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Impacts of the TREP Intervention Program on Pre-Service EFL Teachers

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ABSTRACT

As the global teacher shortage continues to grow, the teaching profession is struggling to retain its workforce and attract new candidates. This situation is also prominent in Israel where there has been a decrease in the number of applicants and graduates in all tracks of teacher education in the last few years. The teacher shortage is intensely felt in all core subjects, including in English as a Foreign Language (EFL). This study set out to investigate the impacts of an innovative teaching program, the TREP program, on third year pre-service EFL teachers' levels of self-efficacy, sense of coherence in teaching situations (SOCITS) and motivation to pursue a career in teaching; and to examine whether these factors influenced their decision to pursue a teaching career upon graduation. This study employed mixed methods: 32 pre-service EFL teachers completed a pre-post questionnaire and kept reflective diaries throughout the TREP program and 22 of them were also interviewed. The quantitative data was analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics, whereas thematic analysis was used to analyse the qualitative data. The findings revealed a significant increase in the levels of self-efficacy, SOCITS and two of the motivation factors: perceived teaching ability and intrinsic career values following the participation in the TREP program. The qualitative analysis supported these findings and shed light on the importance of all four components of the TREP program: Teaching, Relationships, Exposure and Pedagogy. Nevertheless, only 53% of the participants decided to pursue a teaching career. Implications for teacher education programs are discussed.

1. Introduction

The role of teachers in molding the future of nations cannot be stressed enough. According to the OECD (2023), teachers are the most important assets in schools and receiving instruction from exceptional teachers can have a profound impact on students' lives and create tangible positive changes. Teachers are the foundation of every education system and hold a crucial position in fostering the academic, social, and emotional growth of students. Thus, in pursuit of enhancing schools' efficiency, effectiveness, and equity, the need for qualified and competent teachers is indispensable.

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However, a growing global concern revolves around the scarcity of certified and competent teachers, resulting in a decline in the quality of education and the exacerbation of educational inequities (OECD, 2023; UNESCO, 2024). Teaching and teacher education have been facing a profound crisis for a few decades and this includes challenges recruiting, training, preparing, and preserving teachers of high-quality in the system (Kfir & Ariav, 2004; Weinberger & Donitsa- Schmidt, 2016). Even more worrying are the national reports from various countries that also reveal that a substantial proportion of graduates from teacher education programs do not pursue careers as teachers following their teacher training (OECD, 2005).

According to UNESCO (2022), an estimated 68.8 million teachers must be recruited worldwide to achieve the Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG4). This global teacher shortage is particularly acute in Israel, where the Ministry of Education has declared a crisis across all subject areas (Central Bureau of Statistics (CBS), 2024; Weissblay, 2023). At the start of the 2022/23 academic year, Israel faced a shortfall of 5,671 teachers, of which 871 were English as a Foreign Language (EFL) teachers (CBS, 2022). This crisis is compounded by a steady decline in the number of individuals choosing to enter the teaching profession and an increasing attrition rate among practicing teachers (CBS, 2024). Findings from international surveys have highlighted the low status of teachers in Israel. In a 2018 survey ranking the public perception of teachers across 35 countries, Israel placed 34th, indicating a critically low standing for primary and secondary educators (Dolton et al., 2018). Similar findings were reported in 2013 (Dolton et al., 2013), demonstrating a persistent lack of improvement. More recent research found that teachers in Israel ranked the lowest among all professions, with public perception declining even further since 2018 (Donitsa-Schmidt et al., 2021).

The shortage of qualified teachers can be attributed to multiple factors, including low salaries and the diminished social status of teachers in Israeli society (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky, 2016). Additional contributors include excessive workload, teacher burnout, challenging working conditions, parental attitudes, and policies set by the Ministry of Education, such as large class sizes and the increasing complexity of student populations (Weissblay, 2023). As a result, schools often resort to hiring educators outside their trained subject areas or uncertified candidates. In response to this severe EFL teacher shortage, pre-service teachers (PSTs) are frequently recruited for teaching positions before completing their formal training. Many pre-service EFL teachers (PSEFLTs) find themselves teaching in schools during their second or third year of study. While this early entry into the profession provides practical experience, research indicates that it also leads to higher dropout rates. Weinberger and Donitsa-Schmidt (2016) found that several PSTs who began teaching before completing their degrees ultimately left the profession, despite being close to fulfilling their formal coursework requirements.

To address issues of teacher shortage, many countries have implemented policies and programs aimed at attracting and retaining more teachers (OECD, 2023). The issue at hand is whether teacher education programs offer the optimal learning experience to prepare the prospective teachers for the classroom situations they will encounter in the field. Moreover, to what degree are teacher education programs prioritizing the question of whether their graduates are even considering pursuing a career in teaching following their teacher education program. Teacher education programs differ across countries due to differences in context and national needs. However, the structure, coursework and field experience offered in the programs will undoubtedly affect the level of preparation of the PSTs (UNESCO, 2022).

2. Literature Review

A review of the current literature reveals that graduates' decisions to pursue or not pursue a teaching career after completing a teacher education program have received minimal attention (Rots et al., 2014; Watt & Richardson, 2008). Nonetheless, internal factors such as self-efficacy, Sense of Coherence in Teaching Situations (SOCITS) and motivation have been identified as influential in PSTs' choices to enter the teaching profession upon graduation.

2.1 Self-Efficacy

Self-efficacy, defined as the belief in one's ability to organize and perform actions to achieve goals (Bandura, 1997), reliably predicts pre-service teachers' intentions to pursue a teaching career. Bandura (1997, 2008) asserts that self-efficacy is a learned belief system that can change based on tasks and context. It influences the challenges and goals individuals set, their efforts, and perseverance. Bandura has identified four sources to develop self-efficacy: mastery experiences, social modeling, verbal persuasion, and physiological states. Among these, mastery experiences, which involve repeated success and resilience in the face of failure, foster the strongest self-efficacy (Bandura, 2008). Furthermore, self-efficacy affects cognitive, motivational, affective, and decisional processes, thereby influencing career choices and overall life outcomes (Bandura, 2008).

More specifically, teacher self-efficacy, defined by Bandura (2008) as the belief in one's teaching capability, is a strong predictor of behavior. Tschannen-Moran and Woolfolk Hoy (2001) describe it as an assessment of one's ability to promote student engagement and learning outcomes, even with challenging students. It encompasses self-efficacy for student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies. Research has shown that teacher self-efficacy is closely linked to persistence, enthusiasm, commitment, instructional behavior, and student achievement (Calkins et al., 2023).

In addition, studies indicate that self-efficacy may serve as a predictor of behavior and performance (Bandura, 1997; Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Specifically, research conducted in various countries have shown that self-efficacy beliefs influence career decisions and intentions to pursue a career in teaching (Lavrenteva & Orland-Barak, 2019; Pfitzer-Eden, 2016; Rots et al., 2014). Additionally, positive feedback and favorable perceptions of teacher education programs have been found to be linked to higher self-efficacy (Vagi et al., 2017). Other studies have found that effective mentors and supportive faculty can enhance self-efficacy (Cansiz & Cansiz, 2019; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2020; Senler, 2016) whereas high anxiety and stress can lower it (Cansiz & Cansiz, 2019). Some studies have reported a decrease in self-efficacy at the end of teacher education programs (Pendergast et al., 2011; Woolfolk-Hoy, 2000).

2.2 Sense of Coherence in Teaching Situations (SOCITS)

Sense of coherence in teaching situations (SOCITS) is derived from Antonovsky's theory of sense of coherence (SOC) (1979, 1987). SOC is a concept that explains individuals' ability to perceive their experiences as comprehensible, manageable and meaningful, thus enabling them to cope with stress more effectively. Individuals with a strong SOC tend to be more resilient and less affected by stress, whereas those with a weaker SOC are more prone to anxiety and burnout (Eriksson & Lindström, 2014). Although Antonovsky (1979) initially suggested that SOC stabilizes in early adulthood, later studies indicate that it continues to develop based on life experiences and targeted interventions (Skodova & Lajciakova, 2013).

