangulation during data analysis amongst manual coding lists and dedoose results would determine if there is consistency across the transcribed interviews and LED reflective journals (Carter et al., 2014).

Finally, the use of member checking during data collection and analysis of interviews and LED reflective journals provided participants with the opportunity to give feedback and express concerns regarding the accuracy of their transcribed responses, thereby increasing the data's validity (Creswell, 2013). The analysis portion of this study was a lengthy and thorough process, including multiple readings of the information gathered from participants. The member

checking was necessary to ensure that all data is accurate, and interpretations of responses were as intended by the participants. Since the data was analyzed to create an overview of common lived-experiences that novice public school APE teachers, it was essential to verify that their interview and LED reflective journal responses were accurate.

External validity in qualitative research is one's ability to generalize and transfer the findings of the research study into new cases of research (Creswell, 2013). The coding system used during the analysis was conducted both manually and electronically using NVivo 12 (QSR International, n.d.). To increase dependability, NVivo 12 was used to double check manual coding descriptions and themes identified (QSR International, n.d.). Coding is the initial step in data analysis and is heuristic through linking data together to interpret meaning and form ideas, rather just labeling (Saldaña, 2009). The process of coding is cyclical and required multiple visits with the data to manage and filter the themes, patterns, and concepts. Continually addressing the data and checking the codes would provide more rigorous analysis and provide better external validity of codes for future studies. This information may even be transferable to the lived experiences of another novice public school APE teachers who teach in other counties within the same state or in other states that employ public school APE teachers.

Using rich, detailed, and thick descriptions of each participant's experiences would also improve the external validity of this study (Vagle, 2014). This attention to detail would provide readers with extensive information to determine the weight of transferability and generalization of the data provided. Details such as utilizing purposeful sampling participants to maximize variation and diversity would enhance transferability because they represent typical novice public APE teachers who graduate from public and private school preparation programs across the country.

Reliability is one's ability to repeat a study, in qualitative research this is considered dependability (Creswell, 2013). However, Carcary (2009) explained that "qualitative researchers recognize the difficulty in reproducing social phenomena because of the challenges involved in replicating the precise conditions under which evidence was originally collected" (p. 14). Specific strategies that were used in this study to ensure consistency and dependability included: (a) using audio-recorded interviews and providing member accurately checked transcriptions of interview responses; (b) triangulating data amongst interviews and LED reflective journal responses through manual and computer software coding; and (c) maintaining a meticulous system for record keeping to demonstrate an audit trail to ensure interpretations of data are consistent and transparent to other researchers. Thus, providing detailed and explicit information on how the study was conducted, and detailed responses from participants were included to demonstrate transparency of the data collected increased the study's reliability. Detailed information on ethical assurances were outlined, and data collection procedures were discussed to enable another researcher to follow the study's protocol to reach similar, if not identical results (Carcary, 2009).

Expected Findings

As participants share their lived experiences as novice APE teachers, it is expected participants would describe examples of their successes and challenges that contributed to their self-efficacy. According to Lytle et al. (2010), the characteristics of a highly qualified APE teacher include proficiency and expertise in a variety of teaching, assessment, and behavior management skills. Interview and LED responses provided insight into the specific skill areas where novice public school APE teachers struggle or thrive. Interview questions were specific to their teacher preparation training and experiences during student teaching and their first three

year(s) of teaching in public schools. Furthermore, when comparing this study's participant responses to Rizzo's (2013) top 10 issues in APE, the researcher would be able to identify correlated issues found in common. The top 10 issues that Rizzo (2013) found that challenge the APE profession includes: (a) practicing effective teaching behaviors, (b) inclusion, (c) assessment, (d) collaboration with other professionals, (e) transition, (f) response to intervention, (g) certification, (h) leadership, (i) behavior management, and (j) evidence-based teaching. Since these issues are identified by public school APE teachers across the county, they provide a generalized consensus on challenges that most novice APE teachers should experience as well (Rizzo, 2013).

Ethical Issues

According to Adams and Lawrence (2015), each stage of the research process requires ethical consideration. I considered ethical implications throughout the entirety of my study. I did this by following specific ethical codes, ethical principles of the American Educational Research Association (AERA), and ethical standards for research with human participants to guide all ethical decision making during my study (AERA, 2012). Furthermore, when using the phenomenological interview as the primary method of data collection, the researcher must participate in a process called *epoche*, "a Greek word meaning to refrain from judgement", by exploring his or her own experiences, prejudices, views, and assumptions" (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016, p. 27). This process of exploration was necessary for me except that the novice APE teachers' experiences may be different from my own.

Ethical considerations for this study included:

1. Informed participant consents were stored in a password protected folder on my personal computer (see Appendix A). Participants received detailed information about

the study via e-mail and what their role in the research study would be if they chose to participate (see Appendix B).

2. Pseudonyms were consistent throughout the study. All data collected (audio, transcribed documents, LED reflective journal, researcher notes on any printed materials) were consistently labeled anonymously so that information is not directly linked to specific participants.
3. All electronic files were in a password-protected secure storage folder stored on my personal computer, and further protected with facial recognition. Any printed materials were stored and locked in a personal file cabinet in the researcher's home office.
4. Participants' information and identities were not disclosed in publications or any files, the information was kept privately and securely, and study documents will be destroyed five years after the conclusion of the study.

Conflict of Interest Assessment

Due to the connections and previous employment with a university that prepares APE teachers, a professional relationship with some of the participants was taken into consideration. On the consent form, it states that my previous experience included a supervisory role supporting pre-service APE teachers. Therefore, it was imperative that my experience as an APE teacher and APE teacher educator be set aside so that any assumptions or personal perspectives do not cloud my judgment and create bias. My passion for the subject could be a conflict of interest. However, accepting and acknowledging the personal lived experiences of each novice public school APE teacher with an open mind helped to control any personal biases on the subject.

Before the interviews, bracketing was used to personally reflecting on my own personal and professional lived experiences to avoid tainting the responses of the participants. Vagle (2014) explained that bracketing is a process of removing personal experiences when analyzing data to help the researcher suspend judgment and preventing biased interpretations. The use of bracketing allows the researcher to focus on analyzing the experience of the participants without being swayed by their own experiences or bias (Vagle, 2014). Merriam and Tisdell (2016) also suggested that phenomenological interview questions should be used as a framework to guide the discovery and focus the interviews on each participant's lived-experiences and point of view. During the interview process, all responses were recorded. This allowed an accurate review of the participants' responses for manual transcription. Furthermore, providing in-depth and rich descriptions of data and utilizing member checking by the participants would help prevent researcher bias and ensure accurate interpretation of each response.

Researcher's Position

As an APE teacher educator, reflecting on my own experiences as a novice APE teacher helped me identify and remove my personal biases and assumptions from this study. My career in education has spanned for over 12 years. I have been a public school teacher, fieldwork supervisor, designated master teacher, university teacher education lecturer, teacher performance assessment evaluator, and university supervisor for student teachers. These positions have afforded me with the opportunity to witness the challenges that novice public school APE teachers face firsthand. These observations helped me make a direct impact on the teacher education training program I worked for through sharing this information with my superiors.

Rabionet (2011) emphasized the necessity to build rapport with participants to create an environment for reflection and truth. The intent of this study was shared with each participant,

which was to help future APE teachers be more successful because of their candid and honest responses, with each participant. Statements of confidentiality, consent, options to withdraw, and use and scope of the results was shared with the participants as part of the protocol to demonstrate transparency (Rabionet, 2011). My personal experiences as a novice teacher was shared to empathize with the participants, so they can see how vulnerable I was and the challenges I overcame before getting to where I am now.

My experience mentoring and supervising APE educators during their university coursework and student teaching experience could create a connection that would help bypass initial participant/researcher relationship-building efforts. However, this previous relationship could also potentially impact some responses in order to impress me. To prevent this, emphasis on my lack of current affiliations with the university was discussed with the participants. There were also no financial or professional gains earned through conducting this study. Thus, the participants' honest responses would not impact their current job or future involvement with the university in any way.

During the interview process, I created an environment that supports them in sharing their lived experiences without judgment. I did this by being an active listener, only asking probing questions if further detail is needed to understand their experience better and ensuring that questions are respectful and culturally sensitive before the interviews (Rabionet, 2011). I anticipated that through our interactions, the participants would reflect on their lived experiences and how they have impacted their self-efficacy. However, what was not clear was if there would be a discrepancy between novice APE teachers' perceived readiness to begin teaching versus their actual readiness to teach once on the job. My interest in this study stems from my passion for new teacher education and support. Furthermore, my interest in researching novice APE

teachers' lived experiences could determine if a discrepancy in perceived versus actual readiness contributed towards their job satisfaction and self-efficacy.

Chapter 3 Summary

This chapter included information on the rationale for using a qualitative phenomenological research design to align with the problem statement and research questions. To accomplish this, this phenomenological study looked specifically at the lived experiences of 10 novice public school APE teachers and how their lived experiences impact self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Data collected using two recorded and transcribed semistructured interviews and one LED reflective journal responses. After analyzing the two semistructured interviews and one LED reflective journal response for each participant, data was coded both manually and by using NVivo 12 software to identify and sort common phenomenon and themes (QSR International, n.d). The identified themes and phenomenon helped to interpret how their shared lived experiences affect self-efficacy and job satisfaction of novice public school APE teachers.

The purpose of this chapter was to provide other researchers with the information necessary to evaluate this study and consider replicating the study to contribute to the field of education and APE teacher education. The anticipated findings of this study might encourage and influence future researchers to use qualitative methods to learn how to better support and prepare future APE teachers.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the lived experiences of novice public school adapted physical education (APE) teachers and how their experiences impact their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Students with disabilities receive APE services based on gross motor assessment per special education law (USDE, 2004). Different states have varying requirements for the credentialing and certification of APE teachers (APENS, 2008). In California, teachers must have an APE credential or APE added authorization (APEAA) to teach APE in public schools (CDE, 2013). This qualitative study follows a phenomenological approach to identify themes, and common phenomenon present amongst novice public school adapted physical education teachers who teach in California. This chapter includes a review of the research questions, description of the sample, review of the methodology and analysis procedures, summary of the findings, and presentation of the analyzed data.

Description of the Sample

The target population of this study included a total of 20 novice public school adapted physical education teachers, male and female, who have taught for three years or less in California and graduated from an APEAA within California. Of the 20 potential candidates, 10 novice public school adapted physical education teachers volunteered to participate in the study. The participant availability and study parameters contributed to the smaller sample size. Patton (2015) argued that purposeful sampling could provide rich information based on the purpose of the research. The extent to which this purposeful sample represented the entire population of novice public school adapted physical education teachers cannot be known. Furthermore, given the data collected in this study, the saturation of information occurred where repetitive phenomena amongst multiple participants was identified.

Of the 10 participants, five were male and five were female. Seven of the 10 participants graduated from a public university, and three graduated from a private university where they also earned their APEAA. Seven of the 10 participants were under the age of 30.

Participant 1 (NAPE 1) was an under 30-year-old female who received her APEAA from a public university. NAPE 1 received her bachelor's degree from a different university in a non-education field, took the California Subject Examinations for Teachers (CSET) for physical education subject matter competency, but completed traditional student teaching in APE with an inexperienced master teacher in a university partner school district. NAPE 1 was her master teacher's first student teacher. NAPE 1 has taught APE in public schools for three years and is an itinerant APE teacher. Itinerant teachers teach at multiple school sites each week.

Participant 2 (NAPE 2) was an under 30-year-old male who received his APEAA from a public university. NAPE 2 received his bachelor's degree from the same public university in Kinesiology with an emphasis in Adapted Physical Education and earned subject matter competency through his bachelor's degree program. NAPE 2 completed traditional student teaching in APE with an approved master teacher in a university partner school district. NAPE 2 explained that the APE program provides a list of approved master teachers that they are encouraged to observe for fieldwork hours and student teaching. NAPE 2 has taught APE in the public schools for two years as an itinerant APE teacher.

