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Teacher Self-Care: A Guide for Educators

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Teacher Self-Care: A Guide for Educators

By

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Abstract

The field of education is very demanding and stressful. Educators are leaving the field at high rates due to stress levels. Teachers lack self-care strategies to help them cope with an emotionally demanding career. Research shows that self-care builds resilience, which many teaching professionals tend to lack. Educators can greatly benefit from learning about and practicing better self-care. Through review of research, researchers were able to determine that implementing self-care strategies benefits both teachers and students. Self-care strategies increase effectiveness allowing educators to handle challenges that come up during their teaching career. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has created additional challenges for educators through a hybrid model of teaching and learning.

Through the qualitative research, the researchers created an online survey using Likert Scale and open-ended questions to determine the current perceptions and ability of teachers to integrate daily self-care practice. Researchers also determined what components educators believe to be focal points for self-care. Research proves teachers are overwhelmed and need time for daily wellness goals.

After analyzing survey results and recognizing trends, the researchers were able to proceed further in the creation of a potential technology application prototype that will better support self-care in educators. The application would be a useful tool to act as a reminder for the daily integration of self-care strategies. Once users download and open the application, they will be directed to participate in a brief survey to gauge initial self-care needs. This application will direct participants to choose manageable and attainable goals. These selections will act as a guide or reminder for app users. Users can choose to keep track of their goals and continuously

make new goals to aid in self-care. Based on the survey results, the researchers conclude that an

application like this can help educators integrate self-care strategies daily.

Acknowledgements

minds outside of the research. We hope as you grow up, you know it's important to work hard to

earn your successes.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all the educators out there that forget to put their oxygen mask on first. To those struggling day-to-day by the high demands of the field of education and nevertheless, persevere to provide an adequate education for the future of our country. Your hard work and dedication does not go unnoticed and while times can be tough, pandemic or not, you are the true super heroes. Remember how strong and resilient you are and continue to shine and help others and be true to yourself. Thank you for dedicating your lives to the amazing and inspiring kids you teach each day.

A good teacher is like a candle, it consumes itself to light the way for others.

- Mustafa Kemal Atatürk

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The average teacher makes 1,500 educational decisions every school day. In an average six-hour day in front of students, teachers make more than four decisions every minute (Boogren, 2018). Choosing the profession of teaching is both rewarding and difficult. It is one of emotional labor, and teachers often underestimate their role as a supportive and influential figure in their students' lives. Teachers are not only tasked with the academic responsibility of developing their students, but also wear multiple job titles throughout the day, such as a nurse, caretaker, and counselors (Philibert et al., 2020). Teachers have the responsibility to apply social-emotional competence as part of their daily job description. This is demanding, as emotional labor is stressful and leads to teacher burnout and the school's inability to retain teachers (Philibert et al., 2020). Emotional exhaustion is the most predictive dimension of teacher burnout (Philibert et al., 2020).

Statement of the Problem

Early career teachers are facing many problems, which results in a significant issue of teacher retention. Instead of the ability to cope through these problems, teachers leave the field and opt for a different profession (Philibert et al., 2020). Instead of retaining high-quality teachers, there is a vicious cycle of teacher turnover, which coincides with a shortage of quality teachers. Instead of quality teachers being placed appropriately, those with a lack of experience are improperly placed. The emotional labor, stress, and burnout cycle repeats itself at an even stronger rate. Schools do not have the resources to invest in inexperienced teachers (Williams, 2011). Schools try to make do with what they are provided. This vicious cycle can be corrected appropriately. Teachers can be developed and prepared to face the difficulties that arise

throughout their profession, but the tools need to be provided. Then, it becomes their responsibility to utilize the tools appropriately.

Despite the need for educators, there is a shortage of teachers. Teacher attrition has been steadily increasing since the 1990s, and that attrition accounts for nearly 90 percent of new teachers (Boogren, 2018). The 2017 Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) stated that teachers' demand is rapidly rising, widening the gap between a need in the classroom and available professionals. At the beginning of the 2017-18 school year, almost every U.S. state had shortages of teachers in major subject areas (McFeely, 2018). Over the years 2016 to 2026, an estimated 124,100 new teaching jobs will be created. That is almost a quarter of a million new teaching positions opening up before 2026 (Mcfeely, 2018). Even with large numbers of teaching opportunities, research showed that almost half of teachers, approximately 48% in the United States, said they were actively looking for a different job or watched for opportunities (McFeely, 2018). Of those teachers, 16 percent were involuntarily let go, while 84 percent left voluntarily. Statistics demonstrate that young teachers under the age of 30 years leave the profession at a 51 percent higher rate than older teachers. Studies showed that national teacher turnover costed the school district $7 billion annually (Williams, 2011). When a teacher leaves a school, institutional memory is lost, and additional resources are used to hire and train new staff. Schools need to find a way to attract new teachers while retaining experienced teachers (Arnup & Bowles, 2016).

Teachers who stay in the teaching profession after facing systemic pressure and feeling devalued tend to negatively impact their school culture, causing further problems. These behaviors also lead to lower student academic expectations (Philibert et al., 2020). Teachers who stay experience the most extreme burnout phase and depersonalization, which will be discussed more in-depth below.

There is a complication with education. Research proved teachers are overwhelmed and need time for wellness. If these needs are not met, teachers are unable to attain self-care and health in the appropriate order, working through the proper steps, the retention and burnout rate will continue to rise.

Teachers lack self-care strategies to help them cope with an emotionally demanding career. Research showed that self-care builds resilience, which many teaching professionals tend to lack. Mindfulness interventions enhances a teacher's emotional work by helping them build regulation strategies (Emerson et al., 2017). Teachers should use tools to aid in promoting self-care to build resilience. Reinforcing the importance of self-care to teachers may help define what a healthy teacher should look like.

During the recent COVID-19 pandemic, over 63 million primary and secondary teachers around the world were affected by school closures in 165 countries (Gewertz, 2020). As a frontline of response, teachers now have the responsibility to ensure learning for over 1.5 billion students digitally. In addition, teachers are now quickly required to facilitate quality distance learning for students and are playing a key role in the pandemic crisis. This is an added responsibility of keeping their students safe while stopping the spread of the disease while learning remotely (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020). As members of an already emotionally demanding job, teachers face the stress associated with working around the clock to integrate new teaching strategies and communication styles. Combined with this, teachers are juggling, keeping themselves and their families safe during this pandemic (Gewertz, 2020).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to gauge the understanding, amount of self-care that teachers are aware of and currently implementing and provide them with a tool to continue this practice

successfully daily. The researchers' goal is to encourage teachers to practice self-care daily by utilizing key components identified from the study.

Significance

Teaching is one of the few professions that demand the same expectations on day one than it does from teachers with years of experience (Rogers & Babinski, 2002). Many studies showed that around one in five teachers expects to leave the field within the first two years of teaching in the United States. This is a problem in other countries, as well. For example, teacher attrition is a major problem in Australia as 50 percent of new teachers resigned in the first five years (Arnup & Bowles, 2016). There are multiple reasons why teachers leave the profession. New teachers are less prepared to handle the daily expectations of a classroom environment (Konen, 2017). These teachers are two and a half times more likely to leave the field after one year than their well-prepared peers. Teachers suggested that lack of support from administrators and colleagues was a top reason for leaving the profession (Konen, 2017). New teachers who do not receive mentoring and other support leave more than two times the rate of those teachers who do.

Of the teachers who choose to leave, one in four leave to pursue a different career opportunity. Many of them leave due to low salary. Beginning teachers earn about 20 percent less than individuals with college degrees in other fields. According to the United States Department of Labor, the median pay for elementary school teachers is $57,980, and middle school teachers are $58,600. The national average salary is $61,000. More than one in three teachers leave for personal reasons, such as pregnancy and the expense of childcare (Konen, 2017). With ever-greater emotional demands placed on teachers with little, if any support, it is not surprising that the rate of teacher burnout is increasing and that teachers are leaving the

profession at an increasing rate (Ingersoll, 2001). Emotional stress and poor emotional management consistently rank as the primary reasons teachers become dissatisfied and leave teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2001). Indeed, compared with many other professions, teachers report some of the highest levels of occupational stress (International Labour Office, 1993).

Due to recent school shootings, teachers may feel unsafe to attend school due to children's emotional status. Uncertain times cause anxiety, and teaching under these conditions can be difficult. It is recognized that safety has become a big concern for teachers. Recent and devastating school shootings have impacted teachers who now feel fear for their lives when attending work every day (Sinclair, 2018). This unsafe environment is attributed to teachers relocating to different professions.

Recently, the COVID-19 pandemic has created a fast-paced and intense learning environment for both teachers and students. This crisis has put extra pressure on teachers to learn a new skill quickly and effectively. Teachers may not be equipped to handle the daily stresses and expectations of this new digital world (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020). The future of education is changing, and teachers must have adequate skills and emotional well-being to handle the changes. This transition creates a struggle for balance, self-care, and wellness of all teachers in a digital classroom. There is expected to be a renewed respect for educators after dealing with the COVID-19 pandemic.

Teaching is a demanding career choice that often leads to burnout. Multiple teacher stressors such as high workload, lack of experience and support, and student behavior may be a reason behind teacher burnout. The term burnout denotes an all-encompassing psychological and physical state, marked by a loss of energy and inability to function in many life areas; including behavior, health, relationships, and attitudes. Burnout occurs across three dimensions: emotional

exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is the experience of extreme fatigue due to stress, such as high stakes testing and student achievement expectations. Depersonalization is the occurrence of emotional disengagement from service recipients, and is described as relationships built with students and colleagues. Personal accomplishment relates to self-efficacy in the profession (Brasfield et al., 2019).

Teachers suffer from high rates of burnout, psychological distress, and mental illness. This is due to the wide range of stressors such as: high workload and large class sizes, conflicting demands, lack of recognition, poor physical environment, lack of control, and lack of decision-making power (Pretsch et al., 2012). Teacher burnout can occur at any time on a teacher's career path. New teachers face the overwhelming task of planning and adjusting to a demanding career. Experienced teachers may feel less excited to attend class due to the daily grind of the teaching workload. Even veteran teachers experience burnout due to years of change and demands of the teaching environment.

Research Questions

RQ1: What are teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care?

- Hypothesis: Teachers' perception and knowledge of their ability to practice self-care will vary and provide insight into what the researchers can do to help. On good rationale, this recommendation will be concluded based on the Likert scale needs-based Assessment.
- Research Plan: The intent for research will be through an action research study and will consist of qualitative and quantitative research through a case study. Research on current information and programs completed by the

researcher will identify trends and news regarding self-care. This research will guide the creation of Likert scale survey questions that will be used to gather teachers' current perceptions and knowledge. Eventually, this will allow the researchers to utilize information to support teachers by providing data on essential daily self-care practices.

RQ2: What components, identified by equal to or greater than 50% of participating educators, should be focal points for self-care in teachers?

- Hypothesis: The anticipated research-based self-care information creation focuses on interest, practice, purpose, and hope. The components proven effective will be identified and deemed necessary for future researchers looking to develop teacher training, mentoring support, technology applications, professional development programs, and other ways to appropriately develop educators.

- Research Plan: Researchers will review literature focused on self-care in teachers and create a needs-based assessment aligned with current research on ways to promote self-care. Through the assessment that encompasses the teacher's perceptions and previous knowledge, the researcher will identify data that lead to the potential creation of a research-based technology application for teachers to support self-care strategies within different topic areas. The researchers will use this data to create an application prototype. The data will also be useful as future recommendations as it will identify focal points of self-care in teachers.

Research Design

The researchers will conduct an action research study using an exploratory design. First, the quantitative and qualitative portion of our research will commence by using a needs-based assessment. This needs-based assessment will be used to determine the needs, or gaps, in the teacher's self-care. This will guide the development of an application and plan to address the needs of teachers.

Teachers will complete a presurvey. Survey questions will use a Likert scale so the data can be analyzed. The survey questions will further explore the teachers' current knowledge and perception of self-care strategies and identify how to implement these strategies best. The information gathered will give the researchers insight into developing a potential technology application prototype that acts as a daily reminder to practice self-care implementation. The open-ended questions will be analyzed and sorted into specific trends using the survey tool. This analysis will help the researchers understand the needs of self-care in teachers.

Theoretical Framework

In 1943, Maslow wanted to understand what motivated people. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a motivational theory in psychology comprising a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. He believed that people are motivated to achieve certain needs. When one need is fulfilled, a person seeks to fulfill the next one. The needs lower down in the hierarchy must be satisfied before individuals can tend to the needs higher up. The needs from the lowest to the highest are physiological, safety, love and belonging, esteem, and self-actualization (Poston, 2009).

Maslow believed that every person is capable and has the desire to move up the hierarchy toward a level of self-actualization, which is the desire to become the most that one can be.

Unfortunately, progress is often disrupted by failure to meet lower-level needs. Life experiences including teacher stressors and the emotional labor of teachers may cause an individual to fluctuate between levels of the hierarchy (Poston, 2009). Maslow believed that when an individual does not have enough of something, he or she has a deficit, ultimately creating a "deficit need."

The final step in Maslow's hierarchy of needs is self-actualization. People who are self-actualized are focused on what matters and have a more proactive approach to bettering themselves (Poston, 2009). They are able to remain focused on resolving any dilemmas that may arise. Self-actualized individuals are able to understand where there is a deficit and work to better themselves. For an illustration of the natural progression of Maslow's hierarchy of needs (see Figure 1).

Figure 1.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

Note. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a motivational theory in psychology comprising a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. Image adapted from *Thoughtco.com*

In regards to teachers, the basic needs of self-care need to be in effect in order to move up the hierarchy. As stated previously, the teacher's overwhelming daily tasks often disable them to progress up the hierarchy. An educator that is meeting his/her own needs has the capacity to help others, including students (Boogren, 2018). The well-being of educators is reflected by their ability to care for students, both academically and socially.

Conceptual Framework

The existing research on this topic demonstrates a connection between self-care and resilience (Porter, 2017). From the literature review, the researchers have found sources discussing the emotional job of educating and the demands of the career create a need for teacher self-care. The research shows that a higher degree of self-care may help with teacher burnout and would be helpful for teacher retention.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are important to the study:

Burnout. A state of emotional, mental, and often physical exhaustion brought on by prolonged or repeated stress.

COVID-19. A mild to severe respiratory illness that is caused by a coronavirus, is transmitted chiefly by contact with infectious material, and is characterized by fever, cough, and shortness of breath.

Mindfulness. Maintaining a moment-by-moment awareness of our thoughts, feelings, bodily sensations, and surrounding environment, through a gentle, nurturing lens.

Pandemic. Occurring over a wide geographic area and affecting an exceptionally high proportion of the population.

Resilience. The process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant sources of stress.

Self-actualization. The belief we have in our own abilities, specifically our ability to meet the challenges ahead of us and complete a task successfully.

Self-care. The daily process of being aware of and attending to one's basic physiological and emotional needs including the shaping of one's daily routine, relationships, and environment.

Summary

Teaching is demanding and emotional labor is stressful which leads to teacher burnout and the school's inability to retain teachers (Philibert et al., 2020). Research proved that teachers are overwhelmed and need time for wellness. If these needs are not met and teachers are unable to attain self-care and wellness, in the appropriate order, working through the appropriate steps, the retention and burnout rate will continue to rise.

Teachers lack self-care strategies to help them cope with an emotionally demanding career. Research showed that self-care builds resilience, which many teaching professionals tend to lack. Mindfulness interventions enhance a teacher's emotional work by helping them build regulation strategies (Emerson et al., 2017).

As members of an already emotionally demanding job, current COVID-19 school closures have faced teachers with the stress associated with working around the clock to integrate new teaching strategies. Combined with this, teachers are juggling to keep themselves and their families' safe during this pandemic (Gewertz, 2020).

The purpose of this study is to gauge the understanding and amount of self-care that teachers implement and provide them with a tool, as an application to continue this practice successfully. The needs-based assessment will be used to determine the needs, or gaps, in teacher self-care. This will guide the development of a potential technology application prototype and plan to address the self-care needs of teachers.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Teaching is a stressful and emotional career. Teachers that focus on self-care will be more successful in developing resilience. With daily reminders and encouragement, teachers that practice self-care can impact the future of education with retention in the field.

Burnout

Teaching is considered a career with a high burnout rate. In 2018, a survey done by the American Federation of Teachers indicated that 61 percent of teachers stated their career was always or often stressful (Will, 2018). Any job, no matter how stressful, can lead one to burnout. Physicians are often burnt out and there is an average of 400 suicides a year due to the depression that many physicians cope with (Williams, 2011). The World Health Organization defines burnout as "chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed" and characterized by three dimensions: feelings of exhaustion, a cynical and negative attitude, and "reduced professional efficacy" (Luckwaldt, 2019). It has also been described as an occupational phenomenon, as it is a problem for dedicated and committed individuals. The daily workload and planning that teachers must complete to be successful are extensive. The additional stress to managing other aspects of life, such as the ability to practice self-care is often compromised because of the close attention to detail a particular teacher must have (Luckwaldt, 2019).

According to the American Institute of Stress, burnout costs employers $300 billion a year due to teacher turnover, lack of motivation, and dip in productivity (Williams, 2011). A Gallup study done in 2018, found that burned-out employees are 63 percent more likely to take a sick day and 2.6 times as likely to look for another job (Williams, 2011). The research completed by Maslach (2016), Professor of Psychology at UC Berkeley, identified six organizational causes

of burnout:

1) Too high of a workload with too few resources, leading to exhaustion.

2) Not enough control and autonomy.

3) Lack of rewards and positive feedback. Maslach clarifies that people often think of this as the tangible things, like salary and benefits, but the data shows that what's more important is social recognition. THis is when someone pays attention and realizes that something good was done.

4) Lack of a strong sense of community or support.

5) A lack of fairness. Maybe it's about compensation, or maybe it's a sense that you are cheated of the plum assignments or the corner office.

6) Misaligned values, such as a pacifist who works for a weapons manufacturer. The more the values are misaligned between the person and the environment, the more the risk of burnout. (Maslach & Leiter, 2016).