Higher education presents numerous academic and social stressors for students, including PSTs, who must balance coursework, social interactions, and career planning (Togari et al.,

2008). Self-efficacy, social support, and structured learning environments have been found to contribute to stronger SOC in students, promoting well-being and academic success (Kim et al., 2017), whereas lack of support can lead to stress, disengagement, and decreased motivation (Shankland et al., 2019).

For PSTs, SOC is especially relevant given the challenges they face in their teaching practicum—a critical period where they transition from theory to practice (Kokkinos & Stavropoulos, 2016). Studies indicate that PSTs with higher SOC levels experience lower stress, greater confidence, and stronger professional identity (Cohen et al., 2013; Klassen & Chiu, 2011). Those with weaker SOC, on the other hand, are more vulnerable to burnout and may reconsider their commitment to teaching (Nghia & Huynh, 2019).

Recognizing the importance of coping mechanisms in teacher education, Bracha and Hoffenbartal (2015) introduced Sense of Coherence in Teaching Situations (SOCITS). SOCITS reflects the perceptions of pre-service and in-service teachers regarding their ability to understand, manage, and find meaning in teaching-related challenges. Like SOC, SOCITS comprises three key dimensions: Comprehensibility, the ability to interpret and predict various teaching situations, understand student needs, and develop a clear sense of professional identity; Manageability, the extent to which teachers feel they have the skills, resources, and support to handle classroom challenges, lesson planning, and student behavior; and Meaningfulness, the emotional and motivational connection teachers feel toward their profession, including their sense of purpose and satisfaction in working with students.

Research suggests that PSTs with high SOCITS are better equipped to handle the demands of teaching, display stronger professional commitment, and are less likely to experience burnout (Bracha & Hoffenbartal, 2015, 2022). Moreover, SOCITS serves as a predictor of teacher well-being and long-term retention, as those with higher SOCITS levels are more motivated to face challenges and believe in their ability to overcome obstacles (Bracha & Hoffenbartal, 2022; Levy, 2023).

Bracha and Hoffenbartal (2022) identified four key factors that influence SOCITS' levels in PSTs: pedagogical preparedness, the most significant factor, encompassing time management, lesson planning, and classroom adaptability; student-teacher relationships; professional identity, teachers who develop a clear sense of professional purpose are more resilient in challenging situations; and school environment, support from colleagues, mentors, and school leadership significantly boosts teachers' confidence and ability to manage their roles effectively.

Although SOCITS research is still emerging, existing findings suggest that integrating SOCITS-enhancing strategies into teacher training programs can strengthen PSTs' resilience and professional commitment (Bracha & Hoffenbartal, 2022; Levy, 2023). PSTs with a strong SOCITS are better prepared to handle classroom complexities, build meaningful relationships with students, and maintain motivation despite challenges (Bracha & Hoffenbartal, 2015). Given that many novice teachers leave the profession due to stress (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009), building SOCITS could be a crucial factor in improving teacher retention and well-being.

2.3 Motivation

Initial motivation is a widely discussed predictor of PSTs' intentions to pursue a teaching career after completing their studies (Bergmark et al., 2018; De Cooman et al., 2007). Most PSTs enroll in teacher education colleges with the intention of becoming teachers, and this initial motivation can influence their decision to enter the profession upon graduation (Manuel & Hughes, 2006). Initial motivation is derived from three core types: altruistic (a

desire to help society), intrinsic (positive characteristics of the teaching profession itself), and extrinsic (external factors) (Balyer & Ozcan, 2014). Studies provide evidence that all three types are significant among PSTs and can predict their commitment to the profession and their decision to complete their teacher training program and embark on a teaching career upon graduation (Mukminim et al., 2017; Reeves & Lowenhaupt, 2016). **Salifu et al. (2018)**, found that intrinsic motivation played a critical role in the decision to pursue a teaching career. In other studies, altruistic motivation emerged as the primary driving force behind the decision for opting to pursue a teaching (Davis et al., 2019; Hennessy & Lynch, 2017). And still other studies have found that altruistic and intrinsic motivation together have a more substantial impact. For example, Noor et al. (2021) in Pakistan found that high levels of satisfaction from teacher training programs were reported when affective rewards and intrinsic and altruistic motivations were more significant than extrinsic motivations and financial benefits. Similarly, Fuster (2020) in the Dominican Republic and Calkins et al. (2023) in the U.S.A. found that PSTs were driven by a combination of intrinsic and altruistic motives. Bergmark et al. (2018) contended that PSTs are more inclined to pursue a teaching career after graduating when they have mixed motivations for being a teacher, as multiple motivations can provide resilience if one motivation is not fulfilled.

There is, however, little consenus on the defintions of the three motivation types, leading to overlapping categorizatios across studies. To address this issue, Richardson and Watt (2006) introduced the FIT-Choice model which provides a comprehensive framework for measuring teacher motivation, incorporating intrinsic, extrinsic, and altruistic factors, along with self-perceptions and task-related perceptions. Using this scale, teaching-related abilities were found to be the highest rated motivations identified for opting for a career in teaching (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2015; Suryani et al., 2016).

Regardless of the type of motivation, several studies have shown that initial motivation for teaching is strongly correlated with PSTs' commitment and their decision to embark on a teaching career is largely influenced by the motivation present during the early stages of teacher education programs (e.g., Dincer & Seferoglu, 2019; Rots & Aelterman, 2009; Rots et al., 2014; Watt & Richardson, 2007, 2012). Conversely, PSTs who chose not to enter the teaching profession upon gradutaing from their teacher education, were found to have significantly lower initial motivation (Rots et al., 2014).

2.4 Teacher Education Programs

Teacher education programs have been found to influence PSTs' decisions to pursue a teaching career upon graduating (Rots et al., 2014). However, a comprehensive review of the literature reveals that many studies have highlighted the perceived inadequacy of preparation among PSTs upon completing their teacher education programs (Alwahibee, 2016; Chaw & Kopp, 2021; Ma & Cavanagh, 2018). Despite these concerns, certain components of these programs are considered essential for adequately preparing PSTs.

The practicum is a cornerstone of teacher education, offering PSTs the opportunity to bridge theory and practice in real-world settings (Chien, 2015; Gray et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2016). When well-structured and collaborative, it enhances PSTs' skills, knowledge, and overall readiness for the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2006). Kessel and Korthagen (2001) argue that practical wisdom is cultivated through active engagement. Furthermore, research by Orland-Barak and Leshem (2009) emphasizes that meaningful experience, rather than passive observation, is essential for professional development. However, despite its importance, the practicum has been widely criticized for various shortcomings (Agudo, 2017; Akcan, 2016; Karakas & Yavuz, 2018). The quality of this experience is crucial, as positive practicum

experiences support learning and professional growth, while negative ones can hinder development (Gray et al., 2019).

Beyond skill development, the practicum plays a key role in shaping PSTs' understanding of students, school environments, and institutional culture (Arslan & Ilin, 2018; Kosar & Bedir, 2019). Additionally, self-efficacy among PSTs undergoes significant changes during this period, as they integrate theoretical coursework into authentic teaching experiences (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2007). Effective field experiences have been linked to increased self-efficacy, which in turn reduces teacher attrition rates (Brown et al., 2015; Chestnut & Burley, 2015).

A critical factor in the success of the practicum is the role of mentor teachers, whose guidance significantly influences PSTs' preparedness for teaching (Orland-Barak & Wang, 2020). Supportive mentorship fosters confidence and motivation, ultimately strengthening PSTs' commitment to the profession (Levy & Popa, 2022; Mena & Reedy, 2022).