Participant 3 (NAPE 3) was an over 30-year-old male who received his APEAA from a private university. NAPE 3 received his bachelor's degree from a different university in a non-education field, took the CSET for physical education subject matter competency, taught general physical education in the public schools, and has taught APE in public schools for three years as an itinerant APE teacher. NAPE 3 has experience working collaboratively with the APE

teachers by helping students with disabilities in his general physical education classroom.

Before teaching APE, NAPE 3 was a general physical education teacher for over 10 years.

Participant 4 (NAPE 4) was an over 30-year-old male who received his APEAA from a private university. NAPE 4 received his bachelor's degree in special education from a different university, taught in a self-contained special education classroom in public schools for students with Mild to Moderate Disabilities and Severe Emotional Disturbances. NAPE 4 took the CSET for physical education subject matter competency and has taught APE in public schools for three years as an itinerant APE teacher. Before he started teaching APE in public schools, NAPE 4 had experience working collaboratively with APE teachers as a special education teacher for over 10 years.

Participant 5 (NAPE 5) was an under 30-year-old female who received her APEAA from a public university. NAPE 5 received her bachelor's degree from the same public university in Kinesiology with an emphasis in Adapted Physical Education and earned subject matter competency through her bachelor's degree program. NAPE 5 completed traditional student teaching in APE with an approved master teacher in a university partner school district. NAPE 5 has taught APE in public schools for three years as an itinerant APE teacher.

Participant 6 (NAPE 6) was an under 30-year-old female who received her APEAA from a public university. NAPE 6 received her bachelor's degree from a different public university in Kinesiology and earned subject matter competency through her bachelor's degree program. NAPE 6 completed traditional student teaching in APE with an approved master teacher in a university partner school district. NAPE 6 has taught APE in public schools for three years as an itinerant APE teacher.

Participant 7 (NAPE 7) was an under 30-year-old female who received her APEAA from a public university. NAPE 7 received her bachelor's degree from the same public university in Kinesiology and took the CSET for physical education subject matter competency. NAPE 7 completed traditional student teaching in APE with an approved master teacher in a university partner school district. NAPE 7 has taught APE in public schools for three years as an itinerant APE teacher.

Participant 8 (NAPE 8) was an under 30-year-old male who received his APEAA from a public university. NAPE 8 received his bachelor's degree from a different public university in Kinesiology with an emphasis on Physical Education and earned subject matter competency through his bachelor's degree program. NAPE 8 completed traditional student teaching in APE with an approved master teacher in a university partner school district. NAPE 8 has taught APE in public schools for two years as an itinerant APE teacher.

Participant 9 (NAPE 9) was an over 30-year-old male who received his APEAA from a private university. NAPE 9 received his bachelor's degree in special education from a different university, taught special education in a public school, took the CSET for physical education subject matter competency, and has taught APE in public schools for three years. Before teaching APE in public school, NAPE 9 had experience working collaboratively with APE teachers as a special education teacher for five years.

Participant 10 (NAPE 10) was an under 30-year-old female who received her APEAA from a public university. NAPE 10 received her bachelor's degree from a different public university in Kinesiology and took the CSET for physical education subject matter competency. NAPE 10 completed traditional student teaching in APE with an approved master teacher in a

university partner school district. NAPE 10 has taught APE in the public schools for three years as an itinerant APE teacher.

Table 1

Novice Public Adapted Physical Education Teacher Participants

	Age	Gender	CSET?	Years Teaching Adapted PE	Traditional Student Teaching in APE?
NAPE 1	<30	Female	Yes	3	Yes
NAPE 2	<30	Male	No	2	Yes
NAPE 3	>30	Male	No	3	No
NAPE 4	>30	Male	Yes	3	No
NAPE 5	<30	Female	No	3	Yes
NAPE 6	<30	Female	No	3	Yes
NAPE 7	<30	Female	Yes	3	Yes
NAPE 8	<30	Male	No	1	Yes
NAPE 9	>30	Male	Yes	3	No
NAPE 10	<30	Female	Yes	3	Yes

Table 1 provides a breakdown of participant demographics, demonstrating an even distribution of five male and five female participants. Three of the 10 participants were over 30 years of age, and seven of the 10 participants were under 30 years of age. The three participants who were over 30 had taught in physical education or special education before going back to school for their APEAA, and they did not complete the student teaching in APE as they had already completed student teaching in either physical education or special education. Only one of the three participants who chose APE as a second teaching career was able to teach APE while

earning his APEAA; the other two worked on their APEAA while teaching general physical education and special education. There were no deviations between the makeup of anticipated target populations, as discussed in Chapter 3. All participants received their APEAA from a public or private university and had three or fewer years of experience teaching APE in public schools when the data was collected. All participants completed a semistructured interview and lived experience description reflective journal.

Research Methodology and Analysis

This study utilized a qualitative research methodology to explore the research questions. The phenomenological study design was used to investigate how novice public school APE teachers' lived experiences affected their self-efficacy and job satisfaction and to gain understanding on the common challenges that novice teachers experience and how their success impacts their self-efficacy. The novice public school APE teachers' voices are the core of this investigation as their lived experiences elucidate the phenomenon within this phenomenological qualitative study. This phenomenological qualitative research contextualizes the experiences of novice public school APE teachers through their statements, in-depth explanations, and the descriptions of their perceptions of their lived experiences (Creswell, 2013).

Semistructured interviews and lived experience description reflective journals were aligned with the research questions and used to collect data. During the data collection process, the researcher was conscious about approaching all data with an open mind to avoid bias and meticulously review all responses. Data and responses were reviewed as they were provided by participants so that their initial responses were not influenced by other participants' responses. Additionally, member checking was used to ensure the authenticity and accuracy of the participants' answers. The participants' responses were stored in a password-protected file on

my personal computer, and all the printed documents were locked in a storage cabinet.

Throughout the entire data collection and analysis process, the following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the most common challenges that novice public school adapted physical education teachers' experience?
2. What specific knowledge, skills, and supports do novice APE teachers feel are the most important to have?
3. How might contextual factors impact the self-efficacy beliefs of novice public school adapted physical education teachers?

Data Collection Review

Enrollment

During the first phase of the study, the researcher collected participant consent via a recruitment email. Participants from the public university were selected from the university website based on their publicly published graduation date. The private school university's APE coordinator was contacted and provided the names of individuals who met the study criteria and were interested in obtaining more information about participating in the study. Purposeful sampling was utilized to provide detailed, in-depth information on the lived experiences of these novice public school APE teachers' lived experiences and how those experiences impact their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Purposeful sampling was also used to identify shared phenomena within this specific group of participants (Creswell, 2013). Out of 20 potential participants, a total of 10 participants voluntarily agreed to participate in the study.

The researcher sent these interested participants the required consent paperwork. All 10 participants returned the consent form within two weeks. The researcher scheduled interviews as

the consents were received. All the participants had taught APE in public schools for three years or fewer and were currently teaching APE in California.

Interviews

The interviews were completed over the phone and took place at a time that fit the participant's schedule. Before starting each interview, the researcher emphasized that the study was completely voluntary, and that each participant had the right to withdraw at any time. Consent for recording the interview was provided verbally by each participant before the interview was recorded using a phone application. Each interview lasted between 40 and 60 minutes. The interviews followed a semistructured format that allowed participants to answer questions that were guided by the research questions. Careful implementation of the interview protocol refinement (IPR) framework was utilized to increase the quality of data obtained before the interviews (Castillo-Montoya, 2016). Semistructured interviews used consistent interview questions for each participant but remained flexible to allow participants to describe and elaborate upon their experiences during their teacher preparation program and first years of teaching APE in the public schools. The researcher used probing questions when the participants did not provide information specific to the question, or when the participants did not answer the question. From these interviews, direct quotations and paraphrasing were used to accurately identify the participants' experiences related to the research questions (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

After the interviews were completed and recorded, the transcripts were saved in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer. Printed documents were kept in a locked file cabinet to ensure privacy. The researcher completed all manual transcriptions within two months. The transcripts were then e-mailed directly to each participant for member checking.

Member checking is essential to ensure authentic and accurate responses. All 10 interviews occurred within a three-week window.

Lived Experience Descriptions (LED)

After the interview transcript member checking was completed, the LED reflective journal protocol was e-mailed to each participant. The researcher provided detailed instructions and an example for participants to reference. The LED reflective journal prompt requested that participants reflect on and describe a specific lived experience. The lived experience could be related to their teaching ability or interpretation of their proficiency during their first three years of teaching. Van Manen (2016) explained that the LED data method is beneficial because participants must analyze and reflect on a lived experience and then describe it to others. The LED reflective journals received from all 10 participants ranged from one to three pages, double-spaced. The LED reflective journals were due within one month. However, three participants asked for extensions due to a work, school, or a personal conflict. They submitted their LED reflective journals within two months after the initial request. The LED reflective journals were stored in a password-protected file on the researcher's computer. Printed materials were stored in a locked file cabinet to ensure the privacy of the participants and their responses.

Member Checking

Member checking occurred during two different stages of the data collection process and was necessary to protect and respect the information provided by the participants in this study (Creswell, 2013; Vagle 2014). First, the manually transcribed interviews were e-mailed to each participant to review and verify for authenticity and accuracy. If they discovered any errors or there was any clarification necessary, the participants made those corrections and e-mailed them back to me. Second, after the LED reflection journals were submitted, if an explanation was

required, an e-mail was sent to the participant with questions to ensure clarity and understanding of their experience. During the member-checking process, participants responded promptly within seven days via email with any concerns regarding wording or content within the transcribed interview and LED documents. Therefore, no deviations occurred from the original member-checking plan presented in Chapter 3.

Data Analysis

The data analysis procedures used in this study will summarize the data collected to answer the research questions. In this study, data collected and verified through member checking was uploaded and systematically coded in NVivo 12 using words and phrases provided by the interviewee's responses. NVivo12 is "the most used qualitative and mixed-methods data analysis software tool by academics and professional researchers globally" (QSR International, n.d., para. 1). NVivo 12 is a tool used to identify and separate nodes, and then code the data collected. QSR International (n.d.) explain that, "nodes are central to understanding and working with NVivo—they let you gather related material in one place so that you can look for reemerging patterns and ideas" (para. 1).

As described in Chapter 3, interviews were used as the primary instrument to collect data with rich and detailed descriptions of lived experiences from the participants. The whole-part-whole analysis process was used to identify themes and articulate meaning from the data collected. This study used methods to develop trustworthiness including credibility, transferability, confirmability, and dependability using the Van Kaam-Style method of phenomenological data analysis to break apart all the data collected in order to identify the descriptions and common phenomenon (Vagle, 2014). The sections that follow describe in detail

the data analysis processes; a combination of thematic and contextual analysis coding procedures of all the interview and LED reflective journal data collected.

Interview Data

The researcher used open coding in NVivo12 to identify common patterns and themes across interviewee responses based on the research questions by creating nodes and then coding within each node. First, the researcher uploaded member checked interview transcripts to NVivo 12 and labeled it by the assigned pseudonym. Nvivo12 requires a sign in, and all the data is secured. Whole-part-whole analysis began with thoroughly reading through all the transcribed texts from each interview. All the data were carefully reviewed, and open coding with NVivo was used to identify common patterns and themes from the interview responses using the research questions. The researcher then grouped the nodes that were identified into categories, and a descriptive coding list was developed and divided into three main theme categories and 16 subthemes (see Table 2). The participants' words describing their experiences provided units of information for this study. Their words, phrases, and sentences were descriptive codes used to analyze the data collected from the interview for describing, summarizing, and extracting the emerging patterns. These themes and subthemes concerning the research questions will be discussed further in the presentation of the data results section.