A first step to "cure" burnout, as recommended by Dr. Daniel Rockers, a Sacramento psychologist, is to identify areas in which pleasure is given. Understanding that better applications of conflict management principles are also recommended in order to lessen the chances of burning out (Rockers, 2017). A first step recommended by Harvard Business Review is prioritizing self-care. By practicing self-care, you replenish your physical and emotional energy and allow rejuvenation. Gains noticed are the ability to focus, sleep, exercise, have social connections, eat well, and promote well-being. Self-reflection is also important for maintaining wellness and overcoming burnout. Recording one's activities, the people one is around, and feelings felt at the time; then analyzing each block of time utilizing a one to five scale will help distinguish the valuable activities. When this task is completed, understanding how to limit

exposure to specific people, tasks, etc. will help promote better self-care (Valcour, 2016). A shifted perspective is also an important piece that promotes a better ability to prevent burnout and comes when better safe-care is practiced (Valcour, 2016).

Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder

The National Center for Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) estimates 7.8 percent of Americans will experience PTSD at some point in their lives, with women twice as likely as men to have PTSD. While that number may seem very small, if one in three teachers have PTSD symptoms, that means 33 percent compared to the national average of 7.8 percent (Phoenix, 2017). Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder is a mental health condition that is triggered by a terrible event. Victims experience the event or witness it. The symptoms victims experience due to the disorder include flashbacks, nightmares, anxiety, and uncomfortable thoughts about the event. These symptoms can cause extreme problems with relationships, day-to-day functions, duties, and work. (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2018). Studies will continue to determine if PTSD is developing from the Covid-19 Pandemic.

Teacher stress and exhaustion are often termed as "having a bad day," but bad days are more prevalent than anyone may realize. The stress is often dismissed as signs of weakness and inability to cope with the demands of being a teacher (Cachero, 2019). Educators receive little support from schools and districts, so educators have been left to deal with their struggles on their own. Teachers are burned out, stressed, fatigued, demoralized, and now, coping with trauma (Walker, 2019). Emotionally connecting with students is emotional labor that negatively affects some teachers and is, even more, a struggle currently due to the emergency distance-learning mandate.

It is important to acknowledge PTSD as a severe problem that has come about for

educators. In the past, this disorder was more prevalent in schools that lacked administrative support and those that involve violence in the classroom (Kataoka et al., 2012). However, a new common trend is that the teachers are experiencing this in every situation due to burnout caused by the heavy workload that teaching now encompasses (Rubin, 2020). Teachers face daily tasks such as: mandatory meetings, lack of administrative support, and lack of parents support or involvement. They are responsible for individual child academic concerns, behavior, emotional development, and test scores. Many variables of success are large class sizes, the differentiated child needs, learning disabilities, knowledgeable of student lives and families, and the threat of violence from school shootings. Amidst all of this, teachers feel empowered to stay in the classroom when they feel emotionally supported and fulfilled.

Educators have the responsibility to be aware of the importance of self-care and to be proactively engaged in it. Schools must understand trauma is inevitable and can affect anyone. If we want healthy teachers in our classrooms, schools must acknowledge the importance of things like staff appreciation, involvement in decision-making, vacation time, mental health awareness and professional development training on ways to build and value self-care (Walker, 2019). An inordinate emphasis on self-care or resilience without adequate support places too much burden on the educator. Many educators claim they did not know these feelings were part of a disorder. Teachers need support to help them through these feelings. (Walker, 2019). Promoting self-care and wellness strategies is a perfect starting point and a strategy to begin to combat PTSD in educators.

A new trend in education is Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder. According to research, teachers are experiencing PTSD due to the heavy workload that teaching encompasses. They are responsible for molding the minds of students where 40 percent of American children will have

at least one potentially traumatizing experience by age eighteen. Keep in mind; these numbers are before the COVID-19 pandemic. The good news is that with time and good self-care, they usually get better.

COVID-19 Pandemic

The global pandemic caused by COVID-19, a coronavirus, has directly affected the world of education. As of January 2021, there have been 93,800,000 confirmed cases of COVID-19 including 2,000,000 deaths, reported by the World Health Organization. Due to this easily spread virus, social distancing was embraced to prevent groups of individuals from gathering in order to prevent or decrease the spread of the disease (CDC, 2021). Due to this, over 63 million primary and secondary teachers around the world are affected by mandatory school closures in 165 countries (Gewertz, 2020).

As a frontline of response, teachers now have the responsibility to ensure learning for over 1.5 billion students digitally. Within a few days, teachers transitioned to distance learning, a style of online teaching that required quick professional development and transition. The physical and emotional demands placed on educators are taking a toll on their well-being (Gewertz, 2020). These daily stressors create major health problems for educators. For example, with schools being closed and daily routines abruptly changed as well as a decrease in physical activity, many teachers are suffering from insomnia and not getting the recommended amount of daily sleep (Pahr, 2020). This is just one example of a lack of daily self-care during this unprecedented time.

Research predicts the COVID-19 pandemic will have detrimental mental health effects, especially to educators and many will likely experience PTSD because of the pandemic. In a survey of 5,000 teachers by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, teachers reported higher

levels of anxiety related to distance learning and fear of the unknown COVID-19 virus. The reasons stated for stress-related feelings were divided into two categories. First, on a personal level, teachers had a general fear that someone in their family would contract COVID-19. The second, related to the overall stress from managing their own and their families' needs while working full-time from home and adapting to new technologies for teaching. These teachers mentioned a need for work-related boundaries and strategies to support their own wellness and resilience (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020).

Not only are teachers overwhelmed with the workload from distance learning, but many are concerned with the idea of returning to school with COVID-19 still prevalent. According to a report by Child Trends, about 29 percent of teachers are aged 50 and older and are at a higher risk for COVID-19. Reports show that 92 percent of deaths related to the disease in the United States were of people aged 55 and older. This same report states that teachers are more likely to report being stressed at work than the average person is. Some research showed that stress could weaken the immune system (Will, 2020). Schools make it more difficult to practice social distancing due to close quarters. Teachers' anxiety builds as they consider the idea of returning to school (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020). PTSD caused from the COVID 19 pandemic can be addressed in a manner similar to burnout where research consistently recommends a clear line between work and personal life, and taking steps to incorporate self-care such as exercising daily, eating right, and sleeping enough. It is also essential to avoid triggers that are activating PTSD, such as the news. Teachers will more than ever need access to support systems, whether it be a house of worship, a therapist or a technology tool that serves as a reminder to practice wellness and self-care strategies.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs

In 1943, a psychologist named Maslow wanted to better understand what motivates human beings. He proposed that human needs could be organized into a hierarchy. This hierarchy ranges from concrete needs, such as food and water, to more abstract needs such as the sense of belonging. Maslow's hierarchy of needs is a motivational theory in psychology comprising a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. He believed that people are motivated to achieve certain needs (Hopper, 2020). As needs lower on the pyramid are met, one may be able to climb to reach the final goal of self-actualization.

The first need is based on physiological needs and refers to the needs that involve our body and homeostasis. This is the most essential of needs and usually need to be met prior to meeting any other needs. Examples of this need includes: water, food, sleep, and sex for reproduction. The second need is the need for safety. Maslow believed that when someone feels safe, they can continue to progress on the hierarchy period. Examples of safety would be living without war or disaster. Adults often seek safety by doing things such as buy life insurance or create a savings account. People strive for predictability and certainty (Poston, 2009). According to Maslow, the next need is the need for love and belonging. This includes romantic and friend relationships. This need helps us become part of a social group.

The next step on Maslow's hierarchy was the need to feel empowered. According to Maslow, this need reflects self-confidence and feeling valued by others. This means having your contributions and achievements feel valuable and important (Hopper, 2020). Finally, Maslow believed that self-actualization is the feeling of being fulfilled and living up to your potential. It means feeling that we are doing what we are meant to do and helping others in the process. It is

hard to achieve this stage of hierarchy and all other needs must be met in order to achieve this one (Poston, 2009).

In regards to educators, teacher's needs lower on the pyramid need to be met prior to teachers being able to accomplish self-actualization. In order for teachers to meet these needs, they must partake in self-care. For example, getting sleep and eating healthy. These strategies will help teachers build more resilience in order to promote retention.

Self-Actualization and Resilience

It is no surprise that self-actualization is a natural protective factor against teacher job strain, job stress, and burnout. High levels of job stress are strongly related to subsequent burnout, but high self-actualization acts as an effective barrier between job stress and burnout (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). Self-actualization is the belief we have in our own abilities, specifically our ability to meet the challenges ahead of us and complete a task successfully (Ackerman, 2020).

Not only do those with high self-actualization tend to perform better in their jobs, but they also tend to like their jobs more. The relationship between self-actualization and performance is important in teaching endeavors (Neto, 2015). Those with a high level of self-actualization are not only more likely to succeed, but they are also more likely to bounce back and recover from failure.

This demonstrates that resilience is greatly impacted by this need on Maslow's hierarchy. Resilience is defined as "the process of, capacity for, or outcome of successful adaptation despite challenging or threatening circumstances." Teachers who are resilient adjust to negative or stressful events by using personal or environmental resources. Having a high level of resilience helps teachers cope with daily stress and prevents emotional burnout (Mayo Clinic Staff, 2017).

This may be the key to understanding why teachers leave the profession.

Any initiatives to increase the resilience of teachers will improve their working conditions as well as aiding to develop self-actualization. Some exercises and activities that may better support self-actualization in teachers include self-reflection and gratitude journaling. Taking time each day to reflect allows the process to become an intentional journey. When doing this critical reflection, transformational learning is occurring. This allows people to be more effective in their daily lives. By bringing out issues from the subconscious to the conscious, one is dealing with thoughts and no longer allowing them not to be a negative influence (Ackerman, 2020). This will support teachers and aid in decreasing the number of teachers thinking of leaving the profession.

Wellness Strategies

There is a separate association found between wellness and burnout. Specific practices can be encouraged by educational leaders to reduce the incidence of burnout and the negative effect it has on teachers, students, and the school environment. The implementation of wellness improvement strategies can support the level of effectiveness of the implemented wellness program in reducing burnout (Hart et al., 2019). Encompassing wellness as a mitigating factor for teacher burnout, by surveying teachers at multiple points during the year would help determine the existence of any interaction between the time of the school year, burnout levels, and wellness beliefs and practices. In result, researchers could gain an understanding of when it would be best to implement wellness strategies into professional development for educators.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness interventions could also support the ability to build resilience in teachers. This form of mediation teaches the brain to focus one's complete attention on an immediate experience without reacting to it (Sousa, 2012). Mindfulness, also called "present-moment awareness," was initially a Buddhist practice although not the exclusive territory of the Buddhists, but rather a specialty (Lion's Roar Staff, 2019). The idea was to create a state of "bare awareness" and control one's thoughts instead of letting one's thoughts control them.

Mindfulness should help one get details from the upsetting event out of working memory so stress and anxiety can settle as focus is shifted to breathing (Sousa, 2012). Many people undertake practices that are specifically meant to cultivate mindfulness. There are "four foundations of mindfulness" that help identify areas in which people should be mindful. These foundations include: bodies, feelings, minds themselves and the phenomena of the world around us (Lion's Roar Staff, 2019).

Today, in the context of education, mindfulness interventions enhance a teacher's emotional work by developing a wide variety of emotion regulation strategies. According to a recent study published in *Educational Psychology Review*, mindfulness interventions that lasted more than one month had significant effects on personal accomplishment and exhaustion levels within teachers. Making a mindful effort to continue these types of interventions, even when the typical day does not go "as planned" may be an extremely successful missing piece to the teaching practice (Emerson et al., 2017).

Developing mindful habits is developmentally comparable to developing physical skill sets. Things that develop, such as learning to ride a bike, playing the guitar and understanding literary themes throughout literature, all build muscle memory. Practicing mindfulness is

therefore not a "soft skill" (Boogren, 2018). Practicing mindfulness is a concrete mechanism that improves focus. This focus will allow teachers to exert more control over their own thoughts, emotions, and behaviors (Boogren, 2018). It can be summarized that practicing mindfulness can not only prevent, but also heal, the symptoms of stress. This an important concept to include in teacher preparation and ongoing development.

Self-Care

Self-care is defined as the daily process of being aware of and attending to one's basic physiological and emotional needs including the shaping of one's daily routine, relationships, and environment (Boogren, 2018). Self-care is a mindfulness strategy in which one makes oneself a priority. Self-care helps bring balance to the responsibilities and commitments of life. Research shows that 93 percent of educators reported "high levels of stress" (Boogren, 2018). Many of these stresses come from compassion fatigue, which is the idea of being exhausted with daily emotions. Stressed teachers have an effect on the academic success and well-being of students.

Starting a self-care habit every day will ensure that you are taking care of and nurturing your health, and wellbeing. Self-care is when a person is attuned to their body, listening to it, taking moments to check on it, intentionally tuning into the thoughts in their mind, and challenging their behaviors and belief systems if things feel out of alignment in their life (Patel, 2020). Recognizing the need for self-care is one thing, while actually adopting something and being consistent with the regime for self-care is another.

It is important to understand what self-care is. Self-care is not simply taking care of your health. Understanding that in our ever-complicated and busy lives, we simply need to have space and time to slow down and rest. It is also important to note that just because a behavior is "good

for you" does not mean that it is considered self-care (Lawler, 2020). There must be a sense of gratification for it to be considered self-care. An example of this would be running or hiking. They may be healthy habits but if one is not fulfilled upon completion, they are not considered self-care. If you instead feel energized and fulfilled then the activities are considered potential self-care practices. When one receives a sense of satisfaction in meeting goals then they become worthwhile. Educators are better suited to take care of others, foster strong relationships, be resilient, and balance personal and professional responsibilities when they are practicing proper self-care (Lawler, 2020).

A recommended five steps for creating a self-care routine include the following:

1) Find what makes one feel centered. It is important to understand that self-care is not a one size fits all approach. There are different things that bring joy to different people and it is important to identify those specific items when starting a self-care routine.

2) Brainstorm how one can incorporate those things into your daily life. These ideas can be items that can be accomplished in the background or they may take up time during a specific time of day. Start small and your habits will be achieved more easily. Picking one behavior to incorporate for a whole week is a recommended approach.

3) Set goals for incorporating self-care behaviors daily. Once you identify self-care practices that will benefit your life, come up with specific goals on how and when to incorporate them daily.

4) After seven days, evaluate. Noting positive feelings and benefits will be fuel to continue to maintain specific behaviors.

5) Adjust and tweak approach as you go. Understanding one self-care practice during a specific time may not be the same during another is important. Expect some bumps along the way as this process is a journey, not a destination (Lawler, 2020).

Teachers should explore the roadblocks one may be facing in order to begin self-care routines. Journaling is a recommended practice, but some may need something a bit more, like seeing a psychiatrist. Self-care should not be a chore. More self-care equals more self-awareness, which equals more self-love, which will ripple out onto others you interact with every day in the form of compassion, gratitude, and deeper kindness (Lawler, 2020). Self-care an important practice and may be extremely beneficial in building more resilient teachers so less burnout occurs.

Resilient people have a healthy self-perception and are committed to taking care of themselves (Lifeworks, 2019). As we strive for resilient teachers, we must practice self-care in the process. Some of these techniques include getting proper sleep each night, better nutrition, exercising, and connecting with loved ones (Shepell, 2019). These ideas are directly correlated to the needs defined in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs.

Resilience

After extreme adversity, some people fall apart, get depressed, and never recover. Most people bounce back to normalcy, which is called resilience. These different outcomes comes down to optimism. Optimism inoculates one against the aftermath of trauma (Sousa, 2012). Brain scans reveal that when one is distressed with an upsetting incident, the right prefrontal cortex is highly active. When one recovers, the left prefrontal cortex becomes active and the right prefrontal cortex quiets down. Therefore, researchers concluded that training the brain to

focus calmly on the problem could give the left side of the brain time to recover from any stress. Calm reflection can help with resilience (Sousa, 2012).

Resilient teachers have a set of personal values that guide their decision-making. They place a high premium on professional development and find ways to get it. Resilient teachers provide mentoring to others. Resilient teachers are not victims. Rather, they take charge and solve problems. These teachers stay focused on children and their learning. Resilient teachers do whatever it takes to help children be successful. These teachers have friends and colleagues that support their work emotionally and intelligently. Resilient teachers are flexible and encourage the best way of teaching. These teachers are interested in exploring new methods of learning. Resilient teachers know when to get involved and when some decisions are out of their control (Patteron et al., 2016). Teachers who regularly experience more positive emotions may be more resilient (Fredrickson, 2001).

It is critical that administrators provide resources to build resilience in teachers through professional development, which will better prepare teachers and encompass mindfulness interventions. School leaders and departments that encourage a growth mindset have flexible timings for topics and are supportive of finding ways to support students' thinking (Arnup & Bowles, 2016). According to an NPR Ed interview article, the Learning Policy Institute president noted that teachers who are well-prepared leave at more than two times lower rates than teachers who are not fully prepared.

Preparation can come in many different forms. The support that ranges from gaining extensive classroom experience to acquiring skill sets to meet different classroom needs are necessary components for teacher success. Not only does preparation influence the quality of a teacher's lesson, but it also influences the way teachers feel about themselves within their

careers. Those with poor preparation may not be able to effectively meet classroom demands and, as a result, ultimately leave (Arnup & Bowles, 2016).

Teachers need support from colleagues by providing each other with advice and resources as well as sharing experiences with support and guidance. Teachers need strong and supportive leadership. Leaders should be caring and approachable. Teachers need support from family and friends. These include shared roles at home and an understanding of demanding workloads. Student-teacher relationships are key to making connections and help to create a sense of efficacy (Rimm-Kaufman & Sandilos, n.d.). Teachers need a sense of purpose. Many resilient teachers discuss a "calling" to teaching and this helps them maintain a sense of moral purpose or self-actualization (Hopper, 2020). By maintaining hope, teachers can have a sense of optimism for the future. As previously discussed, self-efficacy can develop a sense of self-worth, which helps to identify a healthy teacher identity. Teachers need problem-solving techniques and strategies in order to develop resilience. Reflection can promote resilience by enabling educators to depersonalize stressful events and take these events less personally (Patteron et al., 2016).