Despite the practical training provided, there is often a gap between theory and practice in teacher education programs. Graduates frequently express dissatisfaction with the disparity between their training and real-world experiences (Chaw & Kopp, 2021; Karakas & Yavuz, 2018; Karim et al., 2019; Yin, 2019). Therefore, establishing a connection between theory and practice is essential for effective teacher education (Allen et al., 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2006, 2017; Gravett & Ramsaroop, 2015; Korthagen, 2011).

In addition, effective pedagogical practices, such as microteaching and reflective practices are also vital for bridging the gap between academic content and real-world teaching. Microteaching helps PSTs refine their teaching skills through short, small-scale lessons in a supportive environment (Banga, 2014; Brown et al., 2015) and enables PSTs to put theoretical knowldege into practice (Punia et al., 2016). Other benefits of microteaching include increased levels of self-efficacy (Ma & Cavanagh, 2018), and development of professional identity (Riyanti & Sarroub, 2016). In addition, reflective practices help increase awareness (Farrell, 2016; Gan & Lee, 2016) and help PSTs understand their strengths and weaknesses, improving lesson planning, time management and teaching strategies (Amalia et al., 2020; Msimanga, 2020). The combination of these two practices are crucial for PSTs' professional development (Russell, 2017).

Finally, nurturing relationships between PSTs and pedagogical instructors (PIs) is crucial for the PSTs' development. Positive relationships can enhance PSTs' learning (Frisby & Gaffney, 2015; Quin, 2017), confidence (Huang et al., 2020; Levy & Popa, 2022; Ma & Cavanagh, 2018; Quin, 2017), and motivation (Phillips & Roger, 2020; Quin, 2017).

Based on this literature review, a pioneering teacher education methodology program was developed. This program, called the teaching, relationship, exposure and pedagogy (TREP) program, is tailored to PSEFLTs in the third year of their teacher education and focuses on four major areas that have been found to be critical and significant in the development of PSEFLTs: the *Teaching* (*Practicum)* component; the *Relationship* between the PSTs and the PIs, the mentors, and the faculty; the PSTs' *Exposure to the Field* (in-service EFL teachers, experts who specialize in "Unique" population and stakeholders); and the *Pedagogy* component. The aim of this program is to enhance PSEFLTs' self-efficacy, SOCITS, and motivation to pursue a teaching career in order to increase the possibility that the PSTs will opt for a teaching career after graduation.

The current study focuses on the contribution of this program to PSEFLTs and consequently to combating the EFL teacher shortage in Israel.

3. Method

This study implements a mixed method design. The quantitative study adopted a *One-Group Pretest-Posttest Design* and to validate the findings, the researcher added a *Posttest Only with Non-Equivalent Groups Design*, in which a control group that did not receive any treatment was also assigned the post-test. This design is beneficial for several reasons: First, it can be assumed that PSEFLTs in the third year of their teacher education programs in Israel are equivalent in all teacher education colleges around the country as the entrance requirements and the program outlines in all colleges are set by the Council of Higher Education (CHE). By third year, all PSEFLTs should have studied similar courses and should have had at least one full year of practicum. As such any difference in the outcome measured may be attributed to the intervention program, and not initial differences between the groups. The quantitative study is followed by a qualitative one.

This quasi-experimental study aims to investigate the influence of the TREP intervention program on Israeli PSEFLTs' levels of self-efficacy, SOCITS, and motivation.

The following hypotheses will be tested in this study:

- H1: Pre-service EFL teachers will report higher self-efficacy following their participation in the TREP intervention program.
- H2: Pre-service EFL teachers will report higher SOCITS following their participation in the TREP intervention program.
- H3: Pre-service EFL teachers will report higher motivation to pursue a career in teaching following their participation in the TREP intervention program.

In addition, the following research question will be examined:

- What is the influence of the TREP program on the PSEFLTs' motivation to pursue a teaching career?

In the qualitative study, in order to understand the subjective experience of PSEFLTs following their participation in the TREP program, the following research questions will be explored:

- Which leading factors in the intervention program emerged in the discourse of the PSEFLTs as being significant in their perceptions of teaching?
- How may these factors have impacted the PSEFLTs' self-efficacy, SOCITS, and motivation?
- How may these perceptions have impacted the decision-making process of PSEFLTs with regard to pursuing a teaching career?

3.1 Participants

The sample of the quantitative study comprised all 36 third year PSEFLTs studying in the third year of a teacher education college in Israel. Of the participants, eight were males and twenty-eight were female students and their average age was 26.5. During the academic year, four third year students dropped out from the program. Three due to health issues and one as a result of not keeping up with the academic program. The final number of participants was therefore 32.

To recruit participants, the study was presented to all third-year English department students, inviting them to participate. For the control group, EFL PIs at Israeli teacher education

colleges, were asked to share a Google form with their third-year students. Initial responses were low, but follow-up requests resulted in 15 PSEFLTs (2 males, 13 females, average age 28) agreeing to participate. The questionnaires were anonymous. Pre-questionnaires were distributed during the first session of the academic year. Post-questionnaires were given to the TREP participants and to the control group at the end of the academic year.

For the qualitative study, all 32 PSEFLTs in the TREP program were invited to participate in interviews, with a 69% response rate (N=22). Data saturation was reached after 19 interviews, so the sample was capped at 22 participants. In addition, all 32 kept reflective journals.

3.2 Instruments

For the quantitative study, data collection was conducted through the administration of a self-report questionnaire. The questionnaire used was composed of three sub-questionnaires: *the FIT-Choice questionnaire* (Watt & Richardson, 2007) to investigate the main motivation of PSEFLTs in selecting a career in teaching, the full long form 24-item *Teachers Sense of Self-Efficacy Scale* (Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2001) to assess the PSEFLTs sense of self-efficacy, and the *SOCITS Questionnaire* (Bracha & Hoffenbartal, 2011) to measure levels of SOCITS. The items were all rated on a Likert scale between 1 *Absolutely disagree* – 7 *Absolutely agree.* Permission to use all questionnaires was granted to the researcher by its developers.

For the qualitative study, semi-structured interviews, were used to collect data. Examples of the questions asked include: *Tell me about your experience in the methodology course this year; How do you feel regarding your teaching abilities? Tell me what motivates you regarding teaching.* The interviews lasted between fifteen to twenty minutes.

In addition, data were also collected from the reflective journals kept by participants throughout the TREP program. The PSEFLTs were instructed to write an entry "exit ticket" in their journals at the conclusion of each methodology lesson. They were instructed to reflect on their personal insights from the lessons, identify the strengths and weaknesses of the lessons, share their feelings and thoughts regarding their learning and practicum experiences. Examples of prompts given include: After a session with guest speakers: *How do I feel after hearing all the talks today? Which speaker left the greatest impression on me?* At the end of the year, the PSTs were requested to write a reflection summarizing the whole year.

At the end of the academic year, the following question was posed to all 32 students: "Are you going to sign up for the induction year and pursue a teaching career?" Those who answered that they did not intend to pursue a teaching career were also asked to state the reason for making that decision.

3.3 Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analysed using SPSS version 25. To assess the level of self-efficacy prior to and following the TREP program, as well as the level of SOCITS before and after the TREP program, a two-way ANOVA was applied. To examine the interaction between the subscales and the time of measurement, paired t-tests were conducted as a post-hoc analysis to compare the two measurements (pre and post) in each subscale. An additional MANOVA analysis was conducted between the TREP and the Control only on the post measurements to examine thedisparities between the intervention and the control group.

To assess PSEFLTs' motivation for enrolling in teacher education and their perceptions about teaching, descriptive statistics was employed. To examine changes in motivation following the TREP program, paired t-tests were used. Paired t-tests were used instead of ANOVA,

because each of the first order factors was computed separately and independently and not in relation to others. Additional t-test analyses were conducted between the TREP and the Control to examine differences between the intervention and the control.