Table 2

Emerged Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
1. Challenges	Effective Teaching Behaviors Collaboration Managing Paraprofessionals Leadership (Administration) Behavior Management Time Management Advocate/Lawyer Presence during IEP Meetings
2. Teaching APE	APE Theory and Methods Assessment Lesson Planning Behavior Management IEP Documentation
3. Confidence	Successful Lessons Mentors Specific Feedback Student Engagement Hostile Work Environment Self-Doubt

Lived Experience Description (LED) Data

Like the interview data, the researcher used open coding in NVivo 12 to identify the common patterns and themes present in the LED reflective journal responses provided by participants. First, all member checked LED reflective journal responses were uploaded onto NVivo 12 and labeled by the assigned pseudonym. NVivo 12 is password-protected, and so it ensured that the participants' information remained secure. The whole-part-whole analysis was utilized again by thoroughly reading through the entire document first, and then the process of coding with NVivo 12 began by breaking down the information into codes and identifying the common patterns and themes. An additional coding list was developed and was then compared

to the original interview coding list to find the similarities and common themes. The codes found across all participant responses were: Effective Teaching Behaviors, Leadership/Administration, Lawyer/Advocate Presence at IEP meetings, Collaboration, and Behavior Management.

Summary of the Findings

The 10 novice public school APE teacher participants came from different backgrounds; however, all shared a desire to help children with special needs be successful within physical education. They demonstrated a thorough understanding of the skills required to teach APE in public schools. One pattern that emerged between the seven novice APE public school teachers who completed traditional student teaching specifically in APE was that their overall experiences during student teaching helped prepare them for the realities of their job. The other three novice public school APE teachers chose APE as a second career positively identified that their previous career experience as special education or physical education teachers also helped in their transition into a new teaching area.

The novice public school APE teachers recommended the need for coursework requirements to be modified and improved in the following ways: more comprehensive experiences in gross motor assessment, requiring the completion of diverse fieldwork experiences including all disability levels, time management strategies of a large caseload, and experiences with IEPs that have advocates and lawyers present. They also expressed a desire for more practical knowledge and skills and the ability to use past experiences as a reservoir for solving future problems. Although the foundation of the participants' knowledge base is from their teacher preparation program and student teaching experiences, they emphasized that on the job experiences have benefited them the most.

The participants in this study identified the specific challenges they had experienced while teaching APE in public schools and described how these challenges had impacted their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Most of the challenges they had experienced were discussed within their teacher preparation program theoretically. In practice, with different variables in place, the participants felt that more emphasis on providing more of these experiences before they were on their own would have been beneficial. However, each of the novice public school APE teacher acknowledged that the challenges they had experienced within the first three years of teaching did not outweigh their commitment to their students.

The following section explains the identified themes and subthemes that emerged from the data collected, including patterns observed and understandings that resulted from the coding process. All the data collected was constantly compared throughout analysis to provide the researcher with an overall understanding of the data and lived experiences of the novice public school APE teacher participants.

Presentation of Data Results

This section presents the data analysis information and is organized by the research questions in which the themes emerged. The supporting codes used during the data analysis are described in detail. The three main themes presented in the data and results included:

Challenges, Teaching APE, and Confidence.

The participants described which courses and content they learned during their teacher preparation programs were the most and least beneficial once they began teaching APE in public schools. The participants also shared the specific challenges that they had experienced and how those challenges had impacted their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. In the section that follows,

the three themes that emerged from the triangulated data are discussed in further detail as they directly support and relate to the research questions.

Research Question 1

The purpose of this question was to uncover what novice public school APE teachers felt were the most challenging aspects of their job. Rizzo (2013) surveyed APE teachers who teach APE at the National APE Conference to determine what they identified as the most challenging aspects of their career. Of the 10 issues identified by the participants, the following four commonalities were identified by the novice public school APE teachers: demonstrating effective teaching behaviors, collaboration, leadership (administration), and behavior management. Participants also identified time management, managing paraeducators, and advocate/lawyer presence at IEP meetings as challenges they had faced within the first three years of teaching. Table 3 provides a summary of the frequency of the theme and subthemes identified from the coding process.

Table 3

Emerg ed Themes Related to Research Question 1

Challenges	Effective Teaching Behaviors	Collaboration	Leadership/ Administration	Behavior Management	Managing Paraeducators	Time Management	Advocate/ Lawyer Presence at IEP Meetings
NAPE 1	*			*	*	*	*
NAPE 2					*	*	
NAPE 3					*	*	*
NAPE 4	*				*		
NAPE 5	*			*	*	*	
NAPE 6		*	*		*	*	
NAPE 7			*	*		*	
NAPE 8	*			*		*	
NAPE 9				*		*	
NAPE 10	*				*	*	

When analyzing the data collected in this study, six challenges that impacted the participants' self-confidence as novice public school APE teachers were identified. The challenges that the novice public school APE teachers experienced included: practicing effective teaching behaviors, collaboration, leadership (administration), behavior management, managing paraeducators, time management, and advocate/lawyer presence at IEP meetings. The challenges that were mentioned the most included: time management ($n = 9$), managing paraeducators ($n = 7$), behavior management ($n = 5$), and effective teaching behaviors ($n = 4$).

Practicing effective teaching behaviors. Four of the 10 participants discussed that consistently practicing an effective teaching behavior was challenging for them. This broad category included curriculum and lesson planning as well as structuring lessons by utilizing the

resources available to meet the needs of diverse learners across multiple grade levels. NAPE 4 did not have a physical education background, thus learning how to organize a yearly scope and sequence when structuring units and lessons specific to physical education had been a challenge, whereas the special education component was not. NAPE 4 stated, “I would have liked to have a curriculum map for each level. Then having lessons because you can always modify for each lesson and situation.” Versus, NAPE 1 who explained that her biggest struggle is applying everything she learned in her teacher preparation program and doing them well all the time.

NAPE 1 stated:

I have such a high standard of what I know [my program] should be like, I can hear my professor’s voice in the back of my head . . . I know the standards, I know what objectives should be, I know how to data track, I know how to do all of these things. And when it comes time to get in there and start doing that, none of that happens.

NAPE 8 and NAPE 10 discussed the challenges they experienced regarding the structuring of lessons and environmental factors that impacted their lessons. NAPE 5 and 8 described how their lessons did not go as planned. NAPE 5 experienced her students eloping and not participating in the lesson. So, she had to restructure her lessons and collaborate with other service providers by creating shorter time segments in order to effectively work with the students. NAPE 8 described a situation where the lesson did not go as planned during observation and turned that into a teachable moment for him. NAPE 8 explained:

Once I split up my students and sent them off with my two instructional aides, I preceded to make my rounds to each group and help [the] students perform their skills. All my students were either yelling, crying, or [were] not engaged. It was so bad that my APE department chair had to step in and assist. She assisted by having all my students sit

down on the lunch benches in the MPR. She gave my students a balloon for them to catch. She totally switched up my lesson, but it was for the better. It gave my students an activity to perform instead of sitting on a spot waiting their turn to either throw or hit off a batting tee.

NAPE 10 discussed how the environment can change the effectiveness of the lesson due to external factors such as the wind and teaching space. NAPE 10 stated:

I thought I was prepared enough for the lesson by the way I grouped the students, having some deflated soccer balls, and an adult at each station. Since that simply was not the case I had to think of other ways for the lesson to be more successful . . . I needed to think back on what I learned in my teacher preparation program and collaborate with other APE teachers and talk to [the] administration about having APE class elsewhere.

Collaboration. Collaboration with general physical education teachers posed challenges both professionally and legally when including students with special needs as they are not being included appropriately in the physical education classroom to support their needs and as written in the student's IEP. NAPE 4 shared that fighting for the least restrictive environment was extremely challenging during the first year of teaching because the general physical education teacher believed that all children who have a disability belong in an adapted physical education classroom. NAPE 4 stated that even "after two months of accommodating and modifying his curriculum to meet her needs he was still against her being completely in his class with consultation." The parents and students also felt that placement with her general education peers was the best placement for her if she could have appropriate accommodations in place.

Managing paraeducators. Managing paraeducators or support staff was a challenge that seven of the 10-novice public school APE teachers discussed. The term "managing" was used to

refer to providing instructions to paraeducators in order to implement elements of the APE lesson by either leading activities, helping students, or collecting data. Most of the issues experienced by the teachers dealt with noncompliance and not following instructions, or just not helping and creating more work for them. NAPE 5 stated, “I just felt like I wanted help but no one was helping me, the aides were just watching me struggle and I had to say, ‘hey, I need your help, don’t let that kid go out of the gym.’” NAPE 1 explained:

I gave every support staff the kid’s goal and a pen, and I spelled it out like black and white. So easy. Please just read the paper and start working on the goal. And people were writing, like say their goal is to throw, but they would write that they can run the mile or skip and I’m like, this is a lost cause.

Likewise, NAPE 4 similarly stated:

What’s funny, is they teach you how to work with your paras, but I don’t think you can ever be truly prepared to manage adults and work with your adults in PE. That is THE hardest part of the job. I don’t know if there is a way, they can prepare you for that, to be honest. You literally have to prepare lessons for them and give it to [them] prior to your lessons.

NAPE 2 and NAPE 6 explained that the paraeducators at one school site “did not want to work and viewed APE as their break time.” NAPE 2 and NAPE 6 both had to get the classroom teacher and administration involved. NAPE 6 stated:

There is a paraprofessional that would refuse to bring out a student to APE because the paraprofessional didn’t want to do work. So, that put the numbers off when it came to deal with 20 plus severe to profound students.

NAPE 3 stated “Just motivating and encouraging paraeducators [is challenging] Like when they’re on their cell phones. I’ve learned ways like when I’m getting ready to start the lesson, I’ll assign them tasks and stuff, but I think when I first started I kind of let them gaggle around too much and I would do all the work.”

NAPE 10 asserted, “I was taking a lot on my own. I wasn’t delegating or asking for help [from my paraeducators].”

Leadership. Two of the participants described how dealing with leadership, specifically with the administration was challenging during their first three years of teaching. This included their school site principal and district supporting special education administrators. NAPE 7 stated:

I learned a lot about working with [the] administration. In the second week of school, she was upset with me, because I didn’t want to take a schedule that she wanted to make for me because she had all my students really late and my students medically could not be in the sun due to seizures or other concerns.

NAPE 7 had to learn how each principal may have different procedures they want you to follow when setting up a meeting or changing the master schedule.

NAPE 6 had an experience where she was not supported by the administration when she organized a Motor Activity Training Program event for the whole school so they could have a Special Olympics experience at their ability level. NAPE 6 stated:

Once I was done, I went back into the school and reported back to the principal on how the event went; he did not leave his office to come [to] see the event in action. He said that he heard it went well. He did not say “Thank you” or “Good Job” or anything supportive, I was not surprised but still upset he did not recognize my hard work and

dedication to the school. A week prior to the event he tried to cancel the event because he “did not want the parents to be on campus two times in the same month.”

Behavior management. Five of the 10 participants described their experiences with managing behaviors as challenging during their first three years of teaching. Most of the participants described how the behaviors impacted their lessons, however, three participants had to deal with behaviors that were dangerous to themselves or others.

NAPE 9 wrote:

Addressing behaviors which impact student engagement and participation during teaching a lesson has been the primary area of focus and growth during my first three years as an Adapted Physical Education (APE) teacher . . . Challenging behaviors from students often present personal feelings of frustration, overwhelmed, and disappointment.

NAPE 5 described:

I had a life skills class and the kids in there are a fourth and fifth grade combination class. 12 of them have down syndrome and were plopping on the floor. And I felt like what am I doing wrong, like, I can't get these kids to participate. And I remember one day leaving and I just started crying. I was like what just went so wrong.