Conclusion of Research

Hope is not lost. Burnout prevention, such as better preparation and continued development, wellness and mindfulness skill set development, and the ability to practice self-care, may go a long way in preparing new teachers and even those veteran teachers, for future enduring success. As the world faces challenging times such as a pandemic, teachers with a focus on self-care will be more successful in developing resilience. This resilience will aid in teacher ability to combat burnout and promote retention. The presence of necessary skill sets and abilities of resilient teachers to practice self-care will help impact the future of America's children for the better.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

Becoming a teacher is rewarding and a profession like no other. Supporting students and seeing the growth they have year to year because of the hard work teachers put into each and every lesson is quite rewarding. Teachers are supportive and influential figures in the lives of their students. However, teaching can also be very difficult. Teachers are not only tasked with the academic responsibility of developing their students, but they also take on many other responsibilities in the lives of their students. They also have the responsibility to apply social-emotional competence as part of their daily duties (Prothero, 2020). This task is very demanding and the emotional labor is stressful and causes teacher burnout for many educators. Due to the burnout, the schools are unable to retain teachers and unnecessary turnover continues.

The teachers that experience this burnout as an extreme level are usually the new teachers. They are tasked with many problems and face an inability to cope with these problems. New teachers leave the field and instead, find different professions (Will, 2018). Instead of placing teachers and supporting teachers to retain them, teacher turnover occurs. Quality teachers that are more capable of the professional tasks entailed are placed appropriately and those new teachers, lacking experience, are placed improperly. Professional development, such as mindfulness training, is a tool that builds skills to create more quality teaching. The emotional labor, stress, and burnout cycle repeats itself at a strong rate. Most schools do not have resources to invest in inexperienced teachers (Duncombe, 2017). They simply make do with what they are provided. Teachers must be developed and prepared to face the difficulties ahead of their profession.

The average teacher makes 1,500 educational decisions every school day. On average, teachers are in front of students for six-hours a day. This means that teachers make more than four decisions every minute (Boogren, 2018). This can be overwhelming. Teachers must have a balance and take care of their own needs to be the most successful for their students in the classroom. Teachers need quick and efficient reminders to integrate self-care practices into their busy days. Research proved an extremely high portion of teachers are overwhelmed and must understand the need for balance and wellness (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020). In ability to meet these needs will create the continuation of self-care and wellness needs to go unmet.

With the recent COVID-19 Pandemic and the extremely quick switch to remote learning across the nation, this has become an even larger problem. A problem even more than the previous day to day routine of teachers. If the teachers were not equipped to face the challenges prior to this, they will definitely face issues as we move into the upcoming future of education.

Within a week the entire world of educators, parents, and students had to understand all of the moving parts of technology and wifi. The teachers were faced with a decision to send work home or forget about it. They also were forced to understand true objectives and meaningful work as well as alternative assessments. Through all of this, balance, mindfulness, and self-care has yet to be learned for many. Teachers need to continue the desire to understand a very important but often missing piece, self-care and wellness. Self-care needs to become a routine, like lesson planning (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020). Teachers need to find a work/home balance. The transition has been surreal for many and the need for balance, self-care and wellness is at an all-time high.

Research Questions

RQ1: What are teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care?

RQ2: What components, identified by equal or greater than 50% of participating educators, should be focal points for self-care in teachers?

Sample

Purposeful sampling is a technique widely used in qualitative research for the identification and selection of information-rich cases for the most effective use of limited resources (Patton, 2002). This involves identifying and selecting individuals or groups of individuals that are especially knowledgeable about or experienced with a phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). In contrast, probabilistic or random sampling is used to ensure the generalizability of findings by minimizing the potential for bias in selection and to control for the potential influence of known and unknown confounders.

The target sample will be those teachers that are currently teaching and members of the Teachers Teaching During COVID-19 Facebook group (see appendix A). These teachers must have at least three prior years of teaching experience. However, the position in the educational setting may vary. The questions investigated during the data collection must be specific and relevant to current teaching practices. Researchers are aware and okay knowing snowball sampling may occur on other Public Domain, Social Media groups. A flyer (see Appendix B) will be available on the Teachers Teaching During COVID-19 public domain, social media group every week for a total of one month. Snowball sampling on other Public Domain, Social Media websites may occur depending on participation meeting expectation and anticipated saturation. Researchers anticipate receiving at least 100 questionnaires. Upon analysis of

needs-based assessment, researchers will use information provided to potentially create a technology application prototype. The setting in which the participants will be provided the needs-based assessment survey will be an online surveying tool that is accessible through social media.

Product

Based on the literature review, teachers are stressed and have limited time for self-care. Self-care is a mindfulness strategy that has been proven to help teachers find more balance in their day. Based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, an application prototype will be designed to act as a daily reminder to practice self-care. Upon utilizing the application, teachers will complete a self-care questionnaire where users will be able to select areas of self-care weakness. Throughout the day, these weaknesses will become alerts to remind the user to practice self-care strategies.

Users will be able to add their own daily reminders as well. Based on the need, these messages will be more or less frequent. After the alert, users will have the option to "check-off" that it was completed. Each completion is one-step closer to practicing self-care and building resilience. The goal will be to identify the lacking areas and implement the strategies each for an entire week, which is what the research recommends as the time it takes to understand if there is satisfaction in completing specific tasks. Only if the participant feels that satisfaction it is considered an important self-care practice. It is also important to understand in the above research that the specific needs will change from time to time and the application will function to accommodate those changes and specifications when needed. Table 1 outlines the potential alert messages that will be provided in the application.

Table 1.

Tool: Created Application Alert Message Examples

Physiological Strategies **(eating, sleeping, exercising)**
- Drink more water - Eat a piece of fruit - Plan your meals ahead of time - Include protein in your next meal - Don't skip a meal - Journal your foods - Pack your own lunch - Carry a water bottle at all times - Eat without distractions - Replace soda with a seltzer water - Chew gum to avoid mindless snacking
- Schedule exercise on your calendar - Sign up for a local run for charity - Have a walking meeting - Work outside - Take the stairs when possible - Park in the farthest parking spot - Take an evening walk
- Wash your hands regularly - Stand outside in the sunshine - Pet an animal

- Spend time in nature

- Sit near water

- Use sunscreen

- Take deep breaths

- Set a reminder to go to bed earlier

- Remove all electronics from your bedroom

- Take a short nap

- Set a sleep schedule

- Avoid caffeine six hours before bedtime

- Start dimming your lights prior to bedtime

- Try to meditate before bed

Safety Strategies

(personal security, employment, resources, health, property)

- Record your worries in a journal or book

- Reach out and talk to someone about your worries

- Stick to a schedule

- Listen to calming music

- Think before you post

- Inhale an essential oil

- Tray calming activities such a yoga or meditation

- Talk to a banker or financial adviser to ensure you're saving and investing wisely

- Make sure you have a thorough understanding of insurance policies

- Ensure your family has a safety plan

- Memorize essential phone numbers

- Make copies of your driver's license, passport, birth certificate, and store them in a safe place.

- Check your emergencies procedures at school and home

- Implement rules and procedures with a focus on safety in your classroom

Belonging Strategies
(friendship, intimacy, family, sense of connection)

- When with friends and family, disconnect from technology and be "present"
- Connect with a friend
- Connect with a student
- Put dates with loved ones on your calendar
- Use social media to help you find like-minded people
- Phone free dinner
- Start a positive email exchange with a group of colleagues
- Join a sports recreation league
- Let go to of negative relationships
- Plan a date night with your spouse
- Get intimate!
- Say "no" to an activity that you don't want to do

Esteem Strategies
(respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strengths, freedom)

- Recite a daily self-affirmation
- Set a realistic expectation for your day
- Get rid of negative thoughts
- Choose a more positive colleague to sit with at lunch
- Set an accomplishable goal
- Create a "good moods" playlist

Self-Actualization Strategies
(desire to become the most that one can be)

- Choose work that you love

- Choose an important goal to complete that is challenging, but achievable

- Find your best time to accomplish a goal (morning/night)

- Remove distractions

- Train yourself to stay focused on a particular task for an extended period of time

- Continually practice skills

Qualitative Instrument

The instrumentation used to complete the qualitative research will involve a needs-based assessment that will be analyzed using an online survey and coding tool. Using this scale, researchers will question using Likert Scale questions to further proceed on the creation of a potential technology application prototype. The online survey tool will support this process by analyzing scaled questions. A few of the Likert Scale questions on the needs-based assessment are as follows:

1) I understand what self-care is and how to integrate it into my daily life.

2) Practicing daily self-care is important to me.

3) I practice enough self-care daily to promote physical and mental wellness.

The respondents will be asked to answer these Likert Scale questions using the following scale: (a) Strongly Disagree, (b) Disagree, (c) Neutral, (d) Agree, and (e) Strongly Agree. The qualitative instrumentation will also provide an analysis of the open-ended questions from the needs-based assessment. The survey tool will sort each respondents' open-ended responses and create focus areas for further development. In order to do this, the tool must identify trends and analyze the data accordingly. The open-ended questions are as follows:

1) Are there any items or resources you do not currently have that you feel would enhance your self-care routine?

2) What are your specific responsibilities, activities, or tasks that prevent you from practicing self-care daily?

3) How has the recent COVID-19 pandemic affected your daily self-care routine? What suggestions do you have for others going through the same experience? See Appendix D for the needs-based assessment.

Procedures

Researchers will create a needs-based assessment (see Appendix D) that will provide insight on specific areas of focus. This information will be used for the creation of a potential technology application prototype, specific to self-care. The sample group will be the members of the Facebook group "Teachers Teaching During COVID-19" (see Appendix A). There is a potential for snowball sampling and the researcher may utilize other public domain social media groups to send the survey out in order to meet saturation. The study flyer (se Appendix B) will be posted and participation will be encouraged by as many members as possible. The participants will be provided an informed consent form (Appendix C) prior to beginning the assessment. At the completion of the informed consent form, the participants will be provided with the needs-based assessment (Appendix D) to complete. The researchers will be using forced replies and participants will not be able to go on to the next question until each subsequent question is answered.

The survey tool analyzed data from the survey, drew conclusions for the development of the application by using a Likert scale for those specific questions and drew out specific trends

for the open-ended questions. The potential self-care technology application prototype created

based on the analysis of the needs-based assessment (see Appendix D).

Technology App Prototype

To begin, teachers will take a survey when activating the application that will identify

specific areas they are lacking in self-care. This will allow the teachers to have individualized

self-care plans in which a push notification will pop up as often as needed and serve as a

reminder to check off the specific self-care component in practice. The teachers can also set up

other reminders as needed through the application (see Appendices E-I).

Analysis

Qualitative data analysis is a process that seeks to reduce and make sense of extensive

amounts of information from various sources. Qualitative research is also described as an

unfolding model that occurs in a natural setting that enables the researcher to develop a level of

detail from high involvement in the actual experiences (Creswell, 1994). Descriptive information

will be sorted and offered an interpretation. Using a survey tool, data will be organized

systematically and data themes will be interpreted. Question number one will gather perceptions

and the questions will report out responses.

Quantitative research involves the collection of data so that information can be quantified

and subjected to statistical treatment in order to support or refute "alternate knowledge claims"

(Creswell, 2003). The quantitative data analysis will provide descriptive statistics. A framework

analysis and thematic network analysis will dictate the researcher's aims and objectives using all

data. The information gathered will give the researcher further insight into developing the initial

product by quantifying the results and drawing conclusions based on statistics. The majority of

teachers will be defined as equal and greater than fifty percent.

The online surveying tool will code Likert scale questions and automatically determine themes within the responses of each participant. Trends will be made apparent with an analysis of the open-ended question as well. Through the needs-based assessment and this data collection process, the results determined through the use of coding will support the creation of the potential technology application prototype. The assessment will be shared to social media each Monday for an entire month until saturation is met. The participants must answer all questions and will not be permitted to move on until each question is answered. This is a forced reply.

Using a survey model to gain quantitative data will aid in ensuring the validity and reliability of the study. Expertly designed survey tools will allow the validity of data due to the clarity of terms and word choice. Survey tools will increase transparency and allow for more consistent data collection. This will also be relevant to the qualitative research analysis.

Data Sources

A sample of this study consisted of current educators of a range of grade levels and academic areas that have been teaching for at least three years. The access, consent, and questions will be accessible through the online surveying tool, SurveyMonkey©, via a flyer on the social media group. The following steps were followed:

- Step 1: Obtain approval from Lynn University Institutional Review Board (IRB)

- Step 2: After approval from Lynn University IRB, the researchers posted the flyer (see Appendix B) to the Facebook Teacher Teaching During Covid-19 (see Appendix A) social media page. The flyer gives a brief overview of the requirements of the participants and gives access to the questionnaire.

- Step 3: The first page of the questionnaire is the consent page so once "ok" was clicked the parent was able to continue onto the questionnaire.

- Step 4: Answers from the questionnaire were collected by the researchers via SurveyMonkey©.

- Step 5: The researchers' email addresses were posted on the flyer for questions.

Ethical Considerations

An ethical consideration would be the informed consent form and ensuring that it is understood and accepted by participants in the study. The participants must clearly understand the expectations, scope and purpose of the research before participating. This must be done willingly. The privacy of the participants is also very important. The proposal to conduct research will be submitted to Lynn University's Institutional Review Board to receive approval.

The information collected from the needs-based survey will be anonymous and no information gathered will provide identification to individuals. The participants will remain anonymous throughout the study while collecting data and while data is analyzed. The IP address will not be known to researchers. The needs-based assessment and post-survey answers will be stored on a password-protected computer and will be deleted after two years.

Researchers will be mindful of personal bias in regards to the specific trends discovered based on a needs-based assessment. The desired sample should consist of at least 100 active teachers with at least three prior years of teaching experience, in order for strong relations to exist to drive the development of the strategic product. The researcher must properly create an expertly designed survey so the opportunity for bias is limited. The passion of the researcher regarding the topic must not be evident or included in the consent, background information, and survey.

Risks and Benefits

The risks to participants will be minimal as the participants associated with this study will be confidential. There are no major risks to participants associated with this study. However, if participants feel that this survey is no longer something that interests them, they have the option to exit the survey at any time. All data will be destroyed and shredded. The benefit of the study is that the participants can help others by sharing their own experiences to help gain insight into the topic.

In the qualitative portion of the study, the needs-based assessment will be conducted through an online survey tool. The participants will complete using a link. Each participant will receive a code that will be used on any written documents rather than the participant's name to ensure confidentiality (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). The data received from the interviews and the informed consent will be kept separately in a locked folder on the researchers' computers. The data will be deleted after two years. When the researchers communicated with one another, the researchers spoke in person, phone, or by email to ensure that the documents were not compromised by computer hackers (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016).

Summary

The methodology will provide useful information that will be pertinent to the researchers and the creation of the potential technology self-care application prototype. After analysis of the needs-based assessment, the information provided to the researchers will be utilized to create an application that is specific to the current needs for teachers struggling with practicing self-care. The application will provide self-care tips and reminders throughout the day through push notifications. The sample group will be active teachers with at least three prior years teaching from the Teachers Teaching During COVID-19 Facebook group.

At the outcome of the methodology process, conclusions will be drawn that will provide answers to the research questions: RQ1: What are teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care? RQ2: What components, identified by equal or greater than 50% of participating educators, should be focal points for self-care in teachers? With the answers, there will be a current understanding of perceptions and knowledge of teachers and the ability to practice the very important self-care strategies in order to better help with teacher burnout. This will help better prepare teachers and aid in the development of resilience.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

The field of education is a demanding emotional labor. Educators that focus on self-care will aid in resilience. With daily reminders and encouragement, teachers that practice self-care can influence the future of education with retention in the field. The study focuses on the teacher perceptions of self-care implementation. The researchers found themes that emerged from the data to understand teacher perceptions of self-care implementation, limitations, and utilization of tools.

Purpose of the Summary

The purpose of this study was to gauge the understanding and amount of self-care that teachers were aware of and currently implementing and provide them with a tool to continue this practice successfully daily. The researchers' goal is to encourage teachers to practice self-care daily by utilizing key components identified from the study. The questions on the survey will further explore the teachers' knowledge and perception of their current ability to practice self-care and mindfulness.

Research Questions

The questions below guided the study.

RQ1: What are teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care?

RQ2: What components, identified by equal or greater than 50% of participating educators, should be focal points for self-care in teachers?

Summary of Analysis

The research began as an action research study using an exploratory qualitative case study design. First, the qualitative portion of research commenced with a needs-based assessment completed by teachers. The focus of the survey will be to determine the self-care limitations. The topics will include psychological, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization strategies based on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The survey questions were written using a Likert scale so data can be quantified. A final set of open-ended questions will be included in the survey as well. The questions on the survey will further explore the teachers' knowledge and perception of their current ability to practice self-care and mindfulness. The information gathered will be pertinent to developing a self-care tool for educators.

The research process began with the researchers posting flyers about the questionnaire on a social media group page, *Teachers Teaching During Covid-19*. This group was designed as a resource for educators teaching during the unprecedented times of the Covid-19 pandemic. This page currently consists of 969 members. The survey was posted in this group once a week. The questionnaire remained open for one month and surveyed over 260 educators. Out of the 260 educators, 206 completed the survey in its entirety with 54 participants skipping the open-ended questions.

The following two questions were used to collect demographic information. The questionnaire identified the years of teaching experience and ensured the necessary qualifications of the participants. In order to participate in the study, participants were required to have at least three consecutive years of experience. Results were also gathered and sorted by years of teaching experience. Based on the survey results, the majority of participants had been teaching between 6-19 years. Figure 2 is the chart with information collected for this survey question.

Figure 2.

Participants' Experience

Q2 How many years of teaching experience do you have?

