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## **History Article**

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# Induction programme supporting beginner teachers' self-efficacy at schools in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district: Teaching approach

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Abstract — Beginner teachers experience various challenges, including a lack of support from their colleagues or mentorship, which could lead to frustration and even resignation. The study explored how an induction programme supports beginner teachers' self-efficacy in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district schools. It used a qualitative research approach and generated data through semi-structured interviews. The telephonic interviews were conducted in two phases. The first was in January 2021, and the second was in August 2021. Fourteen beginner teachers were randomly selected from schools in the Thabo-Mofutsanyane district. Data were analysed through thematic analysis. The findings revealed that self-efficacy was vital in developing beginner teachers as professionals through induction programmes. This showed that there was a connection between self-efficacy and an induction programme. Therefore, this study provides conclusive evidence that beginner teacher induction programmes positively impact their preparation in acquiring professional skills and overall contribution to learner development.

Keywords: First year's teaching experience, Beginner teachers, Schools, Thabo Mofutsanyane district, Induction programme supports

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## I. BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

ANY beginner teachers find it difficult to break into the teaching profession. According to studies in South African and international contexts, beginner teachers face various obstacles, including a lack of support from their colleagues or a mentor, which leads to frustration and even resignation (Fantilli & McDougall, 2009). Similarly, beginner teachers in Lesotho were not well-oriented in the school environment: they were assigned huge classrooms with large numbers of children, which produced problems with classroom management, curriculum delivery, and discipline concerns (Makafane, 2022). Some scholars reported that new teachers experienced insufficient support with classroom management or curricular, extracurricular, and governance difficulties (Makhananesa & Sepeng, 2023). Karlberg and Bezzina (2022) further emphasised beginner teachers' low motivation and job satisfaction. According to the findings, Sweden has higher rates of teacher absenteeism, teachers who struggle with students' learning difficulties, and beginner teachers who have low expectations for their students compared to other countries. Researchers in Vietnam discovered that their findings agreed with Karlberg and Bezzina's (2022) study because beginner teachers faced comparable obstacles (Lap, Ngoc, & Thao, 2022).

It is important to note that self-efficacy might assist beginner teachers in overcoming the problems they confront in their early years of teaching. According to research, beginner teachers with high levels of self-efficacy may be better equipped to handle their career problems (Caprara, Barbaranelli, Borgogni, & Steca, 2003). Bandura (1997, p. 3) defined self-efficacy as "beliefs in one's abilities to plan and carry out the

courses of action required to achieve given goals." Their sense of self-efficacy heavily influences teachers' job satisfaction. Self-confident teachers can promote learning, manage classroom discipline, and work with colleagues and families (Caprara et al., 2003). Thus, building or improving beginner teachers' self-efficacy is critical to their professional success.

Implementing induction programmes is essential since they are one of the components that can aid in the growth or reinforcement of beginner teachers' self-efficacy. Beginner teachers will benefit from induction programmes that prepare them for the profession (Halford, 1998, p. 33). When induction programmes are not properly implemented, beginner teachers must learn by doing to improve their instructional techniques. Lesson planning, teaching strategies, assessment, and classroom management are all abilities that take time to develop. Several local and international induction programs have failed to direct new teachers' goals in their new roles (Steyn, 2004). South scholars highlighted that beginner teachers' decision to leave the profession might be influenced by the support they receive, such as mentoring and introduction (DeAngelis, Wall & Che, 2013; Ingersoll & Strong, 2011; Kelly, Sim, & Ireland, 2018). Previous studies indicate a need in South African induction programmes for beginner teachers focusing on establishing or increasing their self-efficacy. As a result, it is critical to establish and implement induction programmes to assist new teachers in developing their self-efficacy.