NAPE 1, NAPE 7, and NAPE 8 all had experiences where the students' behavior was dangerous to others. NAPE 1 explained, “There’s a kid that attacks Gen Ed girls who are near him and he’ll rip their earrings out or pull their hair, and I was trying to help with transitions.”

NAPE 7, on the other hand, ended up getting injured because of the student’s behavior. NAPE 7 stated:

I did have [challenging] experience with a student with severe behavior. We were playing reverse inclusion, wheelchair basketball and I let one of my students use a wheelchair

who doesn't usually use one. And he was upset that I was asking him to get off and, and so when I went to take the straps off his feet, he pulled my hair really bad. I even had to take workers' compensation because my neck was strained. So that was kind of hard. Because I was to the point where I didn't feel safe with him in my room.

NAPE 8 explained a situation due to a lack of training, he was unable to help when a student was physically aggressive. NAPE 8 stated:

I don't think any of our teachers are restraint trained. And so there was an instance where it wasn't panic, but it was just like, "oh boy," just because of that particular class there were a lot of students who were a little lower functioning, so the aides had to be with them and they had to restrain him. So, there was a period where I kind of felt helpless in regard to properly restraining him without him hurting him.

Time management. Nine of the participants expressed that time management was one of the biggest challenges. Juggling the responsibilities of teaching, scheduling, IEP attendance, and paperwork was at times overwhelming and they felt that they were just "getting by" when managing the responsibilities of the job daily. All the participants agreed that being organized was important and that time management is challenging because so many things are going on at the same time. NAPE 10 asserted that "there is always a lot going on at once. So, all of these little things, just balancing everything, that's probably been the biggest struggle." NAPE 5 explained, "just being itinerant and managing multiple schools and students is the hardest part." NAPE 8 also stated:

Probably just managing all of the students in regard to their paperwork, and just keeping track of everything and being really flexible, especially with our caseload; there are a lot

of kids. I know I have close to 70 kids, so that are two or three IEPs a week. And so, that's a little challenging, and then transitioning from school to school.

NAPE 2 and NAPE 7 discussed the difficulties with making up minutes and always “playing catch up” due to IEPs, field trips, or other uncontrollable circumstances that impact your schedule for the week or entire quarter. NAPE 9 stated:

I think overall, the scheduling, the assessments, the meetings, and the communication are the challenging part and also the students being out. For instance, this past week I had a student who had who has a very severe digestion track issue and right after Thanksgiving, abruptly he was rushed to the hospital and has been at the hospital since the day after Thanksgiving. I had planned to assess him when we came back from our vacation; now his IEP is due Tuesday and it is going to go into the “red” and it will show on our end that we are out of compliance. From that administration or district standpoint, all they see is “red,” but not necessarily all of the factors that contributed to that “red.”

NAPE 3 explained that he does the paperwork at home and on weekends because he has 123 students on his caseload and does not have time in his schedule to complete all the paperwork during his contracted day. NAPE 1 and NAPE 6 also described bringing work home after school and on the weekends because they are unable to complete it during the contracted workday.

Advocate/lawyer presence in IEP meetings. Two participants explained how having high-profile IEP meetings where advocates or lawyers are present were challenging to them during the first three years. NAPE 3 explained that “the IEP process is pretty daunting compared to what was taught in the credential program.” He went on to explain how the special situations

or lawsuits are difficult and require the assistance of the teacher on special assignments to help with documentation and double-checking everything before the IEP meeting.

Likewise, NAPE 1 described one meeting that did not go as planned when she had an advocate present. NAPE 1 stated:

When I arrived for the meeting, [the] parents refused to make eye contact with me.... They shook their heads in disagreement with me and said there were “significant inconsistencies” with my previous report and the current report, saying that they were shocked that the student made as much progress from the previous assessment. . . . I hadn’t anticipated a parent disagreeing with what I was saying to them about their child—especially because of the fact that I was reporting that the student had made improvements in [the] targeted areas. I am sure to always report the most accurate data and explain thoroughly what I mean by each of the findings in my assessments.

Research Question 2

The purpose of this question was to discover what knowledge, skills, and support the novice public school APE teachers identified with as being helpful to them the most during their first three years of teaching. The primary theme used for coding for this question was Teaching APE, which was condensed from Teaching APE in public schools. Participants also identified subthemes which included the APE theory and practice, assessment, lesson planning, and IEP documentation as important and necessary knowledge and skills. Table 5 provides a summary of the frequency of the theme and subthemes identified from the coding process.

Table 4

Emerg ed Themes Related to Research Question 2

	APE Theory and Methods	Assessment	Lesson Planning	Caseload Management and Documentation
NAPE 1	*	*		*
NAPE 2	*	*	*	*
NAPE 3	*	*		*
NAPE 4	*	*	*	
NAPE 5	*	*	*	*
NAPE 6	*	*	*	*
NAPE 7	*	*	*	*
NAPE 8	*	*		*
NAPE 9	*	*		
NAPE 10	*	*	*	*

APE theory and methods. All the 10 participants stated that the APE theory and methods courses and fieldwork experiences benefited them the most during their teacher preparation program. These courses laid the foundation for teaching APE in public schools and provided real-life experiences for teaching lessons to students with disabilities in a controlled setting. They emphasized the importance of having a variety of fieldwork experiences to gain the most knowledge of teaching different students APE in public schools.

Most of the participants also stated that they wished they would have done more observations with varying teachers in different districts before accepting their first job. Most of them chose their fieldwork sites because it was the most convenient for their schedules and

closest to where they lived or worked. NAPE 1 discussed that she wished there was a checklist available that required different types of observations. This would encourage students to observe different types of self-contained classrooms and disability categories, especially observing students with low-incidence disabilities such as orthopedic impairments, visual impairments, and hearing impairments.

Assessment. Again, all the 10 participants stated that understanding assessments and being able to conduct assessments was critical when teaching APE in public schools. Of the participants, NAPE 1, 5, 6, 7, and 8 wished that the class structure was different because learning about the types of assessments available did not transfer into performing the assessments on the job. NAPE 7 explained that she wished that the assessment course was set up differently where students assess students with disabilities and the data collected is analyzed and interpreted, and the students then create an example report from the information. NAPE 8, when talking about assessment during the teacher preparation program, stated:

I wish I would have paid a little more attention. Or they would have put a little more emphasis on it, because all the assessments that we covered, none of them really stuck with me. I just remember the names. But, we kind of felt rushed in that class, because all I really remember is each student kind of got assigned an assessment and then we would give a report and it was very brief. It was just us watching; I learned how to administer my assigned assessment. But, [for] all the other assessments, it was just me watching someone else do their project in front of the class.

NAPE 1, 5, 6, 7, 8, and 10 expressed that they also received some training during their student teaching experience, however, it was not enough for them to feel completely confident in their abilities once they were on their own. NAPE 5 described:

When I actually went into my job, I had to relearn all the assessments and really think about it. I was aware of them and knew that there are many different options, but it's kind of different when you go to different places and use different types of assessments . . . doing more assessments during student teaching would have been helpful.

NAPE 3, 4, and 9, on the other hand, felt that their assessment course helped prepare them for their jobs. These participants graduated from the same university and did not have APE student teaching experiences. NAPE 3 stated, "The IEP and Assessment class was the most beneficial because I was able to apply it to my job." Furthermore, NAPE 4 explained that the assessment course was beneficial to him because "assessments are different in physical education than it is in special education."

Lesson planning. Six of the 10 participants described the importance of lesson planning and that learning how to lesson plan during their teacher preparation program was beneficial to them during their first three years of teaching. NAPE 6 stated, "writing lessons and actually executing it was extremely helpful." NAPE 5, 7, and 10 described how the after-school program clinical experience was beneficial because it was the first time, they learnt how to teach a lesson to students with disabilities. NAPE 2 explained:

The program was set up, so you learn theory and best practices for the first half of [the] class and then you actually got to take it and apply them in a controlled setting. Even though it's not how it is in the school system, you're still able to work on the foundational things that every teacher needs to be able to do, and since you are kind of in a setting where you can change the environment and really stop and break down skills it is really helpful when you are first learning.

NAPE 4 also identified that learning how to create a curriculum plan with lessons for the different grade levels as they relate to the physical education content standards is important, and he wished it was required before graduation. NAPE 4 stated, “You can always modify for each lesson and situation. . . . But, having a curriculum map would’ve been really helpful for someone with my background.”

Caseload management and documentation. Eight of the 10 participants discussed the necessity to manage their caseloads effectively, staying organized, and keeping up with the documentation of service minutes and IEP paperwork. Managing a caseload and staying on top of the IEP dates, assessments, and progress is an important job responsibility that became overwhelming for many of the participants. NAPE 1 discussed that she knows she needs to be better at documentation, but there was not enough time in the day. NAPE 2 stated:

I was worried about getting my program implemented and getting the students to buy in to what I was teaching . . . that led to me being disorganized . . . so now I dedicate two weeks at the beginning of the school year to organize it all out and get it all ironed out.”

Similarly, NAPE 3 said:

Our caseloads are heavy, like I have 123 kids . . . there are only three APE teachers in our district and we each have that many on our caseload . . . we have classes of like 25 sometimes. . . . I do a lot at home in the evenings. Sometimes with IEPs it is hard to juggle getting all of my minutes in because I have a ton of IEPs.

NAPE 5 also expressed:

I’m getting by. . . . I have post-it’s all over my desk and I have three different calendars—one for work, one small one that comes home with me, and then my work Google

calendar . . . as an APE teacher we're the least thought about IEPs, so they will forget to invite me to meetings.

NAPE 6 discussed how it is important to stay on top of the administration that sends out the IEP notices because "sometimes they forget about you and when you [are] only there once a week, they ask you if you're going to a meeting that will happen tomorrow."

Research Question 3

Contextual factors specific to APE made a significant impact on the self-efficacy of the participants. Factors including district and school factors, student characteristics, caseload size, availability of resources, and instructional implications were identified in the data collected. These factors influenced the participants' job satisfaction, confidence, and instructional practices. The theme of confidence was identified amongst the data. Participants explored their self-efficacy beliefs and explained how different experiences and contextual factors affected their confidence and job satisfaction levels. Table 6 provides a summary of the frequency of the theme and subthemes identified from the coding process.

Table 5

EmergEd Themes Related to Research Question 3

	Lesson Outcome	Mentors	Stressful Work Environment	Self-Doubt
NAPE 1	*			*
NAPE 2		*		
NAPE 3	*	*		
NAPE 4	*	*		
NAPE 5	*	*		*
NAPE 6	*	*	*	
NAPE 7	*	*	*	
NAPE 8	*	*		*
NAPE 9	*			
NAPE 10	*	*		

Lesson outcome. Nine of the 10 participants referenced that their lesson had an impact on their confidence during their first three years of teaching. The negative lessons impacted the novice public school APE teachers’ confidence, however valuable lessons were gained from these experiences. Positive lesson outcomes in the lessons gave the participants more confidence in their ability to complete their job effectively. NAPE 6 stated, “I push my students to do more than they think they can. . . . I got a lot of positive feedback from the teachers and paraeducators . . . and even the kids say that they have fun.”

Negative lesson outcomes overwhelmingly made the participants reflect on their teaching. No participants stated in interviews or LED reflective journals that their negative

lesson outcomes made them have feelings of leaving the profession. However, many explained that it made them reflect on how they could improve and do better next time. NAPE 5 experienced a lesson that did not go as planned and she ended up leaving and crying. But she stated, “After that, I took a step back and reevaluated exactly what went wrong that day.” NAPE 10 similarly explained, “If I think the students or the adults aren’t enjoying a lesson, [or] if they are not fully engaged, I will feel like I did a crummy job of teaching that day.”