Answered: 255   Skipped: 5
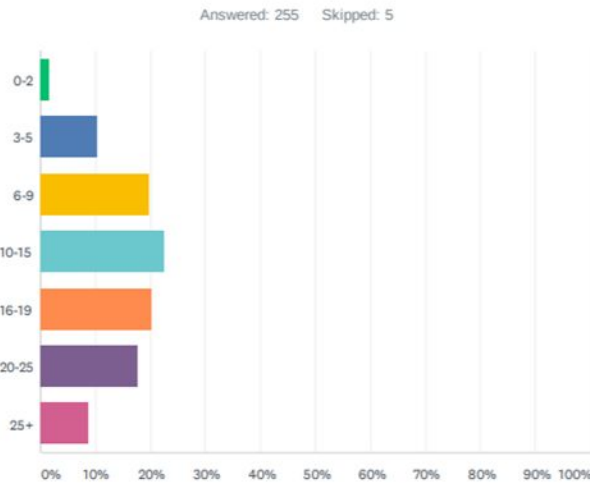
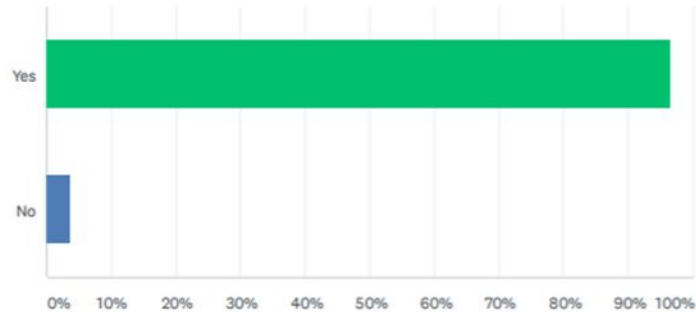| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
0-2	1.57%	4
3-5	10.20%	26
6-9	19.61%	50
10-15	22.35%	57
16-19	20.00%	51
20-25	17.65%	45
25+	8.63%	22
TOTAL		255

The participants were also required to be current, full-time teachers in the United States with at least three consecutive years of teaching. Participants also needed to be at least 22 years of age (see Figure 3). The respondents that did not meet the qualifications were directed to the end of the survey. Their results were not included. Researchers wanted to gain a perspective of educators currently teaching in the United States with at least three years of experience. These years of experience would help gain insight into current self-care practices of educators.

Figure 3.

Participants Required Qualifications

Q3 Are you a current full-time teacher in the United States with at least three consecutive years of teaching and are 22 years of age or older?

Answered: 249   Skipped: 11

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Yes	96.39%	240
No	3.61%	9
Total Respondents: 249		

Summary of Analysis of the Data Survey

Researchers created survey questions in the form of both Likert Scale and open-ended questions. The Likert scale questions aimed to gain perspective of awareness and daily self-care strategies and implementation. Open-ended questions were created to guide the creation of the application. Findings were organized by research questions and include the correlating Likert and/or open-ended questions. Research questions number one did not have a correlating open-ended question and therefore, was used specifically to guide the current perspective of educators.

Research Question Number One

RQ1: What are teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care? Understanding what self-care is and the information surrounding self-care allows teachers to practice self-care in a more productive way. It is important to know the actual definition of self-care and the ways people in general can practice better self-care as well as educators. In all of the questions from the Self-Care survey, there were 206 respondents and 54 people skipped answering these questions.

In the survey, the statistics showed that the majority of the respondents know the definition of self-care. The graph in Figure 4 shows 97.58% of those who completed the survey strongly agreed or agreed with knowledge of the definition of self-care. Still, there were 1.46% that remained neutral and .97% that disagreed about knowledge of the definition of self-care (see Figure 4).

Figure 4.

Survey Results for Question 5

Q5 I know the definition of self-care.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54
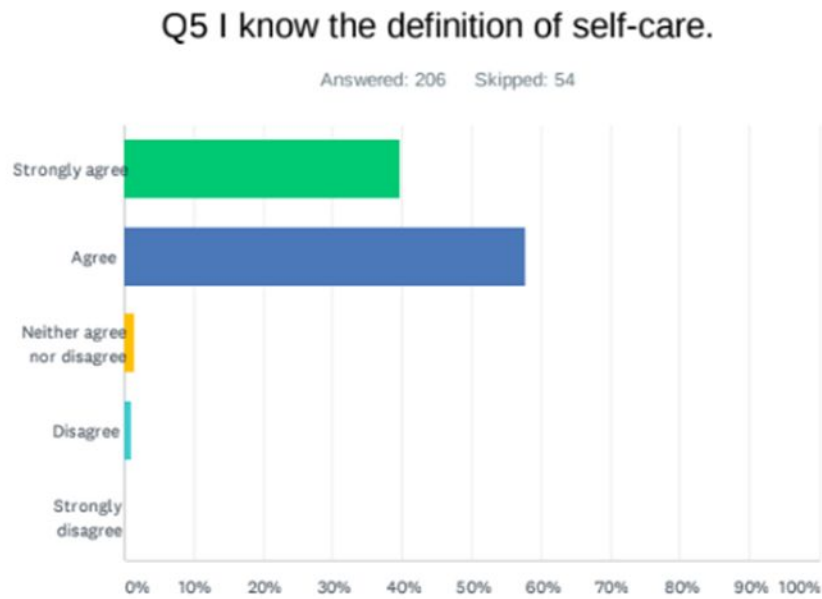
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	39.81%	82
Agree	57.77%	119
Neither agree nor disagree	1.46%	3
Disagree	0.97%	2
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		206

Practicing proper self-care is important when trying to build skills like resilience and grit to combat teacher burnout. According to the survey results, 83.95% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that practicing daily self-care is important to them. 13.11% of the respondents
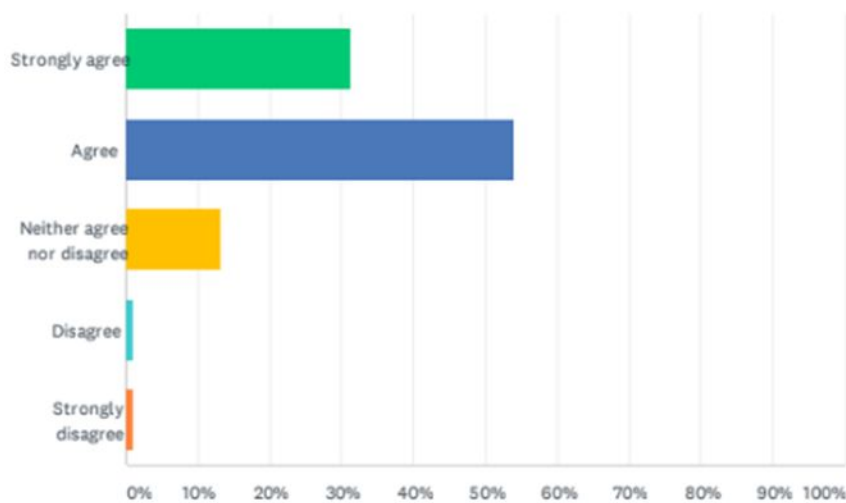
neither agreed or disagreed and 1.94% of respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed. The graph

in Figure 5 shows the breakdown of responses to this question.

Figure 5.

Survey Results for Question 6

Q6 Practicing daily self-care is important to me.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

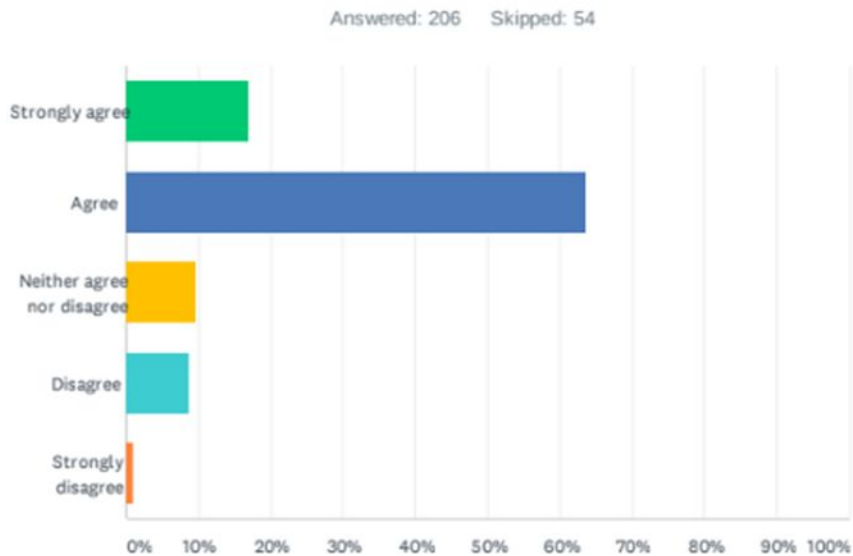| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	31.07%	64
Agree	53.88%	111
Neither agree nor disagree	13.11%	27
Disagree	0.97%	2
Strongly disagree	0.97%	2
TOTAL		206

Once a person has knowledge of self-care by knowing proper definition and

understanding that practicing self-care daily is important, the next question to ponder is whether

educators know how to integrate self-care into their lives daily. Data showed that 80.58% of

respondents strongly agreed or agreed on knowing how to integrate self-care into their lives daily

(see Figure 6). Data also showed 9.71% of respondents stayed neutral and neither agreed or

disagreed. The respondents that disagreed or strongly disagreed totaled 9.71%. Figure 6 displays

this response.

Figure 6.

Survey Results of Question 4

Q4 I understand how to integrate self-care into my daily life.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	16.99%	35
Agree	63.59%	131
Neither agree nor disagree	9.71%	20
Disagree	8.74%	18
Strongly disagree	0.97%	2
Total Respondents: 206		

The next question that helps answer the research question, what are teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care is the ability to understand that self-care is a necessary element for success in personal commitments. Data showed that 91.26% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement when surveyed. Data also showed 5.34% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed and 3.40% disagreed with this statement. The graph in Figure 7 shows the information collected in the survey for this question.

Figure 7.

Survey Results for Question 12

The next question, teachers' understanding self-care is a necessary element for success in professional commitments showed very similar results than the previous. The total respondents that strongly agreed or agreed totaled 91.75%. The data showed that 4.85% neither agreed or disagreed and just the same as above, 3.40% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the statement. The graph in Figure 8 displays these results.
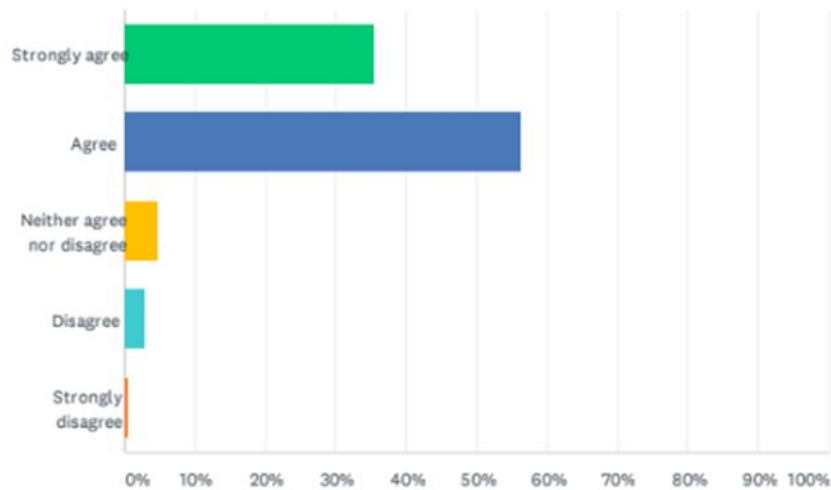
Figure 8.

Survey Results for Question 13

Q13 I understand that self-care is a necessary element for success in my professional commitments.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

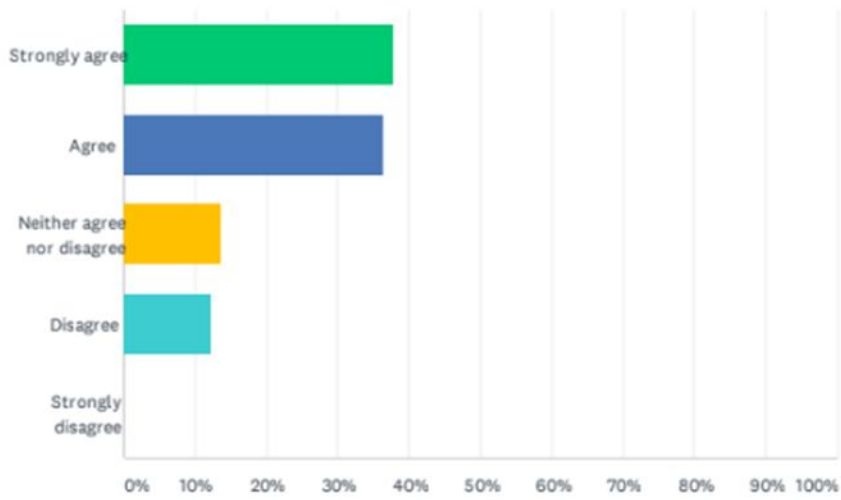| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	35.44%	73
Agree	56.31%	116
Neither agree nor disagree	4.85%	10
Disagree	2.91%	6
Strongly disagree	0.49%	1
TOTAL		206

In order to understand teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care teachers must be aware how certain priorities are organized. The next question helped answer how many teachers' put the needs of my students in front of their own self-care. Data showed that 74.27% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they put the needs of students in front of their own self-care. Data also showed 13.59% neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement when surveyed. Lastly, 12.14% disagreed with the statement. The graph in Figure 9 shows these results.

Figure 9.

Survey Results for Question 15

Q15 I put the needs of my students in front of my own self-care.
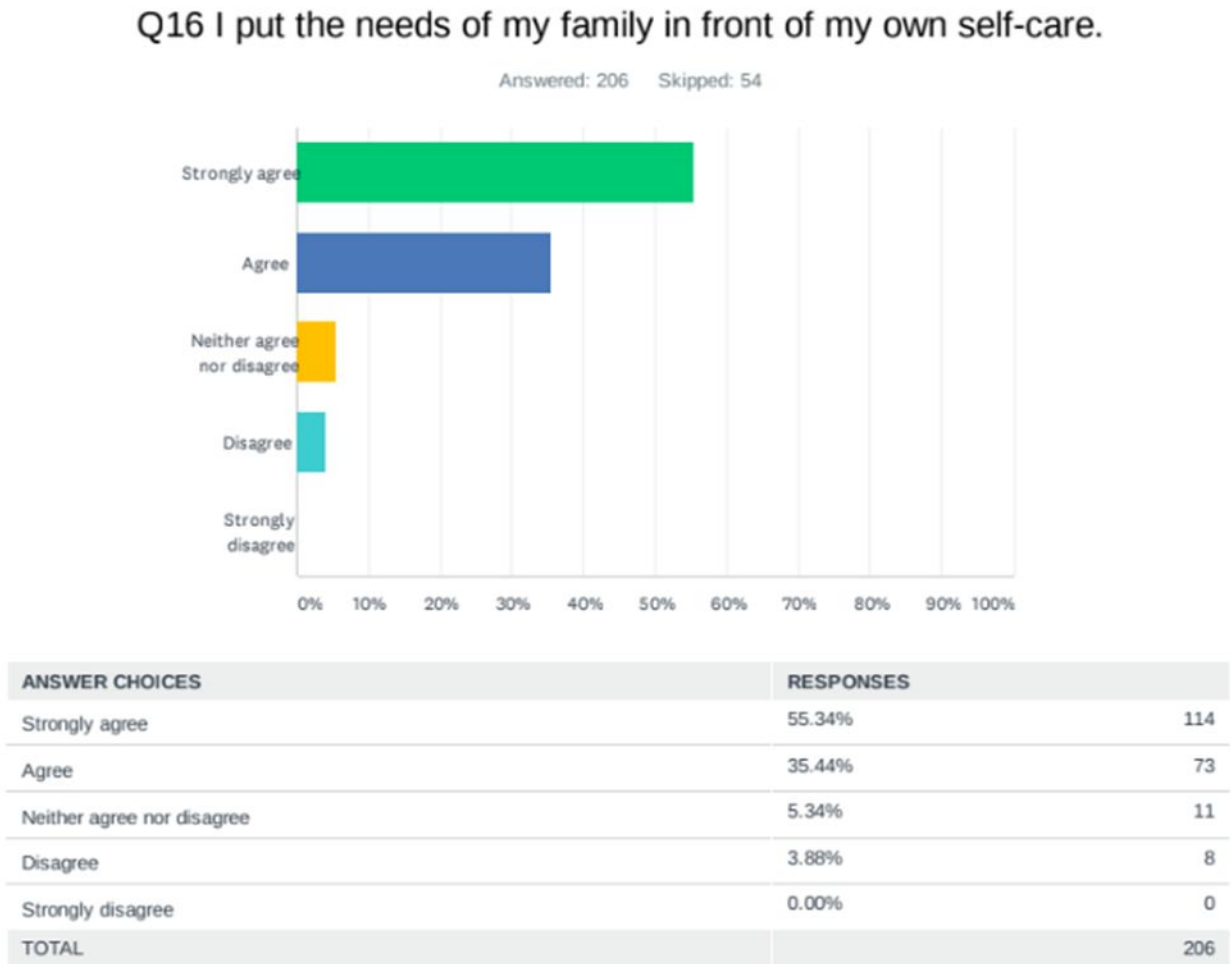
Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	37.86%	78
Agree	36.41%	75
Neither agree nor disagree	13.59%	28
Disagree	12.14%	25
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		206

The next question the researchers asked in the survey was whether teachers' felt they put

the needs of their own family in front of their self-care. Results showed 90.78% strongly agreed

or agreed with the statement. In contrast, 5.34% neither agreed nor disagreed and 3.88% of

respondents disagreed with the statement. The graph in Figure 10 shows these results.

Figure 10.

Survey Results for Question 16

Q16 I put the needs of my family in front of my own self-care.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	55.34%	114
Agree	35.44%	73
Neither agree nor disagree	5.34%	11
Disagree	3.88%	8
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0
TOTAL		206

The final scaled question that helped answer teachers' current perceptions, knowledge,

and ability to practice self-care from the survey was teachers' understanding of how physical

well-being affects their emotional well-being. Results showed 98.54% of respondents strongly

agreed or agreed. A stunning .49% neither disagree or agree and .98% of respondents strongly

disagreed or disagreed. The graph in Figure 11 shows this data.