The qualitative data were evaluated and analysed using the *Atlas.ti* software, based on a data driven inductive process. As a result of the thematic analysis, the four final themes that developed were *Confidence, Motivation, Support System, and Awareness*. The reflective journals documented by the participants were analysed using a deductive top-down thematic analysis where the analysis is explicitly research driven. In addition to the themes that were found in the interview analysis, one new theme that surfaced from the journals was *Calmness*.

4. Results

4.1 Quantitative Data

Hypothesis 1: The level of self-efficacy among PSEFLTs will be significantly higher following their participation in the TREP program.

To examine this hypothesis a two-way ANOVA was applied: Time (pre/post) X Self-efficacy (Student Engagement, Instructional Strategies, Classroom Management) with level of self-efficacy as a dependent variable and the components of self-efficacy as the independent variable. The results of the means and standard deviations scored are presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Pre vs Post Means: Self-Efficacy

Subscales	Pre		Post	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Student Engagement	4.79	.71	5.50	.59
Instructional Strategies	4.79	.76	5.75	.61
Classroom Management	4.68	.95	5.64	.67
Total Self-Efficacy Score	4.75	.73	5.63	.57

The analysis yielded a main effect of time ($F(1,31) = 84.39$, $p < .001$). This effect resulted from an increase from the pre to the post (Pre M=4.75 vs Post M=5.63), (See Table 1) in the total self-efficacy score, following the intervention. There is also an interaction effect time X self-efficacy ($F(2,62)= 4.58$, $p < .01$).

To examine the interaction, paired t-tests were conducted as a post hoc analysis, to compare the two measurements (pre vs. post) in each subscale. The t-tests revealed a notable increase in all three subscales of self-efficacy: student engagement ($t(31)=7.97$, $p<.001$); instructional strategies ($t(31)=9.83$, $p<.001$) and classroom management ($t(31)=7.39$, $p<.001$); however, the increase in the instructional strategies component (Pre M= 4.79 vs Post M=5.75) was the strongest compared to student engagement (Pre M= 4.79 vs Post M=5.50) and classroom management (Pre M= 4.68 vs Post M=5.64). In addition, the t-test also revealed a significant increase in the overall self efficacy score ($t(31)=9.18$, $p<.001$). These results fully support the first hypothesis.

In addition to the hypotheses testing via the analyses presented above, comparisons were conducted between the TREP and the control group. MANOVA was conducted on the three subscales of the self-efficacy as dependent variables with the group (TREP/Control) as

independent variables. Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations of the three subscales.

Table 2. TREP vs Control Group: Self-Efficacy Post Measurements

Subscales	TREP		CONTROL (CG)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Student Engagement (SE)	5.50	.59	4.82	.55
Instructional Strategies (IS)	5.75	.61	5.01	.55
Classroom Management (CM)	5.64	.67	4.47	.80
Total Self-Efficacy Score (TSE)	5.63	.57	4.77	.58

The MANOVA yielded a significant effect of group for all three subscales: student engagement ($F(1,45) = 14.11$, $p < .001$); instructional strategies ($F(1,45) = 15.72$, $p < .001$); classroom management ($F(1,45) = 26.65$, $p < .001$). These results show that the level of self-efficacy is significantly higher among the TREP participants in comparison to the control group in all three subscales (TREP SE *M*= 5.50 vs CG SE *M*= 4.82; TREP IS *M*= 5.75 vs CG IS *M*= 5.01; TREP CM *M*= 5.64 vs CG CM *M*= 4.47) and in the total self-efficacy score (TREP TSE *M*=5.63 vs CG TSE *M*=4.77).

Hypothesis 2: The level of SOCITS among PSEFLTs will be significantly higher following their participation in the TREP program.

To examine this hypothesis a two-way ANOVA was applied: Time (pre/post) X SOCITS (Comprehensibility, Manageability, Meaningfulness) with the components of SOCITS as the independent variables and the level of SOCITS as the dependent variable. The means and standard deviations are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Pre vs Post Means: SOCITS

Components	Pre		Post	
	M	SD	M	SD
Comprehensibility	4.60	.97	4.34	.83
Manageability	4.83	.77	5.53	.50
Meaningfulness	5.11	.83	5.52	.63
Total SOCITS Score	4.85	.65	5.13	.45

The analysis yielded a main effect of time $F(1,31) = 8.90$, $p < .01$. This effect resulted from an increase from the pre to the post (Pre *M*=4.85 vs Post *M*=5.13), (See Table 3) in the total SOCITS score, following the intervention. There is also an interaction effect time X self-efficacy ($F(2,62)=36.53$, $p < .001$). To examine the interaction, paired t-tests were conducted as a post hoc analysis, to compare the two measurements (pre vs. post) in each component. The t-tests revealed a significant increase in two components of SOCITS: Manageability ($t(31)= 6.41$, $p<.001$); Meaningfulness($t(31)= 4.09$, $p<.001$) but the increase in the Comprehensibility component ($t(31)= 1.92$, $p>.05$) was not significant. In addition, the t-test also revealed a significant increase in the general SOCITS score ($t(31)=2.98$, $p<.01$). These results partially support the second hypothesis.

In addition, comparisons were also computed between the TREP and the Control group. Table 4 displays the means and standard deviations of the three components for each of the two groups and the total SOCITS score.

Table 4. TREP vs Control Group: SOCITS Post Measurements

Components	TREP		CONTROL	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Comprehensibility	4.34	.83	4.84	1.28
Manageability	5.53	.50	4.74	.63
Meaningfulness	5.52	.63	5.30	.63
Total SOCITS Score	5.13	.45	5.02	.61

The MANOVA showed that the level of the manageability is significantly higher in the TREP in comparison to the control group $F(1,45) = 20.91$, $p < .001$. There were no significant differences in the other two SOCITS components and in the total score.

Motivation

The motivations and perceptions of PSEFLTs for selecting a profession in teaching in Israel. Table 5 and 6 display the descriptive statistics of the higher order and first-order motivational factors respectively.

Table 5. Means of Higher Order Factors of Motivation

Higher-order Factor	*M*	*SD*
Social Utility Value	5.42	1.11
Personal Utility Value	4.85	1.28
Task Demand	5.12	1.26
Task Return	2.48	1.02

The findings denote that social utility value (altruistic) received the highest rating (*M*=5.42, *SD*=1.11), followed by personal utility value (*M*=4.85, *SD*=1.28) (See Table 5). In terms of teaching beliefs, task demand received a high rating (*M*=5.12, *SD*=1.26), while task return received the lowest rating (*M*=2.48, *SD*=1.02). This indicates that according to the participants in the TREP program teaching is perceived as a career with high demands and very low task returns. Table 6 presents the descriptive statistics of the first-order motivation factors.

Table 6. Means of First Order Factors of Motivation

	M	*SD*
Perceived Teaching Ability	5.76	.941
Intrinsic Career Value	5.71	1.13
Job Security	4.91	1.56
Time for Family	4.83	1.54
Job Transferability	4.81	1.51
Shape Future of Children/Adolescents	5.82	1.17
Enhance Social Equity	5.08	1.50
Make Social Contribution	5.65	1.10
Work with Children/Adolescents	5.13	1.63
Prior Teaching and Learning Experiences	4.48	1.71
Social Influences	4.29	1.86
Expertise	5.12	1.26
Social Status	3.18	1.48
Salary	1.79	.974
Social Dissuasion	4.66	1.60
Satisfaction with Job	5.26	1.45

Shaping the future of children/adolescents (*M*=5.82, *SD*=1.17), perceived teaching ability (*M*=5.76, *SD*=.941), intrinsic career value (*M*=5.71, *SD*=1.13), making a social contribution (*M*=5.65, *SD*=1.10), working with children/adolescents (*M*=5.13, *SD*=1.63), and enhancing social equity (*M*=5.08, *SD*=1.50) were rated as having the most influence on the choice to enroll in teacher education (See Table 6). All factors evaluated in the study received ratings above the scale midpoint of 4, indicating that none of them were perceived by the participants as being below average (See Figure 1).