NAPE 1 stated:

I don’t feel like I’m teaching to the standards, and sometimes I’m just kind of working the kids out. I hear my professor 100% of the time in everything I do because I’ve got to make sure I’m getting enough activity time, gotta do this and gotta do that. . . . I take a lot to heart, maybe more than I should. Because the truth is, they are up and moving and I am impacting them in a positive way. But I’m concerned with the actual content standards and if I’m measuring their learning.

NAPE 7 explained that that during a lesson one of her students grabbed her hair and pulled it with full force, she wrote:

I need to accept that in APE there might be things out of my control or unexpected . . . I learned that even if a lesson does not go as planned, I do not have to toss it or forget it . . . I was sure to ask the teacher what kind of day he was having and would modify accordingly . . . I learned that things are not always going to go the way I planned, but that’s okay. What matters is that I take those experiences and reflect on them to either avoid them or make them better.

NAPE 9 reflected on a soccer lesson that did not go as planned and a student who exhibited behaviors for 10 minutes. NAPE 9 wrote:

Dealing with this issue was a distraction which did not allow for me, as the teacher, to address and observe other students in passing skills activity. I had feelings in this situation of high frustration since there are very limited options as far as direct interventions . . . I also learned, and now have applied to my teaching practice, the necessity of differentiated instruction based on student behavior as well as academic needs.

Effective mentors. Eight of the 10 participants emphasized the importance of having a mentor during their first years of teaching. Of the eight participants, three (NAPE 2, NAPE 5, and NAPE 8) considered their Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) mentors as beneficial and helpful during their first years of teaching. Of the other six participants, one did not have to complete BTSA (NAPE 4), and the other five who completed the BTSA program did not consider their assigned mentors as beneficial compared to their district assigned buddy teacher, supervisor, or APE colleagues.

NAPE 4 was not assigned a mentor for BTSA. He explained that there are four APE teachers who get together and collaborate each week and help one another. NAPE 4 said, “Being an adapted PE teacher is like you’re on an island; I almost wish I had a co-teaching buddy.”

NAPE 3 explained, “I had a great mentor APE teacher. She had 40 years of teaching experience, [and] a lot of those years were in APE where she started out with the County for APE; so, she taught me a lot.” NAPE 2 also described:

Being paired with a mentor that has been teaching for many years has been more beneficial than the actual paperwork portion of [BTSA] . . . the best part is being paired with another APE teacher in the district. It has been a great way to discuss what’s going on and bounce ideas off each other.

NAPE 5 stated:

I loved my advisor who happened to be a Gen Ed teacher who taught special education at the beginning of her teaching career. She really became a friend . . . she would give me so much feedback and told me things she remembered . . . to hear about her teaching background ended up being really helpful.

Five of the participants continued to stay in contact with their cooperating teacher from student teaching and continue to view them as a valuable resource and mentor. NAPE 2, 6, 7, 8, and 10 all are in contact with their cooperating teachers and have collaborated with them during their first three years of teaching. NAPE 6 stated:

I still talk to my [mentor] now. She is so good . . . we were able to talk and share our experiences and like any time I asked for help, she would provide it to me; but if she believed that I would just need to learn it the hard way, she'd let me work it out and I would get better. . . . She just cared and wanted me to become a better teacher.

Stressful work environment. Two of the 10 participants had to deal with situations that dealt with their school site principals or district special education administrator and their lack of support, which created a stressful working environment. NAPE 6 and NAPE 7 both had situations where they were working with students who had significant needs and were medically fragile. To protect their students and keep them safe, both the participants discussed their concerns with their administration, and it was not received well. NAPE 6 described:

I have had a lot of problems at one school, in particular, this semester with conflicts in personality [with a teacher and paraprofessional]. It was hard for me to tell my boss or my supervisor that I'm having [a problem with] them because it looked like I'm a tattletale. It got to the point where I didn't know what to do anymore and it was making

me not want to go to work . . . it made me feel very, very frustrated. And just like sad because I care about these students so much and I care about teaching and I care about my job. I felt like my job was threatened by this paraprofessional who was making up lies and stuff.

This situation took place during the time of the interview and still had not been resolved. When I asked NAPE 6 if she did not have this campus, how her job satisfaction would be, she replied, “It would be rainbows and butterflies.”

NAPE 7 had a similar situation, that also involved working with the administration, which impacted her job satisfaction and self-efficacy. NAPE 7 explained:

My administrator was upset with me because I didn’t want to take the schedule that she wanted to make for me because she had all of my students really late and my students medically could not be in the sun due to seizures and other concerns. . . . Long story short, I fought for my [medically fragile] students to not be in the sun and I fought for them to have an actual area to be in PE, and she said that I was unprofessional because I was hindering the school schedule. I remember feeling unconfident and feeling so defeated . . . I felt like I was being targeted . . . I didn’t tell any of the teachers and even the teachers could feel that there was something wrong, but I would never talk about it because it would be unprofessional and I didn’t want to seem like I was spreading rumors; the principal had issues with a lot of people, not just me.

Self-doubt. Three of the 10 participants talked about experiencing self-doubt during their first three years of teaching. NAPE 1 struggled with feeling like she needed to know all the answers since she was the APE specialist. NAPE 1 explained:

The standard I do have for myself is high. So, I constantly feel guilty, like I'm not doing it right . . . I am self-conscious, and I think I'm my harshest critic. But at the end of the day, I'm trying my best and I'm doing it on my own. Maybe it is not as good as I want to be, so I do feel like it is taking a [bit of a] toll [on me].

NAPE 5 recognized that although she has more confidence now, that was not the case in her first year of teaching. She explained, "I always felt so nervous before . . . I was always psyching myself out and overthinking stuff." NAPE 8 discussed how an unsuccessful lesson that was observed by his department chair made him feel. NAPE 8 wrote, "I remember that I felt like I was useless and that I did a terrible job teaching my lesson that particular day."

Chapter 4 Summary

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study was to explore the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers and how their experiences affect their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. The data analysis indicated that their university teacher preparation program, including all applicable coursework, fieldwork, and student teaching, was beneficial in preparing them for their first three years of teaching. Yet, of the 10 participants, seven participants felt that their perceived readiness was different than their actual readiness to teach APE in the public schools after graduating with their APEAA. The participants felt that their experiences on the job and experiences during fieldwork and student teaching were the most beneficial in preparing them to teach APE in the public schools. The participants also felt that although the experiences they gained from working in the schools have been challenging, they have been beneficial in their overall learning process. The data revealed that challenges and emotions experienced on the job did affect their self-efficacy and job satisfaction both positively and negatively depending on the outcome. However, these challenges did not change their desire

to continue teaching APE in public schools. The next chapter will discuss the study's results with research and interpret the findings. Furthermore, implications and recommendations for future research will be provided.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

This phenomenological qualitative study examined the lived experiences of novice public school adapted physical education (APE) teachers and how their experiences have affected their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. The research findings will contribute to the gap of research, specifically on the novice public school APE teachers and their experiences as they relate to their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. Established research within the fields of special education and physical education were used to draw generalizations to APE because APE is a subdiscipline of disciplines (Winnick & Porretta, 2017). Additionally, this study's results can help stakeholders develop a deeper understanding of the challenges novice public school APE teachers experience to create targeted learning opportunities within teacher preparation and student teaching. This chapter provides both a summary and discussion of the results of the study and its relationship with the literature. The limitations of the study, implications for practice, recommendations for future research, and conclusion are also discussed.

Summary of the Results

This phenomenological study targeted novice public school APE teachers in California who also earned their APEAA from universities in California. The lived experiences of 10 novice public school APE teachers were investigated using qualitative methodology. There was a significant gap in the research that currently exists in the area of studying novice APE teachers in public schools.

The study results showed that novice public school APE teachers experienced many of the same challenges during their first three years of teaching. The participants in the study reported that their top five most challenging experiences were managing paraeducators, time management, behavior management, practicing effective teaching behaviors consistently, and

different administrative and leadership support. The knowledge, skills, and support that novice public school APE teachers felt were most important were a strong foundation in APE theory and methodology, understanding of assessment in gross motor skills, caseload management, and documentation, and lessons and curriculum planning. The participants also identified contextual factors that affected their self-efficacy beliefs the most, which included: lesson outcomes, influential mentors or support providers, a stressful work environment, and self-doubt.

Overall, the 10 participants expressed job satisfaction despite the challenges and contextual factors that affected their self-efficacy. To help strengthen the teacher preparation programs, the participants recommended more focused training on caseload management, working with paraeducators, working with the administration, and requiring diverse fieldwork observations. Other recommendations for future novice public school APE teachers included to never stop learning or asking questions, practice daily reflection with anecdotal notetaking, and use curriculum mapping for different grade levels.

Discussion of the Results

The findings of this study suggest that effective teacher preparation and fieldwork experiences in conjunction with supportive and available mentors were the contributing factors towards positive feelings of self-efficacy. On the contrary, a stressful work environment, unsuccessful lesson outcomes, and self-doubt were the most influential contributing factors towards negative feelings of self-efficacy. The information obtained through the triangulation of data from semistructured interviews and Lived Experience Description (LED) reflective journals were sufficient to answer the following three research questions.

Results: Research Question 1

Results from this study revealed that novice public school APE teachers experienced similar challenges during their first three years of teaching. Overwhelmingly, nine of the 10 participants identified effectively managing their time for their job responsibilities as one of the most challenging aspects of their job. Time management included managing lesson planning, service minutes, and paperwork; collaboration with other IEP staff members; attending IEP meetings; and other commitments such as coaching for Special Olympics. The nine participants explained that they knew it was going to be challenging teaching on their own but felt that teaching students made them feel more prepared. However, it was not until they were doing everything on their own their first year of teaching that they realized how important being organized was to keep up with their workload. When asked how they felt they were managing their job responsibilities, eight of the 10 participants responded they felt as though they were “getting by.” Nevertheless, the teachers with two to three years of experience explained that each year was a little better because of their experience.

Managing and working with paraeducators was the second most challenging experience they identified. Issues with paraeducators included both insubordination and incompetence. Novice public school APE teachers who had negative experiences with their paraeducators indicated that it affected their job satisfaction and self-efficacy negatively. While others explained that it changed their job satisfaction because they felt frustrated that they had to teach and manage adults in addition to teaching their students. The participants all work with numerous paraeducators each week because they are itinerant and teach at multiple schools. However, having to manage one insubordinate or disrespectful paraeducator caused significantly higher levels of stress, discontent, and documentation for the participants.

Practicing effective teaching behaviors by executing lessons or behavior management was also challenging for seven of the 10 participants. These two areas coincided with one another in both the interviews and lived experience description reflective journals. Of the five participants who explained their challenges with behavior management, four also described how they did not exhibit effective teaching behaviors either during the preparation of the lesson or during the execution of the lesson. Challenges in these areas negatively impacted the participant's self-efficacy specifically when their lessons were evaluated by leadership. However, eight of the 10 participants described that when they executed an effective lesson, had strong behavior management, and the lesson outcome was positive, they felt confident and had positive self-efficacy in their teaching ability.

Results: Research Question 2

The study participants all stated that their teacher preparation program, fieldwork, student teaching, and mentors were critical in gaining the knowledge and skills necessary to teach APE in public schools. Six of the seven APE teachers who completed traditional student teaching commented on how valuable their student teaching experience was, but what was more important was the relationship they had built with their mentors and supervisors. Five of the seven participants who student taught were still in contact with their mentors even after they had completed their student teaching experiences. These participants explained that they would still contact them when they had questions once they began their first teaching job.

All 10 participants stated that the coursework that was the most beneficial to them was the APE theory and methods courses. The participants further emphasized that the APE theory and methods courses all had a fieldwork component embedded within the class. These fieldwork experiences provided valuable observations of teaching behaviors of experienced teachers. The

fieldwork experiences also gave them opportunities to ask questions and get practical suggestions. Furthermore, the fieldwork experiences required them to teach lessons to students with disabilities with support from their cooperating teacher, and they received specific feedback on their teaching performance.