Figure 11.

Survey Results for Question 10

Q10 I understand how my physical well-being affects my emotional well-being.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54
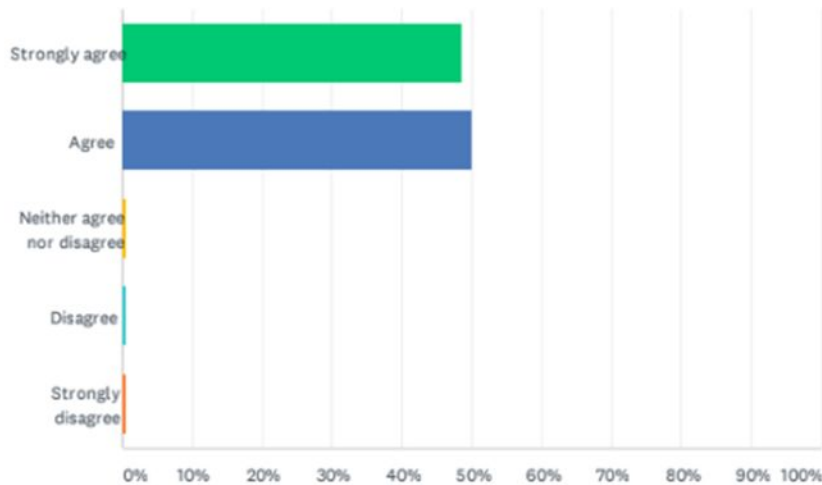
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	48.54%	100
Agree	50.00%	103
Neither agree nor disagree	0.49%	1
Disagree	0.49%	1
Strongly disagree	0.49%	1
TOTAL		206

From previous research, teaching is considered a career with a very high burnout rate.

The additional stress to manage other aspects of life, such as the ability to practice self-care is

often compromised, because of the close attention to detail a particular teacher must have.

Teachers are brain sculptors first, but emotional detectives as well. There are many personalities and life experiences that reflect how students will learn. Teachers invest time addressing these needs before implementing academics and curriculum. Burnout is a reality that comes with the high-stakes work of teaching, but there are resources and strategies available to help educators remain balanced in the classroom.

As researchers drew conclusions, connections were drawn between the questions from the survey. Questions that support research question number one where connected with prior research for triangulation and validation. The eight questions that helped researchers answer the first research question correlated with prior research on PTSD, COVID-19 Pandemic, and Burnout.

The results from the questions regarding knowledge of the definition of self-care helped provide information to the researchers that there currently is knowledge in educators and an ability to include it daily. The results from the survey demonstrated that educators understand that self-care is a necessary element for success with personal and professional commitments. Furthermore, the survey also proved that the needs of others such as, students and family, come before their own. These factors play into Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, particulars that may stem more during the COVID-19 pandemic and potentially cause PTSD or burnout at a higher rate.

It is important to acknowledge PTSD as a severe problem that has come about for educators. According to research, teachers are experiencing PTSD due to the heavy workload that teaching encompasses. Research question number one asks teachers about current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care. If we want healthy teachers in classrooms, schools must acknowledge the importance of things like staff appreciation,

involvement in decision-making, vacation time, mental health awareness, and professional development training as ways to build and value self-care. With this added support, teachers may be more aware and knowledgeable about self-care. Therefore, they will be better equipped with more tools to face the heavy workload teaching encompasses.

Teachers are at the frontline of response during the COVID-19 pandemic having the responsibility to ensure a quick switch to digital learning. Added to the responsibility of trying to keep business as usual during this already very tough time with engagement and lesson planning, etc. Many teachers are also parents and now have that factor to juggle as well. Teachers, who were already stressed, had to work around the clock and integrate new teaching strategies into their practices as well as adequate communication styles. In a survey of 5,000 teachers by the Yale Center for Emotional Intelligence, teachers reported higher levels of stress and anxiety related to distance learning and fear of the unknown COVID-19 virus. At this time, research predicts the COVID-19 pandemic will continue to have detrimental mental health effects, especially to educators and many will likely experience PTSD because of the pandemic.

Teachers are searching for work-related boundaries and strategies to support their own wellness and resilience (Cipriano & Brackett, 2020). In the study, researchers determined that educators put the needs of their students and family in front of their own. The pandemic has created even less boundaries between home and school life with a distance learning model. This will affect teacher self-care and climbing the five-tier model of human needs provided by Maslow in order to achieve the highest goal of self-actualization.

PTSD caused from the COVID-19 pandemic recommends a clear line between work and personal life, and taking steps to incorporate self-care such as exercising daily, eating right, and sleeping enough. Teachers more than ever need access to support systems, whether it be a house

of worship, a therapist, or a technology tool that serves as a reminder to practice wellness and self-care strategies.

Research Question Number Two

What components, identified by equal or greater than 50% of participating educators, should be focal points for self-care in teachers? The researchers were asked questions that pertain directly to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The following questions addressed the lowest division of the pyramid, which provided insight regarding physiological needs in teachers. Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is a motivational theory in psychology comprising a five-tier model of human needs, often depicted as hierarchical levels within a pyramid. Maslow believed that people are motivated to achieve certain needs (Hopper, 2020). As needs lower on the pyramid are met, one may be able to climb to reach the final goal of self-actualization.

These identified components are focal points for better self-care in teachers when calculated by fifty percent or greater of respondents. The total respondents for all of these questions totaled 206 and 54 participants skipped the questions.

The first question, on receiving at least seven hours of sleep nightly, provided that 44.66% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed. Data showed that 6.31% of respondents neither disagree or agree. Data also showed 49.03% of respondents strongly disagreed or agreed (see Figure 12).
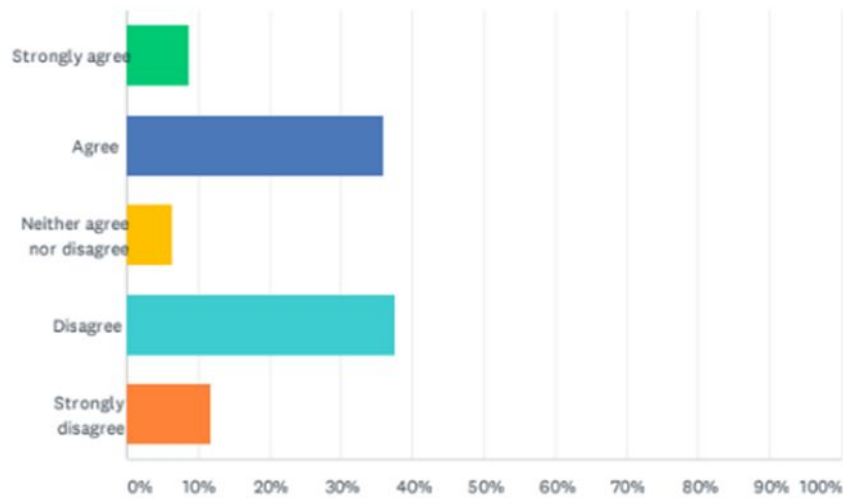
Figure 12.

Survey Results of Question 9

Q9 I get at least seven hours of sleep nightly.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

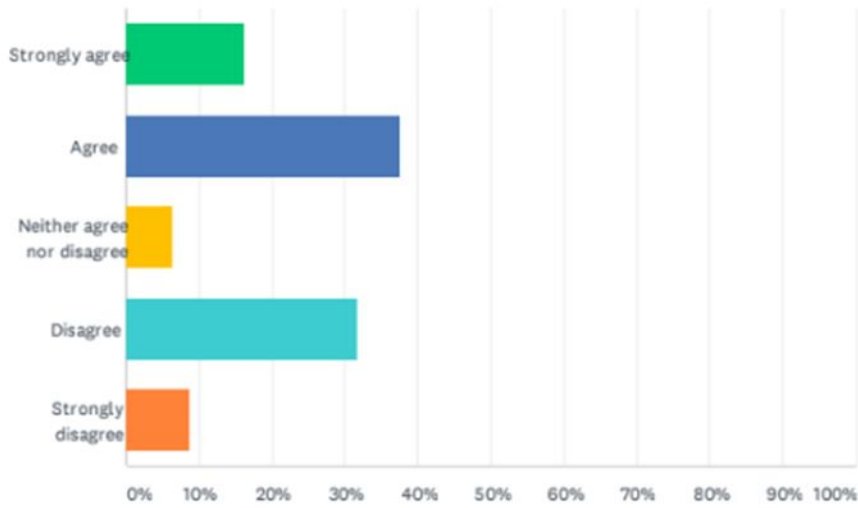| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	8.74%	18
Agree	35.92%	74
Neither agree nor disagree	6.31%	13
Disagree	37.38%	77
Strongly disagree	11.65%	24
TOTAL		206

The next question also helps researchers understand more about the focal points in physiological needs category of Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. The question, in reference to drinking at least six glasses of water a day, showed that 53.40% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed. Results also showed that 6.31% of respondents neither disagree or agree and 40.29% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed. The graph in Figure 13 displays these results.

Figure 13.

Survey Results for Question 17

Q17 I drink at least 6 glasses of water a day.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

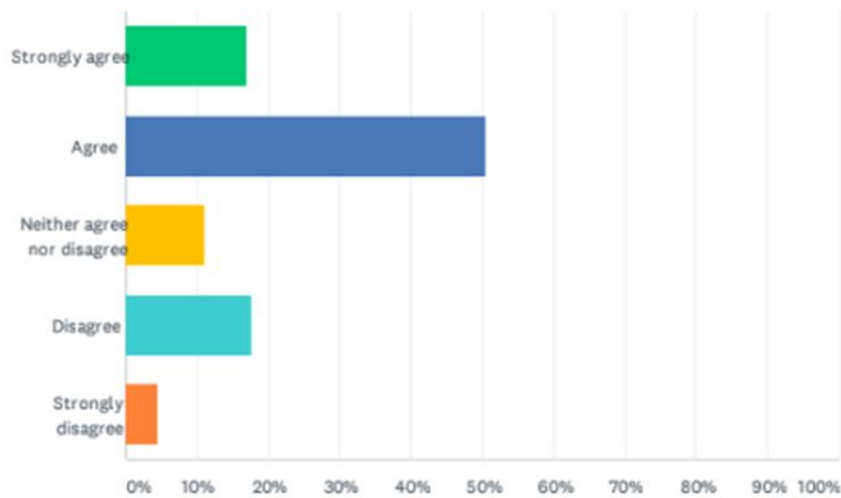| ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	16.02%	33
Agree	37.38%	77
Neither agree nor disagree	6.31%	13
Disagree	31.55%	65
Strongly disagree	8.74%	18
TOTAL		206

The next question that provides information for research question number two is also a physiological need. The question, in regards to eating a variety of fruits and vegetables daily, showed that 67.48% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed. Results showed that 11.17% of respondents neither disagree or agree. The remaining 21.85% strongly disagreed or disagreed. The graph in Figure 14 shows these results.

Figure 14.

Survey Results for Question 22

## Q22 I eat a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	16.99%	35
Agree	50.49%	104
Neither agree nor disagree	11.17%	23
Disagree	17.48%	36
Strongly disagree	4.37%	9
Total Respondents: 206		

The next two questions provided the researchers with additional information in regards to Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs. These two questions addressed the pyramid and continued to look at the physiological needs that should be focal points in teachers.

The first question, in regards to exercising at least 20 minutes per day, showed 43.69% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed. It also showed 5.34% of respondents neither disagree or agree. The remaining 50.97% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed. The graph in Figure 15 shows the results of this question.

Figure 15.

Survey Results for Question 11

Q11 I exercise at least 20 minutes daily.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54
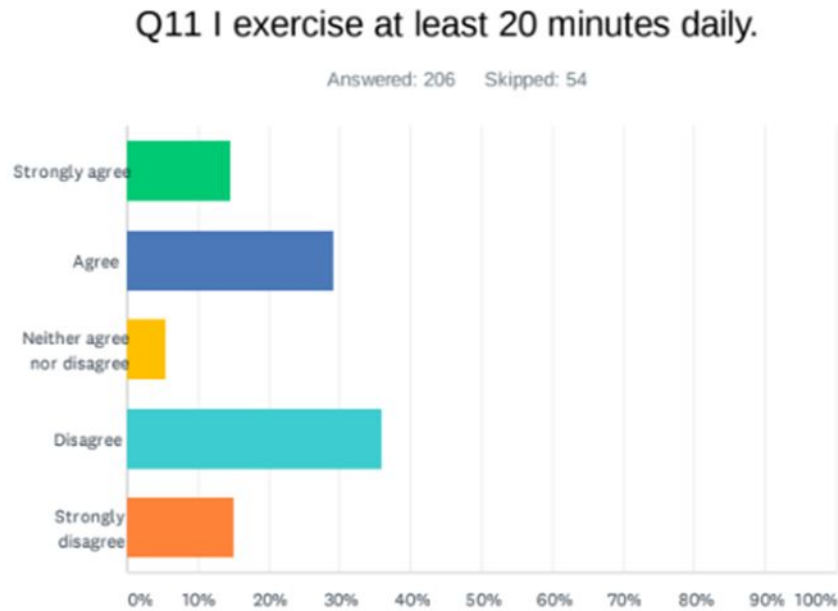
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	14.56%	30
Agree	29.13%	60
Neither agree nor disagree	5.34%	11
Disagree	35.92%	74
Strongly disagree	15.05%	31
TOTAL		206

The next question, in reference to practicing self-care daily to promote physical wellness, concluded data compilation and the information necessary to draw conclusions regarding the two research questions. This question showed 52.91% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed. 16.50% of respondents neither disagree or agree. The remainder of the respondents, 30.59% strongly disagreed or disagreed. The graph in Figure 16 shows the data for this question from the survey.

Figure 16.

Survey Results for Question 7

Q7 I practice self-care daily to promote physical wellness.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54
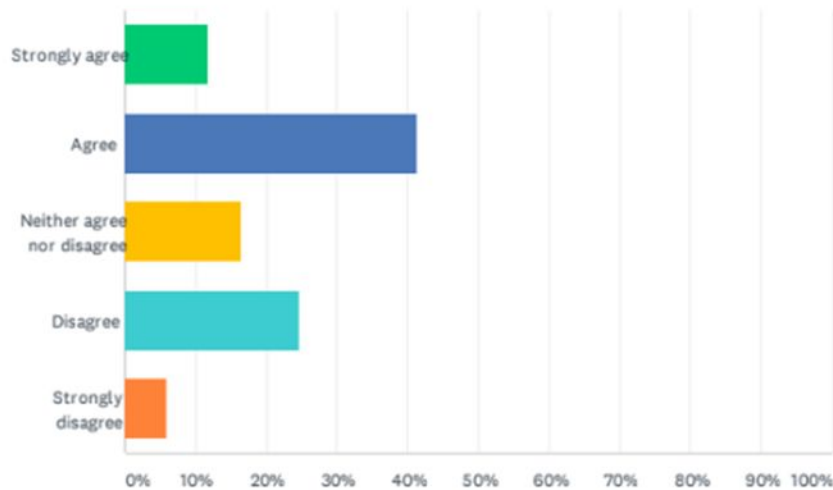
ANSWER CHOICES	RESPONSES	
Strongly agree	11.65%	24
Agree	41.26%	85
Neither agree nor disagree	16.50%	34
Disagree	24.76%	51
Strongly disagree	5.83%	12
TOTAL		206

Researchers identified focal points for better self-care using survey results and prior research. Resilience helps educators adapt well in the face of adversity, trauma, threats, and stress. More resilient teachers experience more positive emotions. Teachers who regularly experience more positive emotions may be more resilient (Fredrickson, 2001). Resilient people have a healthy self-perception and are committed to taking care of themselves (Shepell, 2019). To build more resilient educators that take care of themselves, the study provided that teachers

needed to get more sleep and exercise more from the answers to questions nine and eleven. These should be focus points for educators in order to achieve better self-care and encompassed in the potentially created application.

Self-care means that a person is attuned to their body and listening to it, taking moments to check on it, intentionally tuning into thoughts in their mind and challenging their behaviors and belief systems if things feel out of alignment in their life (Patel, 2020). Recognizing the need for self-care is one thing, while actually adopting something and being consistent with the regime for self-care is another. This looks different for everyone. Some may achieve better self-care by exercising every day, others may not. The ability to feel fulfilled is different which means a very specific process must occur for each person trying to achieve goals that lead to self-actualization, the highest tier in Maslow's Hierarchy. More self-care equals more self-awareness, which equals more self-love, which will ripple out onto others one interact with every day in the form of compassion, gratitude, and deeper kindness (Lawler, 2020).

Based on Maslow's Hierarchy of needs, the researchers developed an application prototype encompassing the different categories of self-care that are easy to implement and will not be overwhelming. Educators can benefit from a unique path to self-care with daily reminders to encourage self-care practices because we now know, through research, practicing better self-care is essential to educators and will make more resilient and better teachers. Making a cognizant effort to continue these types of interventions, even when the typical day doesn't go "as planned" may be an extremely successful missing piece to the teaching practice (Emerson et al., 2017). The potential application can help with the continuation of these self-care strategies.

Throughout the survey model, researchers included open-ended questions. These questions helped the researchers gain more detailed information in regards to the perceptions of educators. These questions were used to help guide and develop the application prototype.

***Question 25*:**

What are your specific responsibilities, activities, or tasks that prevent you from practicing self-care daily?

Question 25 was answered by 206 participants. This question was asked by the researchers to help gain a perspective and understanding of the daily roles or responsibilities that inhibit or encourage educators to practice self-care. Out of the 206 participants, about 18 stated that they did have "no" or "none" responsibilities that prevented them from practicing self-care. The other 188 shared ideas about childcare and family responsibilities, work demands, time management, teaching in a hybrid model, and compensation (see Table 2). The common themes that developed were time, stress or anxiety, and work demands.

Table 2.