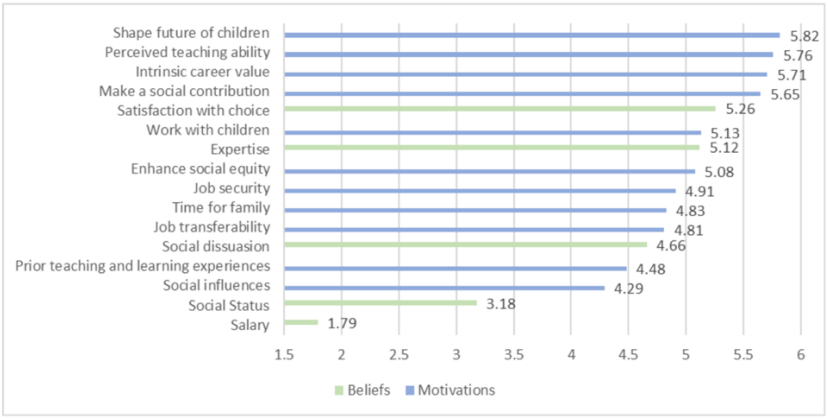

Figure 1. Means of First Order Motivational Factors and Teaching Beliefs

Participants' responses regarding their beliefs about teaching constructs revealed several key findings. Firstly, a career in teaching was perceived as one with great demands regarding levels of expertise (*M*=5.12, *SD*=1.26). However, they perceived this career to provide very low returns especially regarding salary (*M*=1.79, *SD*=.974) and social status (*M*=3.18, *SD*=1.48). Additionally, participants rated social dissuasion above the scale midpoint (*M*=4.66, *SD*=1.60) which suggests they were discouraged by others to become teachers. On a positive note, participants expressed high levels of satisfaction with their choice of teaching (*M*=5.26, *SD*=1.45).

Hypothesis 3: The motivation of PSEFLTs will be significantly higher following their participation in the TREP program.

In order to examine changes in motivation following the intervention, paired t-tests were used. (See Table 7). The t-tests yielded a significant increase between the pre and the post motivation in perceived teaching ability (Pre M=5.76 vs Post M=6.35, t(31)=4.26, $p < .001$) and intrinsic career value (Pre M=5.71 vs Post M=6.12, t(31)=4.00, $p < .001$) and a significant decrease between the pre and post motivation in job security (Pre M=4.91 vs Post M=4.31, t(31)=2.35, $p < .05$). The responses pertaining to the beliefs about teaching constructs unveiled a noteworthy decrease in the participants' perceptions of teaching as a career that offers extremely low returns in terms of both social status (Pre M=3.18 vs Post M=2.81, t(31)=2.00, $p < .05$) and salary (Pre M=1.79 vs Post M=1.39, t(31)=2.36, $p < .05$). No further significant differences were observed among the other factors of motivation and beliefs about teaching. These results partially support the third hypothesis.

Table 7. Pre vs Post Means: First Order Factors of Motivation

Higher Order Factor	First Order Factor	PRE		POST		
		M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	t(31)
Influential Factors						
	Ability	5.76	.941	6.35	.542	4.26***
	Intrinsic career value	5.71	1.13	6.12	.870	4.00***
Personal Utility Value	Job security	4.91	1.56	4.31	1.63	2.35*
	Time for family	4.83	1.54	4.85	1.59	-.07
	Job transferability	4.81	1.51	4.52	1.75	1.03
Social Utility Value	Shape future of children/adolescents	5.82	1.17	5.60	1.32	1.19
	Enhance social equity	5.08	1.50	4.81	1.33	1.36
	Make social contribution	5.65	1.10	5.48	1.10	.85
	Work with children/adolescents	5.13	1.63	5.07	1.75	.29
	Prior teaching and learning experiences	4.48	1.71	4.36	1.79	.62
	Social influences	4.29	1.86	4.32	1.75	-.11
Beliefs about Teaching						
Task Demand	Expertise	5.12	1.26	5.30	1.38	-.84
Task Return	Social status	3.18	1.48	2.81	1.30	2.00*
	Salary	1.79	.974	1.39	.904	2.36*
Your Decision to Become a Teacher						
	Social dissuasion	4.66	1.60	5.03	1.55	1.26
	Satisfaction with choice	5.26	1.45	5.50	1.39	1.93

*p < .05 ** p < .01 *** p < .001

In addition to the hypotheses testing via the analysis presented above, comparisons were also computed between the TREP and the control group (See Table 8). The means and standard deviations of the first order motivation factors for each of the two groups are displayed in Table 8.

Table 8. TREP vs Control Group Means: First Order Factors of Motivation

First Order Factors	TREP		CONTROL (CG)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Ability	6.35	.54	5.60	1.07
Intrinsic Career Value	6.12	.87	6.06	1.14
Job Security	4.31	1.63	5.13	1.58
Time for Family	4.85	1.59	5.08	1.09
Job Transferability	4.52	1.75	4.46	1.45
Shape Future of Children/Adolescents	5.60	1.32	6.08	.85
Enhance Social Equity	4.81	1.33	5.26	1.06
Make Social Contribution	5.48	1.10	5.71	1.12
Work with Children/Adolescents	5.07	1.75	5.88	.81
Prior Teaching and Learning Experiences	4.36	1.79	5.40	1.32
Social Influences	4.32	1.76	3.60	1.72
Expertise	5.30	1.38	6.11	.78
Social Status	2.81	1.30	2.61	.83
Salary	1.39	.90	1.20	.36
Social Dissuasion	5.03	1.55	4.82	1.25
Satisfaction with Job	5.50	1.39	5.46	.92

The comparison between the TREP and the control group revealed two significant differences in first order factors: Perceived teaching ability (TREP M= 6.35 vs CG M=5.60, t(45)=10.50, p<.001) indicating a higher level of motivation in the TREP group and Expertise (TREP M= 5.30 vs CG M=6.11, t(45)=4.42, p<.01). In all other first order factors, no significant differences were noted between the TREP and the control group.

Regarding the question "Are you going to sign up for the induction year and pursue a teaching career?", out of the 32 PSEFLTs, 53% (N=17) chose to commence a career in teaching whereas 47% (N=15) decided not to. The reasons for making this decision can be seen in Figure 2.

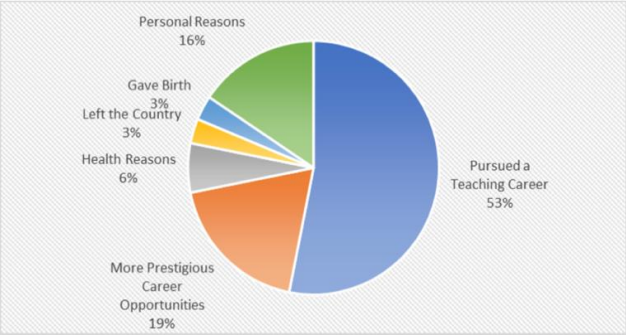

Figure 2. PSEFLTs who Pursued and Didn't Pursue a Teaching Career

4.2 Qualitative Data

The themes that emerged from the thematic analysis using the *Atlas.ti* software pertaining to *all* four components of the TREP program are: *Motivation, Confidence, Awareness and Support System.* As can be seen, all four themes were found in each of the components in the TREP program. Figure 3 presents the number of PSEFLTs who related to each of these themes in each component. Tables 9-13 present the qualitative results according to themes.