Second, all 10 of the participants emphasized that having assessment knowledge was identified as an important skill to possess. Each participant mentioned the importance of understanding and administering assessment as part of the job responsibilities during their interviews. Five of the 10 participants discussed that they wished they had further training in this area, and that if the course was structured differently, it would have been more applicable once they got their jobs. In addition, out of the seven participants who had completed traditional student teaching, four discussed not having enough experience with assessment and data collection during student teaching, thus having to relearn how to administer, score, and interpret assessment data on the job.

Participants discussed the value of lesson planning for students of all ability levels. Lesson planning for APE also included the consideration of support staff necessary to execute the lessons effectively. Some participants explained that student behavior, weather, and other factors impacted the lessons they had thoroughly planned.

Lastly, a seven of the 10 participants discussed the necessity to manage a caseload effectively and provide adequate documentation for IEP meetings. The participants' caseloads varied from 32 to 125 students. They discussed how the management of time to accommodate IEP meetings, make up service minutes, and work around field trips or absences was time consuming. These seven participants also emphasized that being organized to stay on top of their job responsibilities was imperative.

Results: Research Question 3

The results showed that contextual factors both positively and negatively affect the self-efficacy beliefs and job satisfaction of novice public school APE teachers. Nine of the 10 participants described how the lesson outcomes both positively and negatively affected their self-efficacy. Eight of the 10 participants described how having a mentor or someone who could support them positively affected their self-efficacy. However, five of the 10 participants described how stressful work environment and self-doubt both negatively affected the novice public school APE teachers' self-efficacy.

When asked to write and reflect on the challenges faced within the first three years of teaching, five of the participants wrote about the memorable lessons and how a negative lesson outcome or negative experience during the lesson made them feel about their teaching ability. Six of the 10 LED reflective journals included information on student behavior and how being unable to manage that behavior contributed to an unsuccessful lesson. Although, when interviewing, only three of the same six participants described how it made them feel good about themselves and their teaching abilities when the lessons had positive outcomes.

All participants described how a mentor has made a positive impact on their self-efficacy. The participants turned to these experienced teachers and supervisors for support, guidance, and cheerleading. All of the participants emphasized that they felt having a support system in place was both essential and beneficial.

The two areas where the participants described not feeling job satisfaction was when they experienced a stressful work environment or had feelings of self-doubt. Two of the participants dealt with issues with the administration and paraeducators that made their work environment hostile and uncomfortable. One explained that the experience was causing so much stress that it

made her feel physically sick, and it became difficult to go to work at that site each day. On the other hand, two participants described how their feelings of self-doubt and high expectations for themselves would negatively affect their self-efficacy.

Discussion of Results in Relation to the Literature

Challenges APE Teachers Experience in the Field

The first research question examined the most common challenges that novice public school APE teachers experienced in public school. One of the biggest challenges shared between the novice public school APE teachers was managing time for paperwork and teaching responsibilities. According to Mehrenberg (2013), novice special education teachers struggle with managing the responsibilities of paperwork and teaching during their first five years of teaching, and this role conflict causes feelings of despair and frustration. As mentioned above, seven participants described the organizational struggle involved with managing paperwork, planning, and teaching responsibilities. Furthermore, if their caseloads or schools changed, it would mean getting organized and starting all over again in the next school year.

Behavior management of students and paraeducators was the second most described challenge. Six of the participants explained that managing challenging student behavior would impact the success of their lessons. Lavay, Guthrie, and Henderson (2014) emphasized the need for more behavioral management training and instructional practices of Nationally Certified Adapted Physical Education (CAPE) teachers and pre-service APE students and in-service APE Professionals. These findings also align with Rizzo's (2013) pilot study of APE teachers as a challenge experienced within the APE profession.

Similarly, research on collaborating with paraeducators discusses that it is a valuable and necessary part of the job (Lytle, Leiberman, & Aiello, 2007). The challenges that the three

participants discussed while working with paraeducators stemmed from the miscommunication of job responsibilities or the lack of fulfilling job responsibilities during the APE class time. During the interviews, participants explained that the paraeducators either did not understand what their role was during the APE class or they blatantly refused to assist them during the APE class by being on their phones or not coming to class. This added extra job responsibilities for the novice public school APE teachers, who had to manage these adults in addition to their students. Lee and Haegele (2016) emphasized that often there is confusion as to what the responsibilities of paraeducators are during PE. The researchers offered suggestions on how to better utilize paraeducators during PE, such as active and reciprocal communication, sharing lesson plans, developing a collegial relationship, and providing physical activity opportunities for paraeducators (Lee & Haegele, 2016). However, Lytle et al. (2007) discussed that although paraeducators hold a valuable role within the APE classroom, it is necessary to provide proper supervision, instruction, and support because their role is complex and includes both instructional and non-instructional responsibilities.

Highly Qualified APE Teachers

The second research question discussed the specific skills, knowledge, and support that novice public school APE teachers felt were the most important. All of the participants described that their teacher preparation programs contributed to their acquisition of knowledge and skills, but they all also explained that experiences through fieldwork, observations, student teaching, and teaching had been the most valuable for continuing to learn and grow as a teacher. The participants responded that having a foundation in APE theory and methodology, assessment, lesson planning, and caseload management and documentation were the essential knowledge and skills during their first three years of teaching. These themes related to the

existing research on skills and knowledge that highly qualified APE teachers must possess, which correlates with the national standards for APE and California APE Added-Authorization requirements (APENS, 2008; CCTC, 2013; Lytle et al., 2010). Interestingly, the areas that the participants identified in which knowledge and skills were necessary, were also the areas that continued to be challenges for them in their first three years of teaching. Furthermore, feelings of inadequacy in these areas caused distress and self-doubt.

All 10 participants identified assessment knowledge and evidence-based teaching practices as essential knowledge and skills during the first three years of teaching. Participants explained that although they had taken one course on assessment during their teacher preparation program and had completed a few during student teaching, many felt unprepared in this area and needed to freshen up on their skills once they were on the job. Horvat et al. (2018) explained that extensive knowledge of assessment practices in APE is necessary because the data from assessments are used to determine the extent of services offered to each student based on their individual needs. These participants are not alone, according to Rizzo's (2013) pilot study on challenges within the field of APE, as they mirror the concerns of more experienced teachers across the county. Furthermore, research by Jin and Yun (2010) on evidence-based practices, similar to this study, found that many APE teachers struggle in this area although they know it is beneficial and essential when planning learning opportunities for their students.

Teacher Self-efficacy Beliefs

The last research question focused on contextual factors that affect the self-efficacy beliefs of novice public school APE teachers. Researchers found that positive self-efficacy was not only beneficial at all stages of a teacher's career but was also critical for job satisfaction and willingness to stay within the profession (Brown et al., 2015; Hamman et al., 2007; Lauermann

& Konig, 2016; Wang et al., 2015). Factors shared by the participants that have impacted their self-efficacy both positively and negatively, are supported by research. The participants described how the support of mentors and colleagues were necessary during their first three years of teaching. Of the seven participants that student taught, five explained that they maintained relationships with their master teachers and supervisors from student teaching, who still served as their mentors during their first years of teaching.

Jones, Youngs, and Frank (2013) further explained the value of having school-based colleagues as support for novice special education teachers and found that having support improved their commitment. The study surveyed 185 beginning teachers with less than three years of experience in both general and special education. Evidence found that school-based colleagues served as an essential source of support to navigate the responsibilities of the job (Jones et al., 2013). Each of the 10 participants had some means of support that they identified, either a mentor from their teacher preparation program's fieldwork, master teacher from student teaching, a colleague, or a buddy teacher. These individuals who provide both instructional and moral support were identified as helping the participants navigate the areas of their jobs that they felt they have not yet mastered. They turn to these individuals for assistance, to get answers to questions, and to vent out when they are overwhelmed.

Self-doubt, unsuccessful lesson outcomes, and stressful work environments all negatively impacted the participants' self-efficacy. Bandura (1993) explained that self-efficacy beliefs are created by overcoming challenges and mastering knowledge and skills. NAPE 1 mentioned self-doubt and guilt because she did not feel as though she was doing everything she was supposed to when compared to what she learned in her teacher preparation program. Perceived unsuccessful lesson outcomes also contributed towards a negative self-efficacy due to feelings of failure in

mastery as well as negative verbal persuasion and feedback experiences (Bandura, 1993). Four participants described lesson outcomes in their LED reflective journals that were unsuccessful and had the additional factor of being observed by a supervisor. The lessons described by the participants were ineffective due to weather, student behavior, or organizational management.

A stressful working environment impacts self-efficacy, job satisfaction, and willingness to stay (Wang et al., 2015). Two participants described that dealing with unsupportive school administrators or special education administration and unprofessional paraeducators created an undesirable and stressful working environment. Within the research, administrators have been found to impact the special education teachers' willingness to stay within the profession. Billingsley, McLeskey, and Crockett (2017) found that administrators who support a positive environment for special education teachers may help retain them because special education teachers rely on the collaboration amongst many professionals; thus, their retention is primarily dependent on administrators. Similarly, Carver-Thomas and Darling-Hammond (2017) explained that special education teachers identified administrative support as a reason for staying in or leaving the profession. Although these two participants described how these factors contributed negatively towards their confidence and self-efficacy, they both still have overall positive job satisfaction and chose to frame their struggles as learning opportunities for growth.

Limitations

Participants

The limitations of this study can help set the foundation for future research. Generalizing the research findings may be impacted by both the sample size and amount of time used to collect the data for this study. This study was completed within 16 weeks and used a purposeful sampling method. The short amount of time used in this study served two purposes. First, half

of the participants were completing their third year of teaching; thus, the data needed to be completed before the end of their school year. Second, since most of the data collection occurred during the holidays between Thanksgiving and New Year's Day, many of the participants were on vacation or had other school commitments, which made scheduling difficult.

Research Method

The purposeful sampling method was used to identify participants who teach APE in public schools in the two neighboring counties that have up to three years of teaching experience. Of the 20 teachers who were asked to participate in the study, only 10 volunteered to participate. The sample provided a mixture of age groups as well as ethnicities. However, six of the 10 participants were white and under 30 years of age. Although the 10-participant sample provided rich and detailed information relevant to the purpose of the study, a larger sample size could have provided more information or proved further saturation with repetitive data. However, the lack of a larger study population did not limit the ability to generalize the results of the study or identify common phenomenon shared by this group of participants.

Implications of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory

Implications for Teacher Preparation and Practice

In this study, the evidence is provided to aid in the future training of preservice APE teachers during the teacher preparation. The levels of preparedness are related to their teacher preparation program, their experience in fieldwork and student teaching, and the support they receive. The results demonstrated that the levels of support offered to novice public school APE teachers during their fieldwork, student teaching, and first three years of teaching had a significant impact on their self-efficacy and confidence in managing their caseload. The novice public school APE teachers indicated that although they received a general overview of

everything to expect when teaching on their own after graduation, it was significantly more cumbersome than they had initially expected. Of the 10 teachers, nine explained that their perceived readiness and actual readiness to take on all the responsibilities of their job were different.

The results also showed that the study participants preferred coursework that had a fieldwork component either on-campus or off-campus embedded within the course. The fieldwork portion provided the participants with an opportunity to see the theory they learned in class in action. Fieldwork and student teaching in APE were unanimously the most critical pieces of their teacher preparation programs. Most participants stated that they wished they were required to observe many different types of teachers, students with disabilities, and programs (inclusive versus self-contained). Distance and convenience limited many of their fieldwork experiences because they needed to fit their observations around their courses and jobs. The data from this study shows that the APE teacher preparation programs should emphasize practical applications of theory and specific fieldwork opportunities, and more emphasis should be placed on assessments.