Response to Question 25

Examples of Participants' Responses
"I am a teacher, mother, and a wife. My husband works evenings; therefore, I need to take care of my son. If I want 7 hours of sleep, there are not enough hours in the day for self-care, maintaining the house and being prepared for teaching every day."
"Having to be "on" all day, often I'm either too tired or too short on time to consistently practice self-care."
"Work overload such as meetings, creating lesson plans, communicating and visiting students and parents at all times of the day."
"Beginning of the school year, especially virtually, is very time consuming and has given me less time for self-care."
"Long hours at work and family responsibilities."
"Work responsibilities such as meeting deadlines, teaching classes, planning, supporting colleagues, and contacting families."
"Exhaustion from the emotional turmoil of the job."
"There is never enough time in the day. I work two jobs to supplement my pay."
"In the beginning of the school year, it is difficult to make time Because prep time takes over my life. I am a special ed life skills teacher, and I put a whole lot of effort into preparing at the beginning of the school year so that things can float easier for the rest of the year. The time I put into this, limits my daily self-care for at least four to six weeks."
"Teacher responsibilities that go past normal work hours, like email grading and planning."
"Caring for family members, feelings of stress and anxiety, and preparing for an uncertain school year."
"Taking care of my students' or family's needs before my own."

Question 26:

How has the recent COVID-19 pandemic affected your daily self-care routine? What suggestions do you have for others going through the same experience?

Question 26 was answered by 206 participants. This question was asked by the researchers to help gain a perspective and understanding of how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the daily self-care of educators. Out of the 206 participants, about 12 stated that they did feel the pandemic had changed their self-care routine. The other participants shared ideas about fear, lack of exercise, caring for family, anxiety, and motivation. The common themes that developed were anxiety and stress, increased time to care for self and decreased time to care for self.

Within this question, the results of the survey were varied. During the COVID-19 pandemic, educators changed their teaching methods to virtual learning at home. This new style of teaching pushed many educators to reinvent their teaching style to address learning at home. Results showed that quarantine and digital learning either drastically improved or drastically diminished educator self-care (see Table 3).

Table 3.

Response to Question 26

Examples of Participants' Responses
"Work expectations right now to help families navigate this time- plus because of the pandemic, I feel like administration expects you to be available at all times because we are working from home."
"Even though I am home, I work harder. I do not move from my seat/desk for 6-7 hours daily unless it's to go to the restroom. Planning out the day and then uploading everything to Canvas. If good habits have not been built, self-care goes to the side burner."
"It has been horrible. Teaching from home, I run to the pantry between classes and get snacks. I am also sitting all day and not moving around the classroom. However, after looking at the computer screen all day, I force myself outside after school and take a walk."
"It has improved because I have not been at school for 13 hours a day. I try to shut off work at a reasonable time to spend time with self and family."
"It has actually helped. Working from home has eliminated an hour worth of commuting daily that allows me more time to spend on myself."
"The need for self-care has increased while the time to actually allow for self-care practices has decreased."
"I used to have a commute to prepare and decompress but now I don't have a commute."
"It has given me more time to reprioritize my life in order to better take care of myself. However, I am quite nervous and have no idea what teaching in the fall is going to look like and how it will impact my daily self-care."
"Teachers now have to work around the clock and be available whenever a child or parents is able to get around to their lessons, We all need to set boundaries and inform our community of what are reasonable expectations."
"I have actually embraced the pandemic and having the extra time has helped me develop habits that I hope to continue post-pandemic."
"I think COVID has helped me to work on self-care. More exercise and work on drinking more water. More stress though with family sickness and changes in work."

Development of a Self-Care Application

Many of the next group of questions created for the survey were intended to understand more about self-care in educators. These questions were provided in the survey in order to understand the awareness and desire to practice better self-care. As stated previously in the literature review on Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, basic needs of self-care must be met for educators to be able to focus on any growth. Research shows that daily tasks often disable educators to progress through the growth process described. An educator that is meeting his/her own needs has the capacity to help others, including students. The well-being of educators is reflected by their ability to care for students, both academically and socially.

Researchers used Maslow's physiological tier to guide the next set of questions. The first need is based on physiological needs and refers to the needs that involve our body and homeostasis. This is the most essential of needs and almost always needs to be met prior to meeting any other needs. These questions were designed to gain a perspective of how educators preserve their ability to accomplish these tasks. Open-ended question results demonstrated the need for help in organizing a daily plan to implement self-care strategies. Many respondents expressed the need for reminders or simpler ways to integrate daily practices.

The survey question 18 stated, "The field of education is a demanding job that limits the ability to practice self-care". There were 206 respondents and 82.04% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Data showed that 10.68% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed and 7.29% either strongly disagreed or disagreed (see Figure 17).

Figure 17.

Survey Results of Question 18

Q18 The field of education is a demanding job that limits the ability to practice self-care.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54
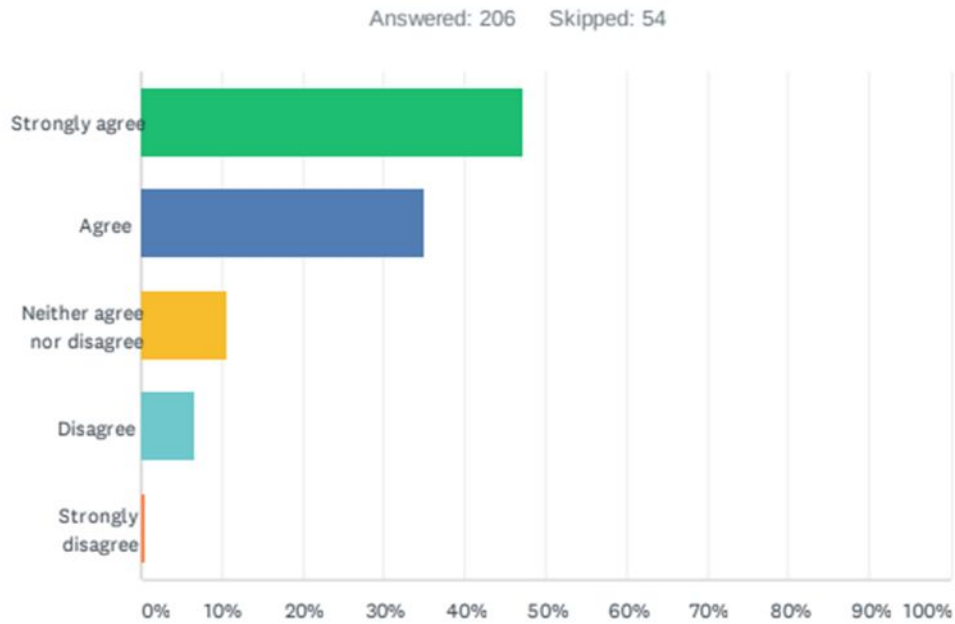
Question 23 stated, "Work-related stress inhibits me from practicing self-care daily". There were 206 respondents to this question and 67.48% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Data showed that 18.45% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed. This leaves 14.08% of respondents strongly disagreeing or disagreeing (see Figure 18).

Figure 18.

Survey Results for Question 23

Q23 Work related stress inhibits me from practicing self-care daily.

Answered: 206   Skipped: 54
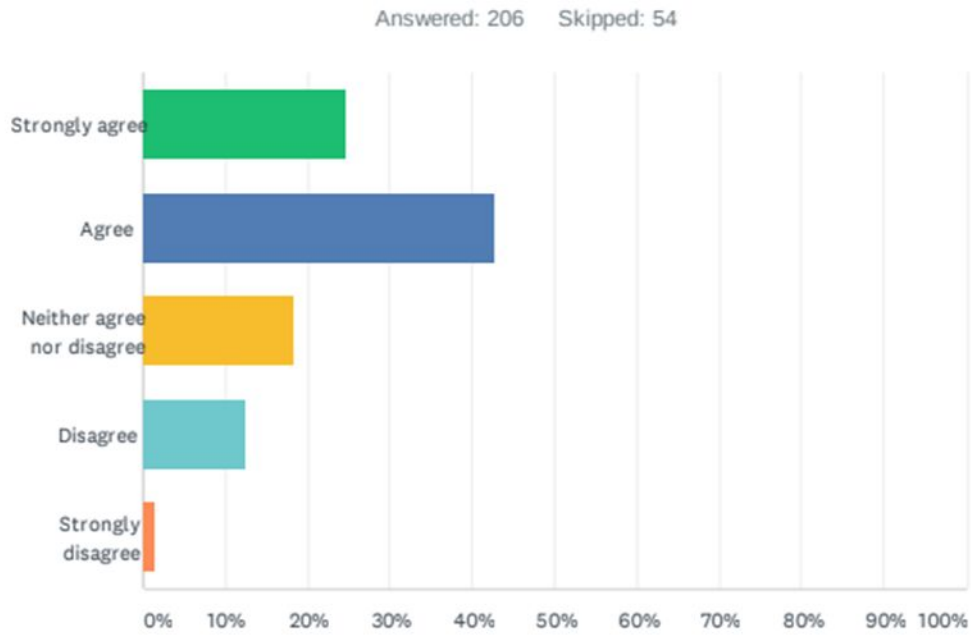
Question 8 asked, "I practice daily to promote mental wellness". There were 206 respondents to this question and 61.65% of the respondents strongly agree or agree with the statement. In contrast, 14.56% of respondents neither agree nor disagree. Lastly, 23.78% strongly disagree or disagree with the statement (see Figure 19).

Figure 19.

Survey Results for Question 8

Q8 I practice self-care daily to promote mental wellness.
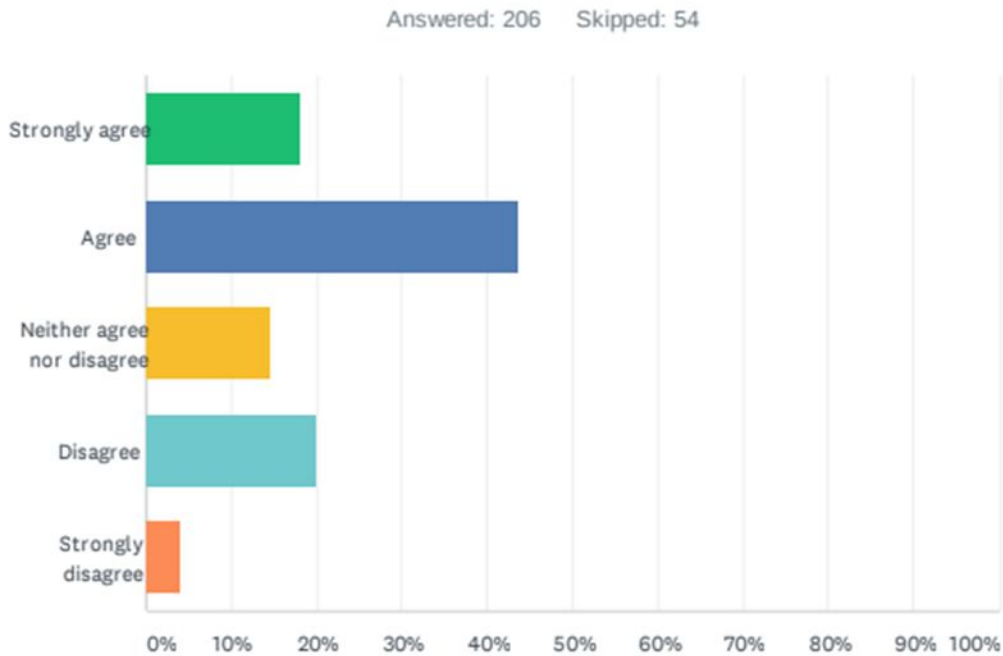
Question 14 asked, "Daily practice reminders to practice self-care that would be beneficial to my overall wellness practice". There were 206 respondents and 77.18% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with this statement. Data showed that 15.05% neither disagree or agree. Lastly, 7.77% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed (see Figure 20).

Figure 20.

Survey Questions for Question 14

Q14 Daily reminders to practice self-care would be beneficial to my overall mindfulness practices.
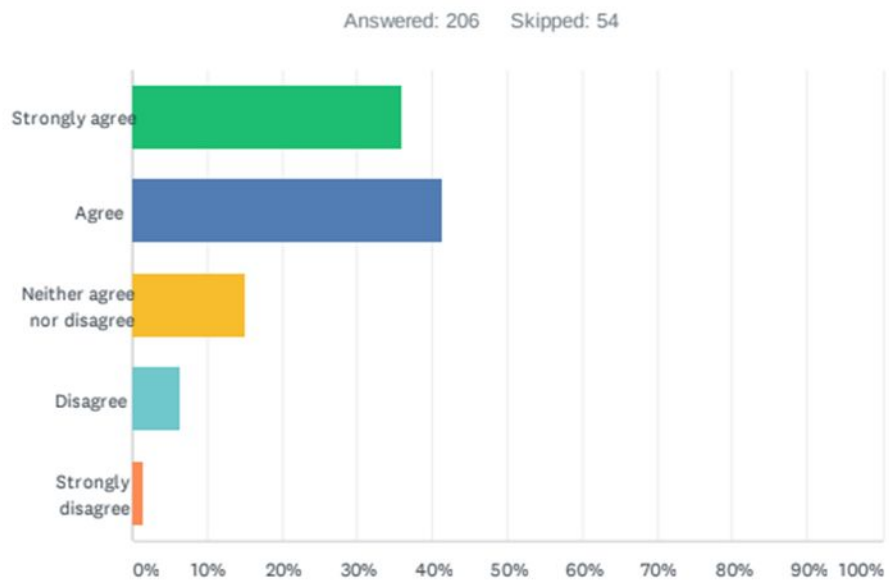
The next question 19 asked, "A self-care plan would help me attain my self-care goals".

There were 206 respondents and 76.70% of respondents strongly agree or agree. Results showed

that 17.96% neither agreed nor disagreed. Lastly, data showed 5.34% strongly disagree or

disagree (see Figure 21).

Figure 21.

Survey Results for Question 19

Question 21 asked, "If implementing attainable daily goals would help educators practice self-care". There were 206 respondents and 84.95% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed. Results showed that 8.74% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed and 6.31% disagreed with the statement (see Figure 22).

Figure 22.

*Survey Results for Question 21*

A final question regarding how educators can be helped in attaining wellness and self-care was question 20, "My school and administration support the practice of daily self-care". There were 206 respondents and 43.69% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed, 22.81% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed, and lastly, 33.50% neither disagree nor agree (see Figure 23).

Figure 23.

Survey Results for Question 20

Q20 My school and administration support the practice of daily self-care.
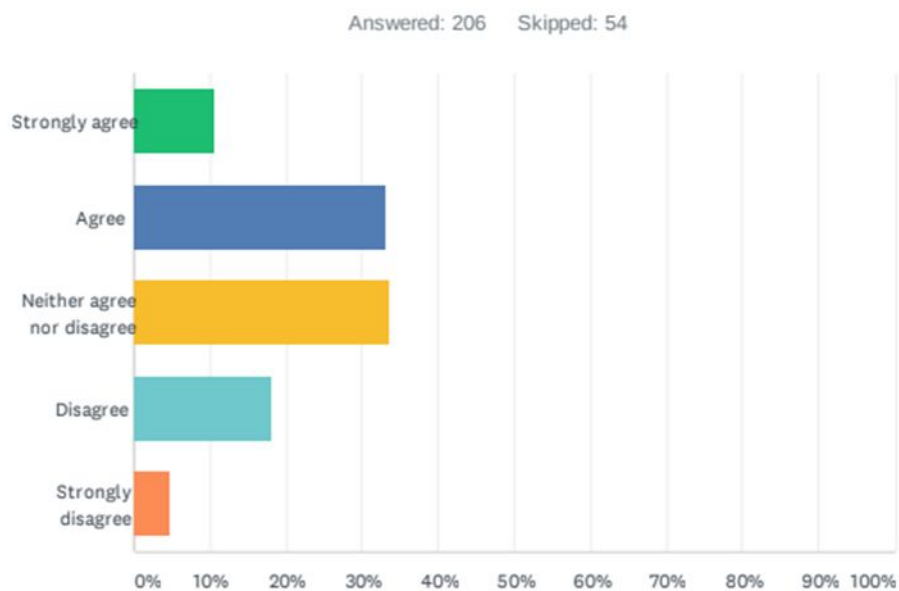
Answered: 206   Skipped: 54

*Question 24***:**

Are there any items or resources you do not currently have that you feel would enhance your self-care routine?

Question 24 was answered by 206 participants. The researchers asked this question to help gain an understanding of what tools or strategies educators would find helpful to enhance

their self-care routine. Out of the 206 participants, about 87 stated that there were no resources that would aid in the implementation of self-care. These responses were not listed below and needed to be considered in the conclusion of the results. The other participants shared ideas about lack of time, inability to exercise, and lack of money to support self-care (see Table 4).

Table 4.

Response to Question 24

| Examples of Participants' Responses |
| --- |
| "Time to meditate." |
| "Time. Since the beginning of the school year, I am working longer hours including nights and weekends." |
| "More access to massages or calming techniques." |
| "Water reminders." |
| "Subscription to a platform or classes that support self-care (yoga, mediation). " |
| "I like the idea of reminders, and having the support of school would be amazing as well." |
| "I would like a list of effective ways to implement self-care within a hectic schedule." |
| "Specific time during the day to practice self-care." |
| "I need a way to remind me to practice. An app or reminder of some kind." |
| "I need someone to look at my daily life and plan a routine that fits who I am." |
| "Just a plan and quick ways to practice self-care throughout the day!" |
| "Balance and self-motivation." |

Subgrouping of the Results

Researchers further considered how the years of teaching experience contributed to the answers in the survey. Researchers drew comparisons by comparing data from the least experienced participants, 3-5 years, and compared this data to more experienced participants of 20-25 years. Survey participants with 3-5 years of teaching experience represented 26 participants, 19 of which answered all questions. Survey participants with 20-25 years of teaching experience represented 45 participants, 37 of which answered all questions. See Figure

24 for the answers to Question 18, "The field of education is a demanding job that limits the

ability to practice self-care":

Figure 24.

Survey Results for Question 18 Grouped By Years of Experience: 3-5 Years

Q18 The field of education is a demanding job that limits the ability to practice self-care.