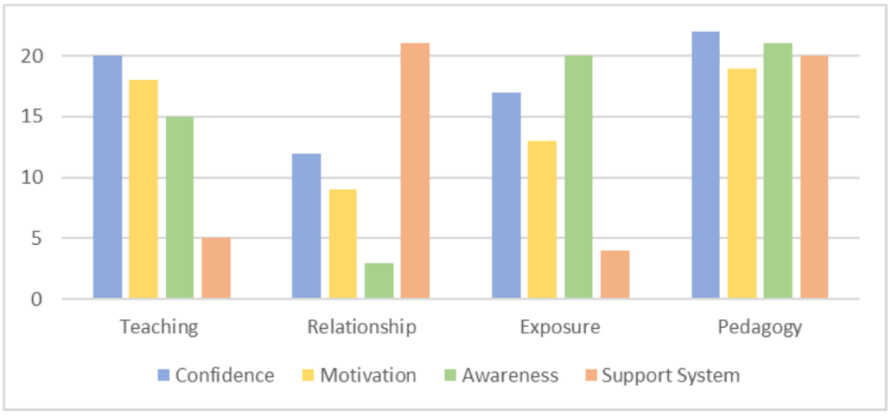

Figure 3. Number of PSEFLTs Relating to each Theme in each of the TREP Components

Table 9. The theme of Confidence in the TREP Program

Component	Key Findings	Supporting Quotes
Teaching	• Mini-Unit /long-term planning (*N*=15).	*"I knew that there is long-term planning but learning how to do it and what's the rationale behind it … like I could plan 10 lessons up front but yeah there is a difference between planning 10 individual lessons and planning a unit, so I think that was very important and gave me confidence." (Noam)*
	• The Mini-Unit broadened teaching perspectives (*N*=4) and increased their sense of responsibility (*N*=12).	*"I made amazing lessons about business and entrepreneurship and the kids were engaged." (David)* *" I felt that these lessons are mine and I created them …and it made me feel more responsible and I gained more confidence." (Kaylee)*
	• Positive practicum experiences and interactions with host teachers (*N*=10).	*"Teaching every week and preparing lessons helped me gain confidence." (Noa)*
Relationship	• Professional and genuine feedback from the PI. (*N*=12).	*"Our instructor gave helpful ideas for improvement, and she was different from other PIs." (Gil)* *"It was genuine, professional, and useful. I really respect her opinion and that affected my confidence." (Layla)*
Exposure	• Guest speakers helped bridge the gap between college and the field, increasing preparedness (*N*=14).	*"These people helped bridge the gap between college and what's going on outside the college." (Sima)* *"We will have to deal with so much pressure from the Ministry and the bureaucracy, so the guests helped make things clearer." (Nir)*
	• Vicarious experiences from fourth-year students (*N*=9).	*"During the lectures… with the people from previous years, they experienced what we will experience next year, and they had the same fears. Hearing that it's possible to overcome that…it really helps… it calms you down and makes you more confident." (Shir)*
Pedagogy	• Simulations and methodology lessons (*N*=6).	*"I think the simulations were the best part of the year…it was very helpful and made me feel more prepared." (Mor)*
	• Sharing experiences (*N*=15).	*"Hearing about others' experiences and sharing mine in the BFCC (Bridging Field and College Corner) was the best part. We really discussed issues that came up in class." (Noa)*
	• Peer presentations (*N*=8).	*"Watching my peers teach, how they walk, how they talk; and learning their ways taught me a lot and helped me feel more prepared." (Shelly)*

	• Learning new teaching methods, tools, and strategies (*N*=11).	*"I learned new strategies to grab students' attention… and yeah… I mean it gave me motivation and it gave me confidence to stand in the middle of the classroom." (Nadia)*
	• Joint tasks between courses (*N=5*).	*"The courses were connected and it felt like a puzzle, each part completed the part that we studied before. It was like a whole puzzle that is complete." (Sivan)*
	• A safe environment for asking questions (*N*=10).	*"For me it was a "life-jacket." Each lesson that we had … it made me feel like a safe space that I can ask questions and get all the information." (Maya)*
	• Exit tickets (*N*=2).	"*The exit tickets were cool because you know during the lesson your mind is loaded… the exit ticket requires you to come back.. focus for one more minute and summarize the lesson. It gives you the opportunity to express yourself, …. It made me feel more confident.*" (Stav)

Table 10. The theme of Motivation in the TREP Program

Component	**Key Findings**	**Supporting Quotes**
Teaching	• Host teachers in Practicum (*N*=6)	*"I saw the connection and the relationship between the host teacher and the students … I want to be like that… I want my student to feel comfortable with me as they are with her." (Mor)*
	• Positive teaching experiences (*N*=4)	*"…the connection with the students is something that I can't explain...it's something unique and that really motivates me."(Mor)*
	• Mini-Unit (*N*=6)	"*Building and teaching five lessons made me more confident and motivated."(David)*
Relationship	• PI's honesty and reflection of reality (*N*=9)	*"The instructor's love for teaching and relationships motivated me."(Gil)* *"The PI gave us a lot of motivation but also calmed us… we can always come to her to consult and get validation."(Nir)*
Exposure	• Inspiring lecturers and guest speakers (*N*=13)	*"It was mind-blowing, and I got so motivated."(Shelly)* *"Hearing about struggles and accomplishments motivated me to continue. They all spoke about how hard it is but how it gets easier. "(Ofir)*
Pedagogy	• Methodology lessons (*N*=14)	*"Writing answers to exit tickets felt like a diary and I really enjoyed it... it motivated me in some way…"(James)*
	• Exit tickets (*N*=5)	*"Exit tickets were a good reflection exercise and served as a motivation for me."(Sam)*
	• Sharing experiences (*N*=3)	*"There was a certain point where I shared in class what my plans are and what my concerns are, and I really got to feel the support… I felt very encouraged after that."(Sam)*
	• Peer presentations (*N*=8)	*"I saw other ideas from other students… I saw N's work, what he did and I understood this is like what the job is for… to make the students happy and be creative and this motivated me."(Gil)*

Table 11. The theme of Awareness in the TREP Program

Component	Key Findings	Supporting Quotes
Teaching	• Developing professional identity and understanding students' needs. (*N*=7)	*"I took something from each teacher I observed, and that's something that influenced the kind of teacher I want to be." (Yael)*
	• Practicum experiences increased understanding of the system and students' needs.(*N*=13)	*"I understand more what students need." (Yael)* *"The mini unit was a sneak peek into the real world, into what it feels to go through a process with a class, seeing how students learn and implement new things." (Dina)*
Relationship	• PIs helped shape professional identity.(*N*=3)	*"Seeing how our instructor interacted with us taught me how to interact with my students...being kind and honest." (Noa)*
Exposure	• Guest speakers and experts bridged the gap between college and the field. (*N*=16)	*"The graduates were talking about planning, the wages and about the things that are important like… who to be friends with and what to lookout for. I feel like bringing them in to talk to 3rd year students is crucial …we need to hear people who have been in our shoes …." (Amalia)*
	• Exposure helped develop professional identity.(*N*=14)	*"Guest speakers presented points of view essential for developing professional identity." (Noam)* *'The lecture on stuttering helped me…now I know how to deal with each case." (Nadia)*
Pedagogy	• Exit tickets raised awareness and personal insights. (*N*=12)	*"Writing down feelings and thoughts makes you more attentive to yourself and aware of where you are."(Layla)*
	• Class presentations (*N*=8)and methodology lessons (*N*=7) helped shape professional identity.	*"Seeing how others teach helped me build my identity as a teacher." (Kaylee)* *"The methodology lessons gave me tools I adopted to my teaching style." (Liron)*