Implications for the Policy and Practice of Mentoring

This study supports the necessity of providing quality mentor cooperating teachers during fieldwork experiences, student teaching, and the first three years of teaching in public schools. The research supports the value of quality mentorship at the infancy of a teaching career. Mentors who possess content expertise and can provide opportunities for independence while giving specific feedback and offering moral support match the theoretical knowledge of andragogy and the value of mentorship for beginning teachers as documented in research (Ayers & Griffin, 2005; Ballinger & Bishop, 2011; Bieler, 2013; Clarke et al., 2012; Cothran et al.,

2008; Goodwin et al., 2016; Gumble, 2011; Hobson et al., 2012; Kell & Forsberg, 2016; Sayeski & Paulsen, 2012; Smith, 2013; Spangler, 2012). Mentors serve a critical role for beginning teachers because they help their mentees develop their teaching skills and knowledge within an environment that encourages their constant learning (Ballinger & Bishop, 2011). All the participants explained the value of having a mentor they could turn to when they had questions or needed support.

Although most of the teachers had a previous fieldwork supervisor or cooperating teacher to turn to, many had developed relationships with more experienced teachers within their districts with whom they could collaborate on a regular basis. This indicates that districts should make an effort to support novice public school APE teachers by providing mentors, but more importantly they should include time within their teachers schedules for regular collaboration with their mentors in order to solve issues regarding lesson planning, making appropriate accommodations, dealing with administration and parents, proofreading assessments, collaborating on IEP goals and objectives, or behavior management strategies.

Implications for Theory

The results of this study show the theoretical impacts that both the self-efficacy theory (Bandura, 1986, 1993) and andragogy (Knowles, 1984) have on novice public school APE teachers. A multitude of factors can impact the self-efficacy of novice public school APE teachers and how confident they are in their ability to teach effectively and carry out their job responsibilities. According to Bandura (1993), mastery experiences provide individuals with powerful feedback on their ability to perform successfully in different situations. When difficult situations result in successful outcomes, it supports positive self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986). This was true for the novice public school APE teachers who responded in their interviews that

success in lessons, verbal persuasion through positive feedback from paraeducators and the administration, and the physical and emotional responses they experience during different situations helped them improve their self-efficacy. The participants who had a strong self-efficacy prior to teaching on their own had more confidence in their abilities and overcame challenges on their own. On the contrary, participants who had a weaker self-efficacy prior to teaching on their own felt the necessity to request for help from others to overcome challenges. Novice public school APE teachers who felt their preparation aligned with their job expectations had a higher self-efficacy than the teachers who felt that they had to relearn APE skills or knowledge on the job specifically in the area of assessments, documentation, and behavioral management.

The results of this study support the argument that mentors of preservice APE teachers and novice public school APE teachers need to have a thorough understanding of andragogy. Andragogy is essential to a preservice and novice public school APE teacher's development because there is an inherent difference between teaching children versus teaching adults (Knowles, 1984). Effective mentor teachers who are exceptional at teaching their students are also equally skilled at switching their roles to mentoring and teaching adult learners (Smith, 2013). Of the seven participants who student taught, six explained the importance of having mentors who allowed them to be independent learners while providing them with a safe place to make mistakes and learn through experience. Chan (2010) emphasized that mentors who have a thorough understanding of andragogy principles can provide preservice teachers with profoundly meaningful and learner-centric experiences that will help prepare them for their teaching careers. All the participants could name at least one mentor who significantly impacted their learning and helped them be successful. The consistency amongst the responses highlights the impact that a

mentor who can effectively teach adults can have on a novice teacher (Chan, 2010). Teacher preparation programs and districts that recognize and support the critical component of effective mentorship aid in the success of novice public school APE teachers.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study examined the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers and how their experiences have impacted their self-efficacy and job satisfaction. There is limited research available on novice public school APE teachers. Thus, research targeted toward this population and how to better support their success would be beneficial to add to the literature. Additionally, as discussed in the previous section, the limitations of this study provide a starting point for future research. Investigating a larger population of APE teachers to identify the challenges experienced within the field could also provide rich information on how to better prepare future APE teachers for these challenges.

For further investigation on this topic, this study could be expanded to include a larger sample size of novice public school APE teachers across California, states with APE credentialing or certification requirements, or across the United States. A quantitative study using a survey instrument could be employed to measure teacher experiences and challenges on a broader population of novice public school APE teachers and could provide more generalized and objective results. As a qualitative research option, a longitudinal study that follows novice public school APE teachers from the time of graduation until their third year of teaching could provide a more in-depth illustration of their lived experiences each year and help determine variable patterns over time and recognize developmental trends. Furthermore, this study's results support the literature that suggests effective teacher preparation, mentorship, and a wide range of fieldwork experiences yield higher self-efficacy. Future research may be beneficial to

break down the specific areas of the teacher preparation program, characteristics of mentors, and types of fieldwork experiences that were most beneficial to the novice public school APE teachers.

Conclusion

In conclusion, this study provided specific evidence on the lived experiences that affect the self-efficacy and job satisfaction of novice public school APE teachers. Bandura's (1986) theory of self-efficacy describes the constant changing of self-efficacy based on mastery experiences. Self-efficacy development through master experiences proved to be accurate with the participants in this study. As the novice public school APE teachers experienced success with their lessons, behavioral management, and positive feedback from others, they felt more confident in their abilities. When asked to reflect on their confidence in their abilities to teach APE after student teaching, five of the seven participants who student taught in APE explained that they were highly confident. When asked to reflect on their confidence in their abilities to teach APE after their first six months of teaching, seven of the 10 participants explained that they were confident. When they were asked to reflect on their confidence in their abilities to teach APE after their first year of teaching, nine of the 10 participants explained that they were confident. Most participants expressed that the change or increase in their confidence was due to the experiences they had gained on the job and the successes they had on the job.

The study also confirmed the benefits of mentors approaching novice public school APE teachers learning from an andragogical lens (Knowles, 1984). When mentors understood how adults learned and transitioned from teaching children to teaching adults how to teach children with disabilities, it helped the participants grow the most in their knowledge and skills.

Participants noted progressive independence, specific feedback, and reflection with support as areas that benefited them the most during their learning process.

It is significant to note that each participant's journey was not only dynamic but also unique due to their district's requirements and caseloads. Bordering school districts had different expectations for teaching time, IEP attendance, service minute make-ups, paperwork, and data collection. Thus, student teaching in one area and getting employed in another did not seem to generalize as well as some participants had anticipated. Some skills and knowledge were transferrable but having to learn or re-learn expectations and procedures added to the anxiety and stress of starting a new job. Novice public school APE teachers who student taught in the same district they got a job in had less of a learning curve since they were already familiar with the expectations of that district.

The first research question investigated the common challenges that novice APE teachers experience in public schools. The study participants identified time management, managing paraeducators, behavior management, and effective teaching behaviors as the most common challenges they faced. Other challenges identified included interacting with leadership (administration), having lawyers or advocates at IEP meetings, and collaborating with general physical education teachers. Overall, these challenges were consistent with what Rizzo (2013) identified in a pilot-study of APE teachers across the nation.

The second research question examined the skills, knowledge, and support that novice public school APE teachers felt were the most important to have. Overwhelmingly, the participants identified these to be having a solid foundation in the APE theory and methodology, assessment, caseload management and documentation, and lesson planning. Support mentioned included the value of having a reliable and available mentor throughout teacher preparation and

the first three years of teaching. All the participants revealed the importance of having support in place when they had questions about a student, paperwork, expectations, or lesson planning.

The last research question focused on the contextual factors that affect the self-efficacy beliefs of novice public school APE teachers. This question highlighted the factors that increased self-efficacy and those that decreased self-efficacy and confidence. The lesson outcomes could increase or reduce self-efficacy when paired with other elements. Participants explained that when their lessons were successful, they felt a sense of pride and accomplishment. On the contrary, when their lessons were perceived to be unsuccessful, they had difficulty with behavioral management, they received negative feedback from staff members or administration, or they had trouble keeping up with their job responsibilities, it resulted in feelings of job dissatisfaction and negative self-efficacy. Mentors helped increase self-efficacy by providing moral support, encouragement, and positive affirmations. However, managing a stressful work environment, feeling self-doubt in their abilities to complete all aspects of their job responsibilities, feeling of disrespect from other adults, or sensing their job was perceived as less valuable reduced self-efficacy beliefs.

In this study, the researcher addressed a gap within the research of novice public school APE teachers and their lived experiences. The conceptual framework of the self-efficacy theory and andragogy help support this study and the findings to support the future teachers' preparation efforts. The methodology of phenomenological qualitative research was designed to learn more about the common phenomenon experienced amongst this group of teachers and to allow their stories to help future novice public school APE teachers.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

Research Study Title: Lived-Experiences of Novice Public School Adapted Physical Education Teachers: A Phenomenological Study
Principal Investigator: Joyce Sakai
Research Institution: Concordia University
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Leslie Loughmiller

Purpose and what you will be doing:

The purpose of this study is to examine the lived experiences of novice public school APE teachers in public schools. We expect approximately ten volunteers for this study. No one will be paid to be in the study. We will begin enrollment on August 20, 2018, and end enrollment on August 31, 2018. To be in the study, you will participate in one phone, or Skype interview, and one lived experience description written a reflective journal entry.

The interview can last up to one hour, although on average it should last about thirty minutes. The interview will be recorded and transcribed. The transcription will be sent to you to verify for accuracy. The lived-experience description protocol is a written description of an experience you have had and will be one to three pages in length. If there are any questions for clarity, the researcher will contact you for clarification and then will send you any transcriptions or additions made to verify for accuracy.

Risks:

There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your information. However, we will protect your information. Any personal information you provide will be coded so it cannot be linked to you. Any name or identifying the information you give will be kept securely via electronic encryption or locked inside a cabinet. When we or any of our investigators look at the data, none of the data will have your name or identifying information. We will only use a secret code to analyze the data. We will not identify you in any publication or report. Your information will always be kept private, and all study documents will be destroyed three years after the conclusion of this study.

Benefits:

Information you provide will help the professional community by identifying factors that contribute towards novice public school APE teacher self-efficacy through your lived experiences.

Confidentiality:

This information will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us to abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

Assurances Statement:

Participants will always be protected during the study by the researcher using a coding number system, no names will ever be used. The information gathered from the participants will also be stored in a software password-protected system.

Right to Withdraw:

Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking are personal. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required, and there is no penalty for not participating. If at any time you experience a negative emotion from answering the questions, we will stop asking you questions.

Contact Information:

You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions, you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Joyce Sakai at e-mail: [redacted]. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our institutional review board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

Your Statement of Consent:

I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study.

_____	_____
Participant Name	Date
_____	_____
Participant Signature	Date
_____	_____
Investigator Name	Date
_____	_____
Investigator Signature	Date



Investigator: Joyce Sakai; email: [redacted]
c/o: Professor Dr. Leslie Loughmiller
Concordia University–Portland
2811 NE Holman Street
Portland, Oregon, 97221

Appendix B: Recruitment E-Mail

Greetings.

My name is Joyce Sakai, and I am enrolled in the Doctor of Education Degree Program at Concordia University. I am conducting a research study about the lived experiences of novice public school Adapted Physical Education teachers in public schools. I am emailing to ask if you would be willing to participate in my study. Participation is completely voluntary, and your answers will be anonymous.