Answered: 19   Skipped: 7
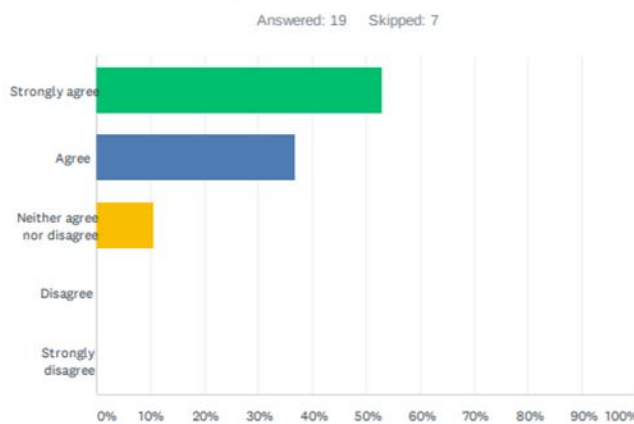
Of the participants with 3-5 years of experience, 52.63 % of participants strongly agreed,

36.84% of participants agreed, and 10.53% of participants neither agree nor disagree. In

conclusion, all participants perceived that the field of education is a demanding job.

Of the participants with 20-25 years of experience, 48.65 % of participants strongly

agreed, 32.43% of participants agreed, 8.11% of participants neither agree nor disagree, and

lastly, 10.81% of participants disagreed. In conclusion, this range of experience included a small

percentage of educators that disagreed that the field is demanding and limits self-care (see Figure

25).

Figure 25.

Survey Results for Question 18 Grouped By Years of Experience 20-25 Years

Q18 The field of education is a demanding job that limits the ability to practice self-care.

Answered: 37   Skipped: 8
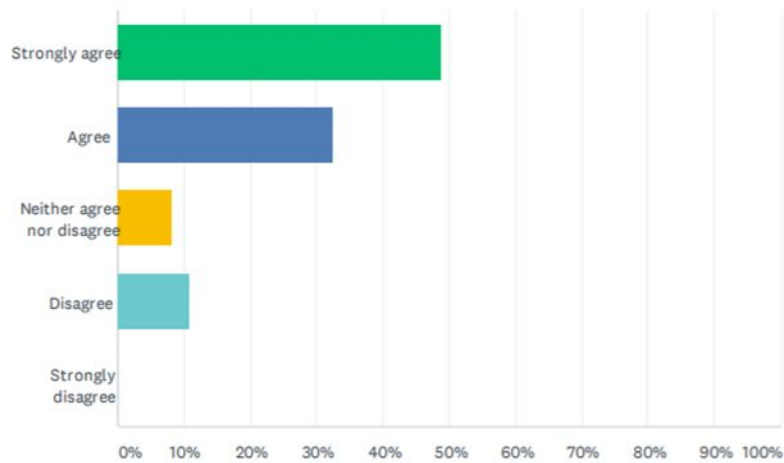
Question 24:

Are there any items or resources you do not currently have that you feel would enhance your self-care routine?

Question 24 drew conclusions about lack of time, inability to exercise, and lack of money to support self-care. Researchers continued to explore how this question was perceived by participants with varied years of experience (see Table 5).

Table 5.

Response to Q24 for Participants by Years of Experience

Years of Experience	Examples of Participants' Responses
3-5 years	"Time and access to resources." "Just a plan and quick ways to practice self-care throughout the day." "Strategies for mental self-care that isn't yoga."
20-25 years	"Specific time during the day to self-care." "Reminders to do what I know I should do would be great. Some kind of compassionate accountability would also be good." "No, I just have to make a point to do it."

In conclusion, researchers can conclude that the amount of experience in the field does not change the perception of it being demanding and limiting self-care. Researchers can use this subgrouping data to determine that the self-care application will act as a helpful tool for educators with any range of experience.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

Introduction

The field of education is stressful and demanding. It leaves little time for self-care. With daily reminders and encouragement, teachers that practice self-care can influence the future of education with retention in the field. The study focused on teacher perception of self-care implementation. The researchers found themes that emerged from the data to understand teacher perceptions of self-care implementation, limitations, and utilization of tools. Based on the compilation of data and themes, the researchers could draw conclusions and make interpretations to provide better self-care opportunities for educators.

Summary of Results

The survey included both Likert scale and open-ended questions. The results were triangulated to previous research on self-care knowledge, perceptions, and the ability in educators, which provided detailed information necessary to develop a technology application prototype. Through the data collected, conclusions to support self-care in educators can be made. The researchers can conclude based on the strong data from questions 18, "The field of education is a demanding job that limits the ability to practice self-care," and question 23, "Work-related stress inhibits me from practicing self-care daily," that there are demands in the field of education and it causes work-related stress. Based on this data, the researchers can conclude that there are existent hardships that teachers are well aware of. Despite these hardships, educators are still mostly practicing self-care daily to promote mental wellness. Researchers can conclude that the use of a self-care tool can help implement physiological self-care strategies, suggested from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, to help educators achieve better self-care daily.

Now that the researchers were able to conclude, based on the Likert scale questions on the survey, the need for those in the field of education to practice more self-care, questions 14, 19, 20, and 21 from the survey helped the researchers conclude how self-care can be practiced more efficiently and effectively in educators. Recognizing the need for self-care is one thing, while actually adopting it and being consistent with the regime for self-care is another. The results from question 14, "Daily reminders to practice self-care would be beneficial to my overall mindfulness practices," shows that educators can support the general wellness practices by being provided some sort of daily reminder. The results from question 19, "A self-care plan would help me attain my self-care goals," provided that a self-care plan would allow those educators to achieve self-care goals. The results showed a plan would benefit the majority of educators.

A self-care plan that perhaps encompassed daily reminders would help educators attain self-care goals better. This was supported in the two questions from the survey above and question 21, "Implementing attainable daily goals would help me practice self-care". Not only would a plan with daily reminders help educators practice better self-care, but these goals should also be attainable in order for the teachers to receive these self-care benefits. Making a cognizant effort to continue these types of interventions, even when the typical day doesn't go "as planned" may be an extremely successful missing piece to the teaching practice (Emerson et al., 2017).

The potential application can help with the continuation of these self-care strategies. A final question regarding how educators can be helped in attaining wellness and self-care is question 20, "My school and administration support the practice of daily self-care". The data gathered from this question showed that most educators from this group get support from the school and administration when practicing self-care. Without support from the top down, attaining self-care would be more difficult as the researchers have proven that the field of

education is demanding and causes stress. It is important to note that most educators surveyed do feel they receive support from the school and administration when it comes to practicing self-care.

The open-ended questions 24 and 25 provided information regarding any items or resources educators do not currently have that would enhance their self-care routine and the specific responsibilities, activities, or tasks preventing educators from practicing self-care. With these answers, suggestions and considerations were made by the researchers, for a tool that does not take much time to utilize.

In conclusion, the researchers gained insight as to what tools educators would use, if available, to practice self-care. The summary of data states that educators lack time to practice self-care daily. The majority of responses indicated that educators would like daily reminders to include self-care in small increments throughout the school day.

Some of the answers stated that there were "no tools needed" to practice self-care. Researchers concluded that these participants might not know how to integrate self-care into each day; therefore, do not know what tools to use daily. The conclusion from the study supports that educators would be better able to practice self-care by identifying personal, focal points of self-care.

Research Question Number One

What are teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care?

From the research conducted and data compiled from the survey, the researchers can provide information regarding the teachers' current perceptions, knowledge, and ability to practice self-care. According to the results from question five on the survey, 97.58% of those who completed the survey strongly agreed or agreed with knowledge of the definition of

self-care. According to question six, 83.95% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that practicing daily self-care is important to them. Question four from the survey, showed 80.58% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed on knowing how to integrate self-care into their lives daily. Question 12 showed that 91.26% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the understanding that self-care is a necessary element for success in personal commitments. In addition, 91.75% of the total respondents that strongly agreed or agreed that understanding self-care is an essential element for success in professional commitments showed very similar results to the previous. These results were concluded from question 13.

The results from question 15 showed that 74.27% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that they put students' needs in front of their self-care. Furthermore, 90.78% strongly agreed or agreed with question 16 that "teachers' felt they put their own family's needs in front of their self-care". The final question regarding research question one provided 98.54% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed with the statement "teachers' understanding of how physical well-being affects their emotional well-being". These results were concluded from question 10. There is significant awareness of the need for self-care in the educators surveyed. There are current perceptions, knowledge, and awareness of the ability to practice self-care in educators. Based on these questions from the survey, there is evidence that awareness regarding self-care exists in educators.

From previous research, teaching was considered a career with a very high burnout rate. The additional stress to manage other aspects of life, such as the ability to practice self-care is often compromised, because of the close attention to detail a particular teacher must have. There are many personalities, personal life problems and other factors, year-to-year, that affect students without even getting to the academics. Teachers spend a great deal of time getting through those

hurdles before even addressing the academics and curriculum. Burnout is a reality that comes with the high-stakes work of teaching, but there are resources and strategies available to help educators remain balanced in the classroom.

Research Question Number Two

What components, identified by equal to or greater than 50% of participating educators, should be focal points for self-care in teachers?

Question nine: "I get at least seven hours of sleep at night," showed that 49.03% of those surveyed strongly disagreed or disagreed, and 44.66% strongly agreed or agreed. While this is not exactly 50% or more of the respondents as stated in the research question, the number of teachers not doing this versus doing this is significantly larger. This data helped the researchers to conclude that this is significant enough to be a physiological need that teachers need to focus on more to have better self-care.

Question 17: "I drink at least six water glasses a day," provided data that 53.40% were already completing this task. Data showed that 6.31% neither agree nor disagree, potentially taking the above percentage and lowering it below the required 50% or more as stated in the research question. There were 40.29% of respondents from the survey not completing this task. As the researchers were able to conclude from research question one, there is a desire to have a self-care plan that encompasses daily, attainable reminders. Including a daily reminder regarding the amount of water an educator should be drinking each day and the amount of sleep, educators should be getting each night would better help educators meet self-care goals.

The next question that shows significance when looking at the number of respondents not completing a specific task that could help them practice better self-care daily was question 11. For this question, "I exercise at least 20 minutes daily," provided data to the researchers that

43.69% could complete this task. Results showed that 5.34% of respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with this statement, and the remaining 50.97% strongly disagreed or disagreed. Based on the data collected from this question, a daily reminder regarding 20 minutes of daily exercise would potentially help educators meet self-care goals better.

Question 22: "I eat a variety of fruits and vegetables daily," provides the researchers with a specific area that does not currently seem an issue for educators. Results showed that 67.48% of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that this was happening daily in the survey. Only 21.85% of the respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed with this statement. Last, 11.17% of respondents neither agree nor disagreed; however, the number of those not practicing this self-care would not be significantly affected based on the requirement stated in research question two.

In summary, participants expressed feeling stressed preparing for a new school year. The majority of participants said that their daily in-school responsibilities combined with their outside school responsibilities prohibited them from practicing self-care. Participants noted that children, household responsibilities, and secondary jobs all take priority over self-care goals.

The final question that helped the researchers answer research question two is question seven from the survey. This question asked if teachers understood how their physical well-being affected their emotional well-being. Based on the provided survey responses, 52.91% of educators strongly agreed or agreed with the statement. Another 16.50% of respondents neither agreed or disagreed, and 30.59% of respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed. From the responses to question seven, educators are focused on practicing self-care daily to promote physical wellness, although many are not.

Incorporating a daily reminder that would promote attainable goals would help encompass the 30.59% of survey respondents that are not currently practicing better self-care. When one is expected to think more about practicing better self-care, one's overall mental wellness will improve; therefore, better self-care in educators would be beneficial. Practicing self-care is essential for mental and physical wellness. Educators face many obstacles daily and expressed feeling stressed throughout the school day.

Research and results proved that focusing on specific areas that will promote resilience and wellness for educators. Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats, or significant sources of stress. Teachers who regularly experience more positive emotions may be more resilient (Fredrickson, 2001). Resilient people have a healthy self-perception and are committed to taking care of themselves (Shepell, 2019). To build more resilient educators that take care of themselves, the study provided that teachers need to get more sleep and exercise. These should be focus points for educators in order to achieve better self-care and encompassed in the potentially created application.

Self-care is when a person is attuned to their body, listening to it, taking moments to check on it, intentionally tuning into the thoughts in their mind, and challenging their behaviors and belief systems if things feel out of alignment in their life (Patel, 2020). More self-care equals more self-awareness, which equals more self-love, which will ripple out onto others you interact with every day in the form of compassion, gratitude, and deeper kindness (Lawler, 2020).

Based on ideas from Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, the researchers developed an application prototype encompassing the different categories of self-care that are easy to implement. The goal of the application is to encourage self-care by assessing the current needs of the educator. Teachers will take an assessment after downloading the application to pinpoint

unique paths to self-care. It will act as a daily reminder to encourage self-care practices. Making a cognizant effort to continue these types of interventions, even when the typical day doesn't go "as planned" may be an extremely successful missing piece to the teaching practice (Emerson et al., 2017). The potential application can help with the continuation of these self-care strategies.

In conclusion, the researchers gained insight as to what tools educators would use to practice self-care. The summary of data states that educators lack time to practice self-care daily. Many responses indicated that educators would like daily reminders to include self-care in small increments throughout the school day. Researchers conclude that this application may help the survey participants that did not know of any tools to help them achieve their goals. The conclusion from the study supports previous research that educators would be better able to practice self-care by pinpointing specific focus points to climb Maslow's five-tier model of human needs and reach self-actualization.

Limitations

The COVID-19 pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide. In the United States, school closures occurred, and a sudden emergency transition to distance learning. The survey results were gathered during the educational transition. Therefore, the results of the survey may be biased due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

However, the survey participants' results varied dramatically. Many participants felt that the COVID-19 pandemic aided in their ability to practice self-care because they did not have as many extra-curricular activities. This quarantine allowed them time to embrace a self-care routine as they had more to integrate daily strategies. In contrast, a large portion of the survey results indicated that participants felt overwhelmed by quarantine and distance learning's daily

pressure and stress. These participants expressed a decrease in their self-care as the demands from work and home increased.

A continued piece to this limitation is many respondents expressed having to care for others during their pandemic teaching which made practicing self-care difficult. Many of the polarized results could have been connected to caring for others. Researchers could have included a question to determine if the at home responsibilities of respondents reflected their perception of the pandemic teaching.

A limitation to the study was that the teacher participants being studied are only those currently teaching and those that have been actively teaching for the last three years. Therefore, the unique experiences of the surveyed group may not represent all teachers' needs to practice self-care.

Another limitation in the study is the questionnaires being distributed online, and the researchers do not know if the participants are true to the stated requirements.

A final limitation is the lack of subgrouping teachers by specific grade level, content area, and specialization may not clearly distinguish the teachers that need particular support. Out of the 270 respondents, 54 respondents skipped the open-ended questions. The open-ended questions require more thought and time, which may be the reason for this. These respondents were included in the Likert scale results. Other wellness strategies for teachers, aside from self-care, were not focused on during this study. These alternative strategies may also be ways teachers can incorporate to avoid burnout.

Implications for Future App Development

Based on the results, researchers concluded that a tool to help educators practice self-care would be beneficial. These results are consistent with previous research. Teachers should use

tools to aid in promoting self-care to build resilience. Reinforcing the importance of self-care to teachers may help define what a healthy teacher should look like.

Many of the results indicated that educators lack the time or motivation to plan self-care strategies. Suggestions from question 24 helps researchers understand that a quick way that is easily implemented to help build a better routine to promote balance, self-motivation, and self-care would be beneficial. Based on this information, the researchers considered a technology application as the useful tool to act as a reminder for the daily integration of self-care strategies.

An application prototype has been created based on results from the survey and literature review. Once users download and open the application, users will be directed to participate in a brief survey to gauge the initial self-care needs. This application will direct participants to choose manageable and attainable goals. These selections will act as a guide or reminder for app users. Users can choose to keep track of their goals and continuously make new goals to aid in self-care. Researchers conclude that an application like this can help educators integrate self-care strategies daily.

Recommendations for Future Studies

Researchers recommend further research on the future effects of the Covid-19 pandemic and maintaining proper self-care strategies. Since results were so varied from the research, future research may help determine why some educators were able to implement strategies more effectively than others.

Research should continue on analyzing the effects of a school-wide self-care implementation program. This research may include the effects of these interventions on specific grade and content areas. This study may also include how years of teaching experience may manipulate the implementation of self-care strategies.

Higher education is constantly reshaping their curriculum to support the hurdles professionals will encounter when entering the workforce. Perhaps, a focused course in higher education, teacher preparation programs would support better self-care in education through exposure of effective and efficient strategies.

Ongoing professional development could support self-care by exposing educators to effective and efficient strategies to accomplish the five-tiers of needs from Maslow's Hierarchy after graduating from higher education.

Finally, if the application prototype is developed, a recommendation would be to complete a pre- and -post survey with those using the tool with fidelity. This information would also be useful to collect in order to continue to meet educator's needs through ongoing improvement of the technology application.

Summary

Teaching is a demanding profession with a high burnout rate. Teachers lack self-care strategies to help them cope with a demanding and emotional career. Daily implementation of self-care strategies can help teachers develop the skills necessary to face difficulties that arise in the education profession. According to research results and Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, educators need to set attainable daily goals to fulfill their physiological needs to best serve themselves and others. Incorporating strategies to support better self-care through daily reminders and attainable goals could help educators be better prepared for the high demands and stress of their job. The recent COVID-19 pandemic has created additional challenges for educators through a hybrid model of learning.

Through the research process, educators were surveyed regarding current knowledge and perceptions of self-care. Through the data collected and triangulation, the researchers were able

to conclude that educators had current knowledge and perceptions of the ability to practice self-care but lacked direct tools to implement self-care strategies. This information was consistent with the previous research. Researchers understood ways to support self-care in educators based on results from the survey and themed suggestions from open-ended questions. One specific tool that could help educators attain better self-care through daily reminders is through the use of an application. Time is consistently a concern in educators and was mentioned often in the study. This application will direct participants to choose manageable and attainable goals in a timely manner.