Table 12. The theme of Support in the TREP Program

Component	Key Findings	Supporting Quotes
Teaching	• Support from host teachers during practicum (*N*=5).	*"My host teacher was very helpful and always there for me. I never felt alone."(Mor)*
Relationship	• Appreciation for professional feedback from PIs (*N*=12).	*"I think my PI was amazing … if I asked her a question she would answer it … even if I sent her a message… she would reply to me … I think it's very special. I know that I can get help from her." (Sima)*
	• Availability (*N*=11), approachability (*N*=8), and empathy (*N*=6) of PI.	*"When I needed my PI. I could send a text…and she will answer…and I didn't have to worry. The PI was always available and answered honestly."(Noa)*
	• PI helped participants get back on track (*N*=10).	*"My PI reassured me and helped me get back on track."(Layla)*
	• Peer support (*N*=11)	*"I consulted with other students to solve difficulties." (Gil)*
	• Support from college staff (*N*=8)	*"In the college if I had a problem I dealt with it by talking to my lectures and most of them when you e-mail them…they reply, they talk to you and they help you with what you need." (Amalia)* *"You see us as people. I always had support" (Sam)*
Exposure	• Support from	*"We had people coming in and offering us help."(Sima)*

	guest speakers (*N*=4).	
Pedagogy	• Methodology lessons as an anchor (*N*=11).	*"Methodology was an anchor where you can check what you're doing."(Nir)*
	• Alignment between college material and field experiences provided security (*N*=13).	*"Methodology brought light to the practical aspects and matched reality."(Kaylee)*
	• Exit tickets provided security, showing PI cared (*N*=9).	*"The PI really cared about what we think and where we stand right now."(Maya)*

In addition to these findings, one significant finding that emerged during the thematic analysis

relates to the practicing teachers (PT), that is, the PSEFLTs who were both students and practicing teachers simultaneously. As a result of the teacher shortage, various principals hire PSEFLTs as part time or full-time teachers.. Out of the 32 participants in the TREP program, eight were teachers in the system who were given between a third to half of a teaching position for the full school year.

Comments that emerged from the discourse of the PSEFLTs also related to impediments that may cause some of them to decide not to continue teaching in the system following their induction year. One of these is the low salary that teachers in Israel earn (*N*=10).

Their comments show that they cannot make ends meet from the salary they earn and are therefore contemplating as to whether this is the right career for them: *"The salary…that's the only thing that's missing for me - like this month I need to decide if I can buy food or pay the rent… that's the decision that I need to make this week." (Liron)*

A further concern that emerged from the interviews relates to the difficulties in the system and

lack of appreciation as was mentioned by David: *"The teaching conditions in Israel, the teachers' reputation, and the parents are horrible… I don't think teachers get enough recognition…they're not valued by others…not by the Ministry of Education and I don't think these things will change so fast.".* "*I think that it's very challenging here in Israel to be a teacher… I think that in Israel you don't teach… you are more like a police officer in the class… it's very sad ….it's not like I imagined…." (Kaylee).*

In addition to these four themes, one other theme that emerged from the reflective journals that was not found in the interviews is the theme of "Calmness" with 66% (*N*=21*)* reporting feeling calm as a result of the TREP program . Table 13 presents this theme.

Table 13. The theme of Calmness in the TREP Program

Component	Key Findings	Supporting Quotes
Teaching	• Long-term planning / Mini-Unit (*N*=5)	*"One thing that made me feel calmer is the Long-Term Planning." (Gil).* "*I feel more connected to the class. When I think about the activities in the mini-unit I think about the students and suit the activities for them. I feel more relaxed since I know the students and the atmosphere in class." (Kaylee).*
Exposure	• Guest speakers (*N*=10)	*"The different workshops we had were super helpful specially the one with the inspectors and internship students. They gave me information about the "real world" of teaching… how it is at the beginning. This makes me feel calmer."(Maya)*
Relationship	• PI (*N*=5)	*"Personally, I believe that I am more comfortable after this class because of my pedagogical instructor. Previously I was lost and didn't know where to begin. Currently I am ready to go!" (Amy).*
Pedagogy	• Presentations (*N*=5)	*"Watching O. and S. present made me feel calmer. I know what is expected." (Shelly).*
	• Sharing(BFCC) (*N*=5)	*"The sharing part each lesson is something that always calms me because I can see that I'm not alone." (Mor).*

5. Discussion

This section discusses the impact of the TREP program on PSEFLTs. The results are analyzed in relation to the hypotheses and the broader context of teacher education. The first hypothesis posited that PSEFLTs would report higher self-efficacy following their participation in the TREP program. The quantitative results supported this hypothesis, showing significant increases in self-efficacy across three subscales: engaging students, using instructional strategies, and classroom management. These findings are noteworthy as they contrast with existing literature, which often reports a decline in self-efficacy towards the end of teacher education programs (Pendergast et al., 2011; Woolfolk-Hoy, 2000). The qualitative data further reinforced these results, with the theme of confidence, emerging from the interviews and reflective journals. PSEFLTs attributed their increased confidence and preparedness to all four components of the TREP program.

Practical components are a fundamental aspect of teacher education programs, providing PSEFLTs with hands-on experience that deepens their understanding of the teaching profession (Arslan & Ilin, 2018; Chien, 2015; Gray et al., 2019; Jones et al., 2016). The Teaching component of the TREP program aimed to increase third-year PSEFLTs' active engagement in their practicum, fostering confidence, preparedness, motivation, and a stronger awareness of the realities of a teaching career.

A key feature of the program was the five-lesson "Mini-Unit" and long-term planning process, which encouraged greater accountability and responsibility. As a result, PSEFLTs felt calmer and more prepared for teaching, supporting Kessels and Korthagen's (2001) assertion that practical wisdom is developed through active participation. Positive practicum experiences further reinforced PSEFLTs' confidence and motivation, particularly when they received appreciation from their students. This aligns with Orland-Barak and Leshem's (2009) argument that meaningful experience, rather than passive observation, is crucial for professional growth.

Mentor teachers played a pivotal role in this process, serving as role models and enhancing PSEFLTs' self-efficacy through modeling effective teaching practices (Cansiz & Cansiz, 2019; Orland-Barak & Wang, 2020; Senler, 2016). This aligns with Bandura's (1997)

concept of mastery experiences as a key driver of self-efficacy—an effect clearly demonstrated in the TREP program's impact on PSEFLTs.

The **Relationship** component played a crucial role in providing both emotional and pedagogical support, helping PSEFLTs overcome self-doubt and develop confidence in their teaching abilities. Strong relationships with PIs enhanced self-efficacy and professional growth, reinforcing Bandura's (1997) theory on self-efficacy and the findings of Tschannen-Moran et al. (2007) and Quin (2017). PSEFLTs particularly valued professional feedback, empathy, and encouragement from PIs, which further strengthened their teaching confidence (Frisby & Gaffney, 2015; Ma & Cavanagh, 2018).

The **Exposure** component enriched PSEFLTs' understanding of the teaching profession by allowing graduates to share their field experiences, successes, and challenges. These interactions provided realistic insights into the profession, increasing PSEFLTs' confidence and preparedness, as highlighted by Gravett and Ramsaroop (2015). Additionally, exposure to lecturers discussing the complexities of diverse student populations enhanced PSEFLTs' self-efficacy in student engagement.

The **Pedagogy** component focused on activating prior knowledge and tailoring instruction to PSEFLTs' needs. Strategies such as microteaching, presentations, exit tickets, and the Bridging Field and College Corner (BFCC) strengthened their preparedness for real-world teaching. Unlike the findings of Karim et al. (2019) and Ma and Cavanagh (2018), which indicated gaps in teacher preparation, the TREP program effectively improved PSEFLTs' readiness in classroom management, instructional strategies, and student engagement. Furthermore, reflective practices integrated into methodology lessons enhanced their ability to implement effective classroom strategies, aligning with the research of Farrell (2016) and Gan and Lee (2016). By connecting methodology courses with other courses and integrating joint assignments, the program helped PSEFLTs see the broader picture of teaching, increasing their confidence and efficacy in applying instructional strategies.