The participation in my study will consist of confirmation and consent to participate in the study, one interview, and one lived experience description written reflection journal entry. The consent form verifies your willingness to participate in the study and reiterates your voluntary participation, providing you will the opportunity to opt out of the study at any time without penalty. The interview will be conducted over the phone or via Skype and are expected to last between thirty to sixty minutes. The lived-experience description protocol is the written account of your lived experience and typically is between one to three pages in length. After completion of the audio-recorded interview, a transcript will be created and e-mailed to you to verify authenticity and accuracy. After receiving the lived experience description written reflection journal entry, if there is a necessity for clarification, I will email you with those questions. Furthermore, if any additions are made to your journal entry from your clarifications, I will resend a transcript reflecting those changes for you to verify for authenticity and accuracy.

Assurances Statement:

Participants will always be protected during the study by the researcher using a coding number system; no names will ever be used. The information gathered from the participants will also be stored in a software password-protected system.

If you are interested, please reply to this e-mail. Upon receipt, an additional e-mail will be sent, providing you with the consent form and link to the questionnaire.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at [redacted].

Thank you for your time.

Joyce Sakai
EdD Student
Concordia University

Appendix C: Interview Questions

Questions for Interview Part One: Perspective of Participants' Teacher Preparation Program

Interviewee: _____

Interviewer: _____

Date: _____

Interview Section(s) Used:

A: Teacher Preparation Program Perspective

B: Self-Efficacy

C: First year(s) of teaching reflection

D: APE teacher challenges

Sequence of Interview

Overview of Interview

To simplify note taking and be considerate of your time, I would like to audio tape our conversation today. Per your signed consent form, only the researcher and transcriber will have access to these audio files. These audio recordings will be destroyed after the completion and publication of my dissertation. Furthermore, per your signed consent form, all information will remain confidential, your participation in this study is voluntary and you stop at any time if you do not feel comfortable with your participation, and I do not intend to inflict any harm from your participation in this study.

This interview is scheduled to last no longer than one hour. During the interview, I have several questions that I would like to cover. If time is running out, I will ask you if you (a) have more time to answer questions further or (b) if I may interrupt your responses in order to complete all questions during the allotted time.

Introduction

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study. I believe that you possess important experiences that will provide a valuable perspective on helping other novice APE teachers. My research project focuses on the lived experiences of novice APE teachers. I am interested in how prepared novice APE teachers feel they were before beginning their first years of teaching. I am also interested in the emotions you have experienced as a novice APE teacher. My study does not aim to evaluate your proficiency as a novice APE teacher. I am trying to learn more about how confident novice APE teachers feel to take on all the responsibilities required of the position. Hopefully, by learning more about novice APE teachers' experiences, I can learn how to prepare future novice APE teachers in the future better.

Background Experiences and Questions:

(Note: This background experience sharing and questions are meant to be a brief part of the interview. They are meant to provide information, the context of experiences and preparation, and a way to build rapport with the participants.)

Before we begin exploring your experiences as a novice APE teacher, I want to share my own experience as a novice APE teacher. My own experiences have prompted my desire to help future novice APE teachers and study this group of individuals.

**Briefly share my experience with participants*

It will be helpful to learn more about you so that I can have a context for our discussion.

1. Please tell me some details about you and your teacher education program:

- a. Where did you graduate from with your APEAA?
- b. How long did the program take you to complete?

c. Did you have to take any pre-requisite classes, or did you graduate with your degree option in APE?

d. Did you complete traditional student teaching?

e. How many different districts did you observe during your fieldwork hours?

f. Did you observe APE being taught to students in each qualifying disability area per IDEA?

g. Did you observe APE being taught to students with mild, moderate, and severe/profound disabilities?

Probes:

- Why did you decide to pursue an APEAA certification?
- Why did you only observe those specific districts?
- Why did you only observe APE being taught to students with those specific disabilities?

Lived Experience Questions: Perspective of Participants' Teacher Preparation Program

(Note: The following open-ended questions will be used to guide the conversation. The questions are designed to help participants describe their lived experiences of their teacher preparation program to the best of their recollection. These questions focus on the participant's teacher preparation program and how prepared they felt upon graduation from the program.)

1. Please describe your experience with your teacher preparation program coursework.

Probes:

- Which classes/coursework did you feel were the most beneficial? Why?
- Which classes/coursework did you feel was the least beneficial? Why?
- Did you feel confident in APE theory and practice upon graduation?

2. Please describe your fieldwork experiences during your teacher preparation program.

Probes:

- Did you receive guidance and mentoring from your fieldwork supervisor?
- Which fieldwork experiences were the most beneficial? Why?
- Which population of student did you not get to observe during your fieldwork experiences?
- How much independence did the fieldwork supervisor provide you?
- How was your on-campus fieldwork different than your off-campus fieldwork experiences?
- How confident did you feel in your teaching ability during your fieldwork experiences?

3. Please describe your student teaching experience during your teacher preparation program.

Probes:

- Who chose the placement for your student teaching site?
- Did you have a close relationship with your cooperating teacher(s)? Why or why not?
- Did you have a close relationship with your university supervisor? Why or why not?
- Did your cooperating teacher use specific feedback? Did this help you?
- How much independence did your cooperating teacher(s) provide you with?
- What was the most challenging part of student teaching?
- How confident did you feel in your teacher preparation and teaching ability before, during, and after student teaching?

Member Checking Questions (After interviews are completely transcribed):

1. Does all the information contained in this transcript reflect your experiences accurately?
2. Is there anything you would like to add to clarify any of your original responses?

3. Is there anything that you would like to remove to clarify any of your original response?

Questions for Interview Part Two: Perspective of Participants' first years of teaching (up to 3 years)

Interview Section(s) Used:

_____A: Teacher Preparation Program Perspective

B: Self-Efficacy

C: First year(s) of teaching reflection

D: APE teacher challenges

Introduction:

Now we will transition into discussing your lived experiences during your first three years of teaching APE in the public schools.

Lived Experience Questions: Perspective of Participants' First Years of Teaching (up to 3 years)

(Note: The following open-ended questions will be used to guide the conversation. The questions are designed to help participants describe their lived experiences of their teacher preparation program to the best of their recollection. These questions focus on the participant's teacher preparation program and how prepared they felt upon graduation from the program.)

1. Did you feel there was a difference between your perceived readiness after student teaching and your actual readiness once you began your first year of teaching? Please explain.
2. What was your typical attitude about your teaching ability during your first six months? After your first year? Second year? Third year? What impacted your attitude?
3. How do you feel when you needed to ask for help from others about your job responsibilities?

4. Have you ever not been able to handle a teaching responsibility on your own? What happened? What did you do about it? How did it make you feel?
5. What has been the most challenging as a novice teacher? Why? What have you done about it?
6. How do you perceive your ability to manage and organize your job responsibilities?
7. Do any emotions (negative or positive) affect your job?
8. Do you think your self-esteem and academic competency affect the emotions you experience during challenging experiences during your job?
9. Do you feel that the Beginning Teacher Support and Assessment (BTSA) in your district helped you during your first years of teaching? Why or Why Not?

Probes

- Is there anything else you would like to add to describe better any challenges or experiences that have impacted your readiness for your first year of teaching?

Member Checking Questions (After interviews are completely transcribed):

1. Does all the information contained in this transcript reflect your experiences accurately?
2. Is there anything you would like to add to clarify any of your original responses?
3. Is there anything that you would like to remove to clarify any of your original response?

Appendix D: Lived Experience Description (LED) Reflective Journal

The purpose of completing the Lived Experience Description (LED) reflective journal is for you to describe a specific experience (challenge or success) when you recognized and reflected on your teaching ability or proficiency during the first three years of teaching APE in the public schools. The goal is to think about a specific event that you experienced during your first three years of teaching (i.e., instruction, planning, behavior management situation, IEP, assessment, etc.) and how that impacted your perception on your proficiency as an APE teacher. After choosing a specific event to describe, please consider the following guidelines (adapted from Vagle, 2014) as you write.

1. Think about the event chronologically in your teacher preparation program.
2. Describe in detail how you felt, what was said or not said to you (and by whom), what you experienced when you felt this way, and what you thought.
3. Try and describe the experience like you were watching yourself experiencing it.
4. Describe the experience as you experienced it and lived through it. Try to avoid any causal explanations, generalizations, or abstract interpretations.
5. Write as straightforward as possible.
6. If using names, please use pseudonyms.
7. Read the example for reference and guidance.

Please write a description in response to the following prompt:

Write and describe a specific time when you recognized and reflected on your teaching ability or proficiency during the first three years of teaching APE in the public schools

LED Example

During my first year of teaching at my elementary school site, I was teaching a lesson incorporating stations that focused on fundamental motor skills (throwing, catching, and rolling). I had three adult assistants and ten students with moderate disabilities (predominately students with autism and learning disabilities).

I remember that during this lesson, I was very nervous because my administrator was coming to observe my lesson for my evaluation. I had my lesson plan ready in advance and thought of as many modifications as I could. We were scheduled to complete this activity in the multi-purpose room. I brought balloons and beach balls to help my students track and catch with success. I had ten soft 4" yarn balls for my students to practice throwing overhand with and hula hoops for targets with thematic (valentine's day heart) targets. I had two soft 8" nerf soccer balls for the students to kick into pop up goals. Lastly, I had all my usual environmental prompts (poly spots) and Bluetooth speaker for music during warm-ups.

As we arrived at the multipurpose room with all the students and adults, there was another teacher inside the room practicing for a performance. I went to talk to the teacher and told her that we use that space every week during this scheduled time. However, the teacher informed me that she reserved the multipurpose room with the principal for their practice. I did not double check to make sure that the multipurpose room was booked for our lesson and was unaware of the change. No one informed me that we could not use that space or that there were any changes.

The scheduled time is during recess. There were limited options available to conduct my lesson. Also, I could only have the students for their 30 minutes because they had to go to lunch right after their session, which limited my flexibility. I remember feeling frantic because I knew

that time was ticking, anywhere outdoors was not ideal because of the wind and distractions, and I still needed to set up my stations for the lesson.

At this point, I decided that I would use the hallway between the multipurpose room and the front office. As I got the students started on their warm-up locomotor movements, I began brainstorming how I was going to be able to set these stations up in the limited space. After deciding the lesson had about 10 minutes left to complete the activities. I went over the instructions for each station without demonstrations and then had one adult stay at each station to help the students. The students were divided, and then I prompted them to begin. We only had five minutes of activity, and the kids were not attentive to the stations. Most of them needed continual redirection because of the distractions from the wind and recess noise. The balloons and beach balls were flying everywhere, and the adults and I had to retrieve them only to have their students wander from their station. Two students eloped (ran away) and we had to stop everything we were doing and retrieve them and bring them back to the lesson area.

I already knew that this was a disaster, and I tried to stay confident and power through my lesson. I could see the disappointment and worry about my administrator's face. I already had twenty things going through my mind that I needed to do differently when I had a conversation with my administrator. As expected, I had a lot of corrective feedback and suggestions. However, she was very understanding because as an itinerant teacher, we are often the last one to know of any changes made at our sites that impact APE. As I reflected on this moment, I remembered how during my teacher preparation program and fieldwork experiences, I never had to think about every single possible scenario that could happen. I only focused on my lesson planning and modifications. This moment made me realize how much planning and preparation went into itinerant teaching and how important it was to check on reserved space in

advance and on the day of the activity. My equipment was inappropriate for the outdoor environment and teaching outside for that class was extremely challenging and ineffective. I was exhausted and embarrassed at my performance in front of the adult aides and my administrator. I knew at that moment that I would have to work even harder to earn their respect and prove to them that this one lesson did not define my ability as a teacher.

Appendix E: Statement of Original Work

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously-researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

Statement of academic integrity.

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does “fraudulent” mean?

“Fraudulent” work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one’s own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate’s final work without full and complete documentation.

What is “unauthorized” assistance?

“Unauthorized assistance” refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another’s work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

Statement of Original Work (Continued)

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University–Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.
2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*.

Joyce Mariko Sakai

Digital Signature

Joyce Mariko Sakai

Name (Typed)

November 18, 2019

Date