These selections will help educators with balance and routine and act as a quick guide or reminder for app users, which educators requested in the survey. Once the selections are made, educators can keep track of goals and continuously make new goals to aid in self-care. Researchers conclude that an application like this can help educators integrate self-care strategies daily. When an educator receives a sense of satisfaction in meeting goals then they become worthwhile.

Research proves teachers are overwhelmed and need time for wellness. This is demanding and emotional labor is stressful and leads to teacher burnout and the school's inability to retain teachers (Philibert et al., 2020). Emotional exhaustion is the most predictive dimension of teacher burnout. The needs of educators must be met through self-care goals.

Research shows that self-care builds resilience. Teachers that focus on self-care will be more successful in developing resilience. Resilient people have a healthy self-perception and are committed to taking care of themselves (Shepell, 2019). High levels of job stress are strongly related to subsequent burnout, but high self-actualization and resilience act as an effective barrier between job stress and burnout (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). In order for teachers to reach

self-actualization, they must first meet their bottom tier needs. They must implement self-care

strategies to do so. With daily reminders and encouragement, teachers that practice self-care can

impact the future of education.

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Appendix A:

Teachers Teaching During COVID-19 Facebook Group

https://www.facebook.com/groups/742796306549538/

Appendix B:

Flyer for the Study

Are you an active teacher with 3 prior years of experience?

Volunteers needed for a research study.

★ Please help us complete our study by answering the attached survey.

★ The time involved– Approximately 20 Minutes

★ If you don't qualify or don't have time, please pass this on to someone who does

Contact: Jacqueline Leahy jleahy2@email.lynn.edu , or Jamie Wolfe jwolfe@email.lynn.edu For additional information.

Appendix C:

Informed Consent

1. The purpose of this study is to research how the integration of daily reminders may help build consistent self-care strategies.

Specific Procedures

Your participation in this study will assist in learning about the self-care habits of educators and how these habits can be integrated into a daily routine. You will be asked to answer 19 questions about your self-care habits as an educator.

Duration of Participation and Compensation

The total duration of your participation should be no longer than 20 minutes. There will be no compensation for participation.

Risks

This online questionnaire is strictly voluntary, and no penalty will be imposed for non-participation. There are minimal risks in participating in the questionnaire. However, if you feel uncomfortable or anxious at any time, you may press the "X" button in the upper right-hand corner of the questionnaire and exit out of the questionnaire.

Benefits

There are no benefits for answering the questionnaire, however, educators may enjoy sharing their knowledge and experience in order to contribute to the research about the impact of self-care strategies on educators.

Confidentiality

This questionnaire is strictly anonymous and there is no identifying information. No IP addresses will be kept or known to the researchers. Your answers to questions will be stored for two years on a password-protected computer and after that time will be deleted. This project's research records may be reviewed by the departments at Lynn University responsible for regulatory and research oversight.

Documentation of Informed Consent

I have had an opportunity to read the consent form and have the research study explained. I have had an opportunity to ask questions about the research project and my questions have been answered. I am prepared to participate in the research study described above. By clicking "OK" I am consenting to participate in the study.

- OK, you have my permission

Appendix D:

Needs-Based Assessment

Demographic Questions:

How many years of teaching experience do you have?

0-2 Years	3-5 Years	6-9 Years	10-15 Years	16-19 Years	20-25 Years	25 Years +

Are you a current full-time teacher in the United States with at least three consecutive years of teaching and are 22 years of age or older?

Likert Scale Questions:

On a scale of 1 to 5, how strongly do you feel about the following statements:

1. I understand how to integrate self-care into my life daily.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

2. I know the definition of self-care.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

3. Practicing daily self-care is important to me.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

4. I practice self-care daily to promote physical wellness.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

5. I practice self-care daily to promote mental wellness.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

6. I get at least seven hours of sleep nightly.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

7. I understand how my physical well-being affects my emotional well-being.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

8. I exercise at least 20 minutes daily.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

9. I understand that self-care is a necessary element for success in my personal commitments.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

10. I understand that self-care is a necessary element for success in my professional commitments.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

11. Daily reminders to practice self-care would be beneficial to my overall mindfulness practices.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

12. I put the needs of my students in front of my own self-care.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

13. I put the needs of my family in front of my own self-care.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

14. I drink at least 6 glasses of water a day.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

15. The field of education is a demanding job that limits the ability to practice self-care.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

16. A self-care plan would help me attain my self-care goals.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

17. My school and administration support the practice of daily self-care.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

18. Implementing attainable daily goals would help me practice self-care.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

19. I eat a variety of fruits and vegetables daily.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

20. Work related stress inhibits me from practicing self-care daily.

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree

Open-Ended Options:

21. Are there any items or resources you do not currently have that you feel would enhance your self-care routine?

22. What are your specific responsibilities, activities, or tasks that prevent you from practicing self-care daily?

23. How has the recent COVID-19 pandemic affected your daily self-care routine? What suggestions do you have for others going through the same experience?
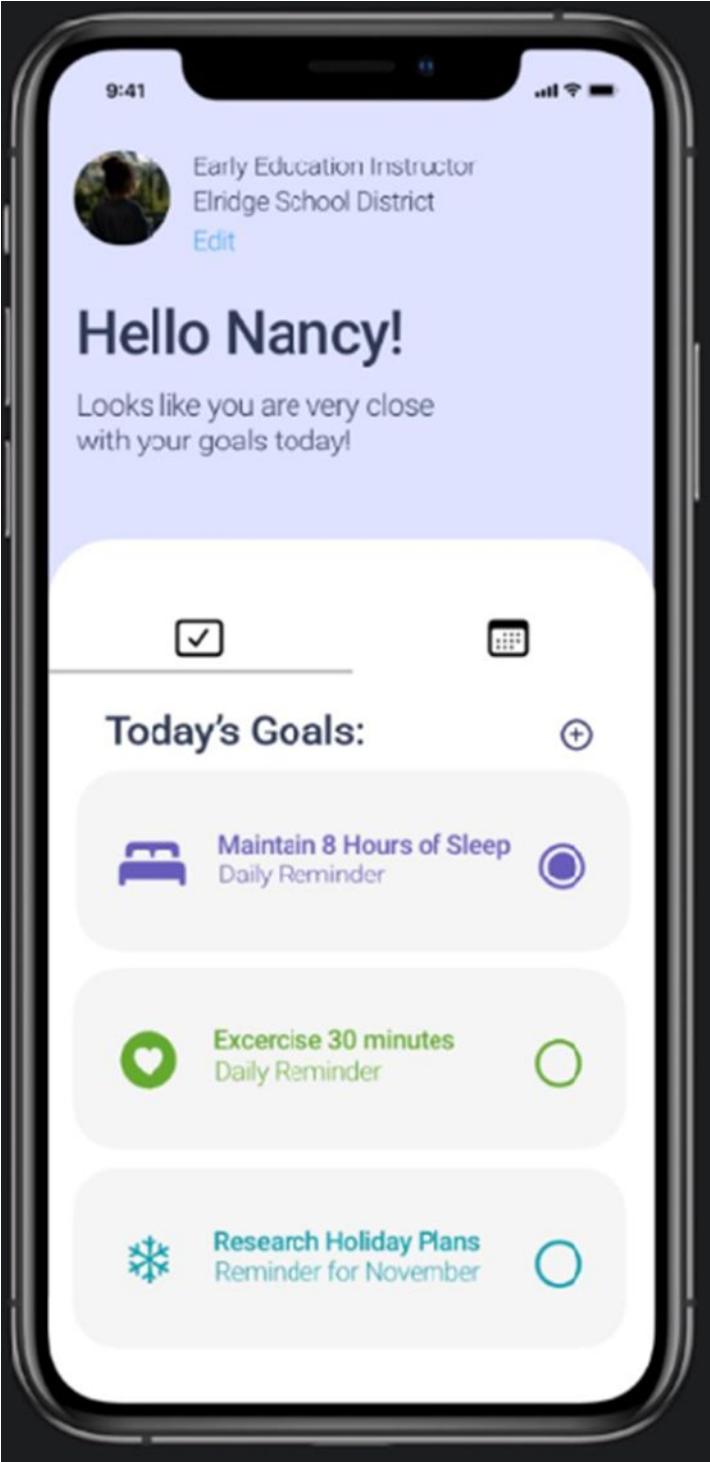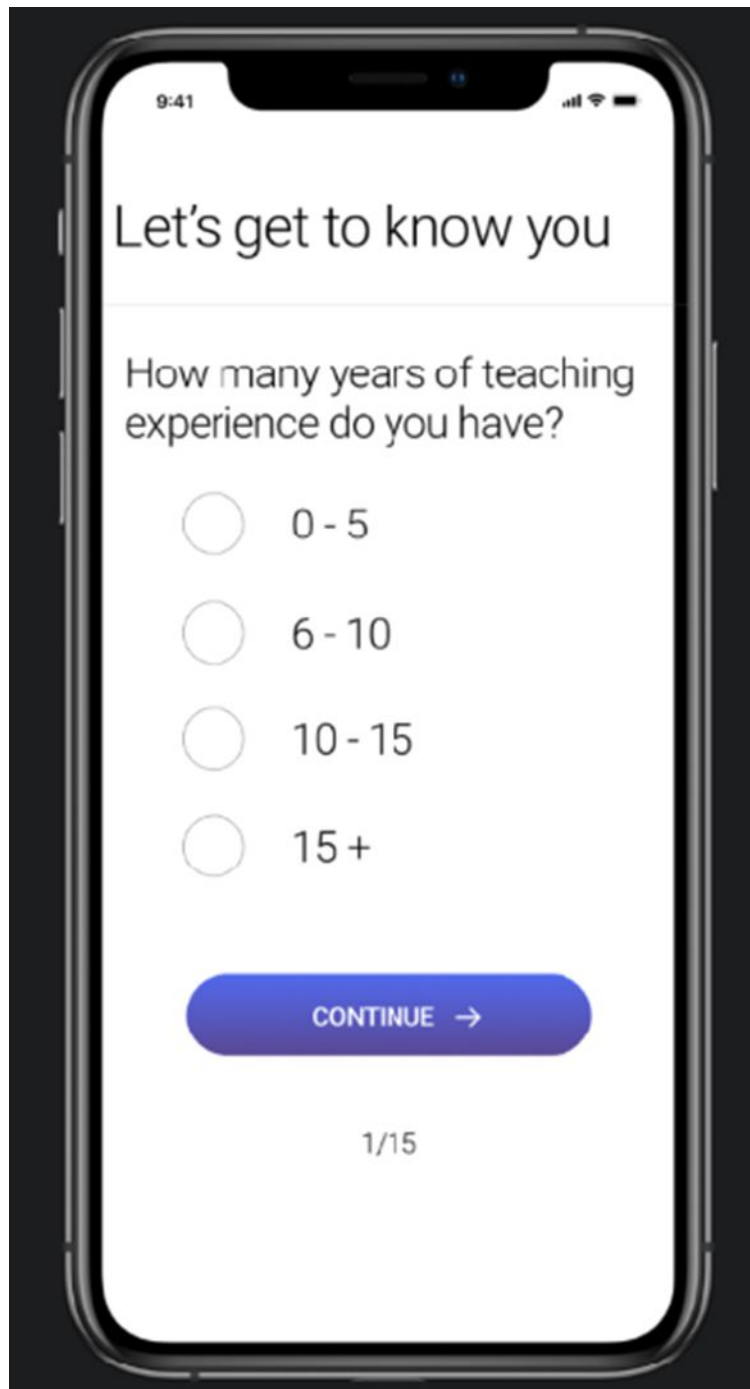
Appendix E:

Product Prototype A
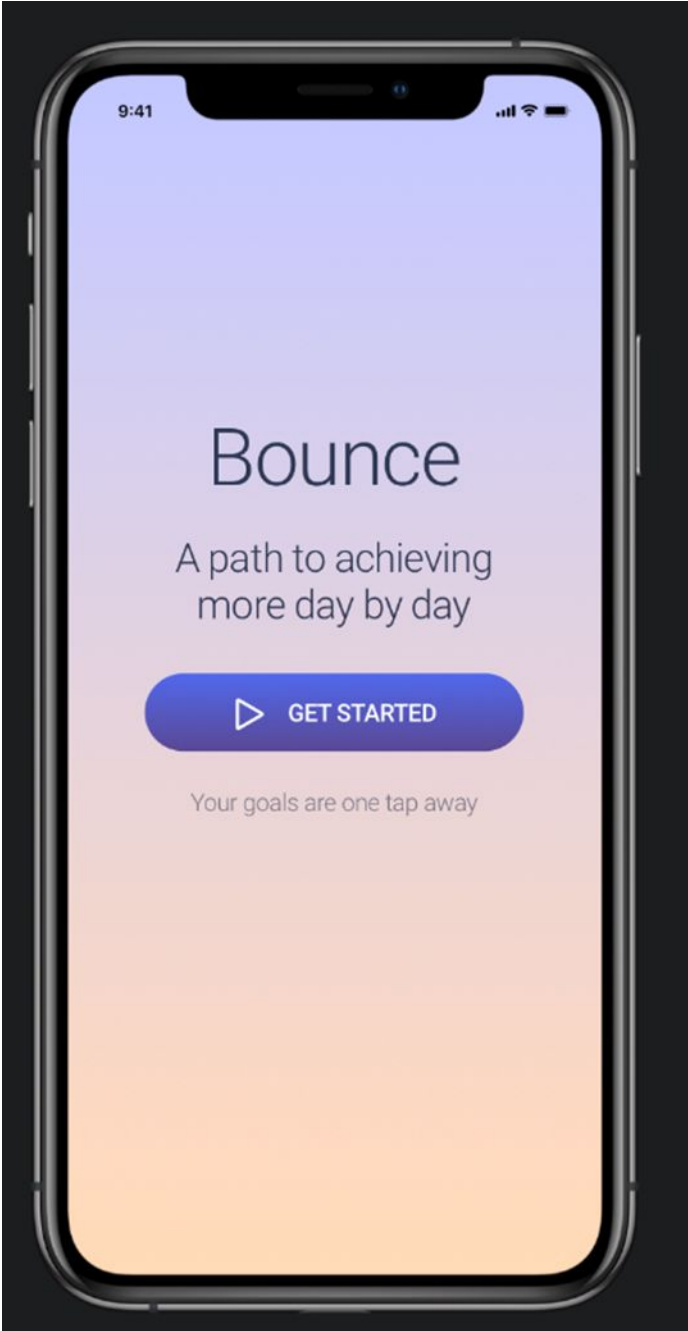
Appendix F:

Product Prototype B
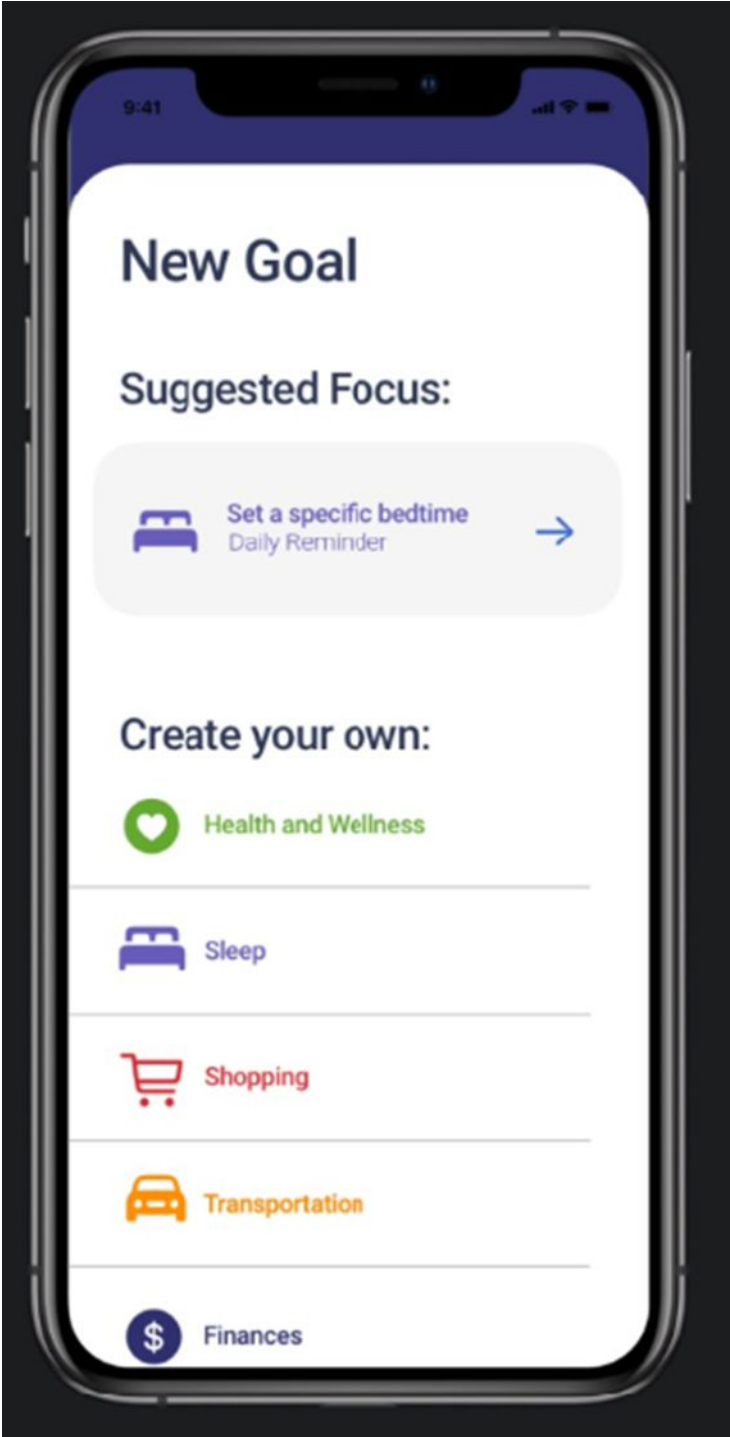
Appendix G:

Product Prototype C

Appendix H:

Product Prototype D

Appendix I:

Product Prototype E