The second hypothesis proposed that PSEFLTs would report higher levels of SOCITS following their participation in the TREP program. The quantitative findings supported this hypothesis, revealing significant improvements in the **Manageability** and **Meaningfulness** components. However, the **Comprehensibility** component did not show a significant increase, suggesting that while PSEFLTs felt more capable of managing and finding purpose in teaching situations, they did not necessarily perceive these situations as more predictable or understandable.

The qualitative analysis, however, provided further insights into these findings, highlighting the crucial role of **practical experiences** and **supportive relationships** in enhancing SOCITS. Themes of **awareness** and **support systems** emerged as key factors in helping PSEFLTs navigate teaching challenges. Specifically, the **Teaching** component played a central role in deepening their understanding of the profession, their professional identity, and students' needs (Bracha & Hoffenbartal, 2022). Many PSEFLTs reported that hands-on teaching experiences clarified the relevance of college coursework and its real-world application, contributing to their **sense of comprehensibility.**

The **Exposure** component also fostered greater awareness by bridging the gap between college and the field. Listening to graduates discuss their experiences provided reassurance, reduced stress, and enhanced PSEFLTs' understanding of the challenges they might face. These **vicarious experiences** strengthened their sense of competence and ability to manage difficulties, reinforcing their **sense of manageability**.

Similarly, the **Pedagogy** component played a critical role in promoting awareness. Activities such as **exit tickets, class presentations, and the methodology lessons** helped PSEFLTs consolidate their learning and apply instructional strategies effectively. Given that SOCITS focuses on teachers' emotions and beliefs about their capacity to handle various teaching situations, the overall increase in SOCITS scores may be attributed to the strong support system established through both the **Relationship** and **Pedagogy** components.

The **Relationship** component, in particular, emphasized the power of meaningful connections. Emotional and pedagogical support from the PIs created a **safe learning environment**, reducing stress and increasing PSEFLTs' confidence (Ma & Cavanagh, 2018; Quin, 2017). Attentive, approachable, and professional PIs played a crucial role in fostering strong, supportive relationships, which served as valuable coping resources (Bracha & Hoffenbartal, 2022). Weekly discussions on strengths and weaknesses, as well as structured sharing platforms in methodology classes (e.g., **BFCC**), further reinforced this sense of security and professional growth.

For many PSEFLTs, **methodology lessons** acted as an anchor, offering clarity, reassurance, and practical solutions to classroom challenges. As a result, they reported increased **motivation to cope with teaching situations (sense of meaningfulness), understanding of teaching principles (sense of comprehensibility), and confidence in handling classroom challenges (sense of manageability).**

The third hypothesis proposed that PSEFLTs would report **higher motivation to pursue a teaching career** following their participation in the TREP program. The **quantitative data partially supported this hypothesis**, revealing significant increases in **perceived teaching ability** and **intrinsic career value**. Social utility values and intrinsic motivations emerged as key factors influencing career decisions, aligning with global research identifying **altruistic motivation** (Davis et al., 2019; Hennessy & Lynch, 2017) and **perceived teaching abilities** (Fokkens-Bruinsma & Canrinus, 2015; Suryani et al., 2016) as major drivers for entering the teaching profession. Interestingly, **intrinsic career value** was rated nearly as high as **perceived teaching abilities**, and none of the other motivational factors fell below the midpoint of the scale. This suggests that **PSEFLTs in Israel are motivated by a combination of factors**, supporting the broader literature on teacher motivation, which emphasizes that different types of motivation often coexist within the same individual (Bergmark et al., 2018).

The qualitative findings reinforced these insights, with motivation emerging as a central theme across all four TREP components. Host teachers, classroom connections, and the "Mini-Unit" in the Teaching component, supportive and encouraging interactions with PIs in the Relationship component, inspiring lecturers and guest speakers in the Exposure component, and practical teaching methods and instructional strategies in the Pedagogy component all contributed to increased motivation. Furthermore, **increased self-efficacy**—particularly in **student engagement, classroom management, and instructional strategies**—likely played a significant role in boosting motivation to pursue teaching. According to the **FIT-Choice Scale** (Watt & Richardson, 2007), expectancy for success is shaped by task difficulty perceptions and self-beliefs. PSEFLTs who developed a **stronger self-concept of their teaching abilities** showed greater motivation to commit to a career in education.

The final research question examined whether **PSEFLTs' perceptions and insights influenced their decision** to begin their **induction year** and pursue a teaching career. Despite the clear benefits of the TREP program, results revealed a **significant decline in job security perceptions** and a more negative view of teaching in terms of **social status and**

salary. In Israel, teaching is widely regarded as a **low-status profession with poor financial compensation and limited societal respect** (Donitsa-Schmidt & Zuzovsky, 2016; Donitsa-Schmidt et al., 2021). While PSEFLTs acknowledged the **demanding expertise** required for teaching, they were also acutely aware of its **financial limitations** and **low prestige**. As a result, many aspiring teachers often face discouragement from their social circles, with external dissuasion playing a notable role in career considerations. Nevertheless, **many PSEFLTs expressed strong satisfaction with their decision to enter teaching**, suggesting that **intrinsic and altruistic motivation**, rather than external incentives, drive their commitment. These findings align with **Salifu et al. (2018)**, who identified similar trends in Ghana, where intrinsic motivation played a critical role in teacher retention despite societal challenges.

However, **external factors may have influenced PSEFLTs' perceptions this year**, particularly **ongoing labor disputes and teacher strikes**. These challenges may have contributed to **only 53% of PSEFLTs choosing to pursue a teaching career**, while **47% opted for other professions**, often drawn to **more prestigious job offers**. This trend is consistent with **CBS data (2024)**, which indicates a decline in the number of graduates entering teaching, and **OECD (2005) reports**, which highlight that many teacher education graduates never actually enter the profession. These findings challenge existing literature suggesting that **strong initial motivation, positive mentor support, and feeling well-prepared** are significant predictors of entering the teaching profession (Rots et al., 2014).

6. Conclusion and Implications

In conclusion, the TREP program has proven effective in enhancing PSEFLTs' self-efficacy, SOCITS, and motivation to pursue a teaching career. These outcomes have important implications for teacher education, offering a model that not only addresses challenges within the Israeli context but also holds relevance for teacher education programs worldwide.

On the theoretical level, this research underscores the importance of fostering PSTs' self-efficacy and strengthening their internal coping resources as part of their preparation for the challenges of classroom life. It also highlights the need to better understand the motivations behind individuals' decisions to enter teacher education. On the practical level, the TREP intervention program proved effective in preparing prospective teachers for a career in education and equipping them to adapt to the ongoing changes within the school system. Therefore, other teacher education colleges may benefit from adopting the TREP model, as it has the potential to foster a generation of educators with a strong sense of self-efficacy and deeper commitment to the profession.

However, while prior studies have shown that satisfaction with teacher education programs can predict entry into the profession (Rots et al., 2014), this study reveals a crucial distinction between being ready to teach and actually wanting to become a teacher. This insight challenges the notion that teacher education programs alone may be sufficient to influence PSEFLTs' career choices. Despite their benefits, additional factors, specifically perceptions of the teaching career, seem to play a pivotal role in shaping career choices and appear to deter some PSTs from pursuing a long-term career in education.

Consequently, systemic challenges such as the diminished social status of teaching must also be addressed to sustain the gains of the TREP program and ensure a stable supply of well-prepared teachers. Therefore, policymakers and the Ministry of Education must recognize the need to bridge the gap between readiness to teach and the decision to enter the teaching profession. They must take all necessary actions to elevate the reputation of the teaching profession, help teachers gain respect and prestige and improve teachers' working conditions.

Improving the prestige of teachers may be the only way to tackle the severe teacher shortage. Finally, future research should involve larger-scale studies to explore the broader applicability of the TREP model across diverse contexts.

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