### II. THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Albert Bandura was born in 1925 and is widely regarded as the pioneer of Social Cognitive Theory (SCT). Bandura's SCT has significantly impacted several research fields, including education, health science,

and social policy. Bandura (1999) expanded the theory from social learning to social cognitive theory. According to Green and Piel (2009), SCT provides individuals with a framework for anticipating and comprehending changes in human behaviours. Bandura's theory introduced self-efficacy as a framework for describing human behaviours (Bandura, 2006). Their self-efficacy ideas influence how people think, either positively or negatively. Self-efficacy is important in self-motivation because it influences goal setting, tasks, and outcomes (Mark, Donaldson, & Campbell, 2011). According to the theory, people participate in activities depending on their abilities and accomplishments. Self-efficacy is still essential because it is part of Bandura's social cognitive theory (Betz, 2007). SCT is based on the notion of reciprocal determinism. The interplay of a person (cognitive events, emotional events, and biological events) with the environment (physical environment, family and friends, and social influences) and behaviours (motor reactions, verbal responses, and social interactions) is central to reciprocal determinism. Reciprocal determinism is a hypothesis that the outcomes of previous events determine a person's actions or decisions. This suggests that people's actions react to what has already occurred. Bandura goes on to claim that human activities, because of past occurrences, have an impact on the environment (Bandura, 1986). SCT posits that a person's behaviour is best understood through their perceptions of their social context. Psychologists have utilised this strategy to understand human conduct better. In this approach, human motivation and actions depend on perceived selfefficacy, circumstance outcome, and action outcome (Green & Piel, 2009). In this study, the researcher analysed qualitative data from a sample of beginner teachers to investigate their confidence (selfefficacy) in their capacity to perform the daily activities demanded of them. The researcher investigated how an induction programme aided beginner teachers' self-efficacy in schools, how the obstacles experienced by an individual affect their self-efficacy levels, and how their work environment influences their behaviours.

## III. LITERATURE REVIEW

## Induction programmes for beginner teachers internationally

Azhar and Kayani (2017) assert that a preparation program's primary function is to strengthen beginner teachers' teaching skills and capabilities. The induction of beginner teachers is one of the most basic tasks to be completed at the school level. Beginner teachers must undergo induction because they are assigned the same tasks as more experienced colleagues (Magudu, 2014). Beginner teachers are prepared for the job by participating in induction workshops (Halford, 1998). New teachers must hone their instructional techniques through trial and error when induction programs are not properly implemented. Lesson planning, teaching strategies, assessment, and classroom management are all abilities that take time to develop. Some beginner teachers leave the profession before acquiring these abilities (Freiberg, 2002). Despite this awareness, some nations lack the systems to address it, and many initiatives fail to help beginner teachers succeed in their new positions (Steyn, 2004).

Shanks, Attard Tonna, Krøjgaard, Annette Paaske, Robson, and Bjerkholt (2022) compared beginner teacher induction programmes in three countries: Scotland, Malta, and Denmark. Scotland has adopted a national teacher induction plan since 2002, while Malta has only had an induction programme since 2010. Denmark has no national scheme, but some help is organised at the school level. According to their findings, the implementation of mentoring programmes experienced challenges in all three nations, including a shortage of time for observation and feedback and uncertainty about how to mentor. Critical elements of teacher professional development were also lacking, including expanding pedagogical knowledge, understanding, and establishing a professional identity. The results showed that some professional practice areas, like evaluative processes, are more challenging to assist through mentorship than others.

The opportunity to learn in a partnership community was valued by the mentors and university professors who participated in the Scottish study. The mentors stressed the benefits and challenges of motivating beginner teachers to pursue research in the classroom. They also discovered that in Scotland and Malta, where there are national induction programmes with mentors, more assistance is provided than in Denmark, where each school determines the quantity of assistance provided to beginner teachers. A major research finding was the importance of the level of assistance for beginner teachers in the classroom. A shortage of staff made this assistance more difficult in Scotland. In contrast, institutional support and school culture played a significant role in determining the extent of support in Malta and Denmark. The presence of a mentor (Grey & Taie, 2015), access to highquality professional development (Castleberry, 2010; Coldwell, 2017), or feeling self-sufficient (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007) may all help beginner teachers continue in the field.

In nations such as Israel, induction programmes are required for all beginner teachers during their first year of teaching, and successful completion of the one-year training is required to acquire a permanent teaching licence. The implementation of an induction programme for these teachers is shared by schools, national educational authorities, and teacher training institutes (Nasser-Abu, Alhija, & Fresko, 2016).

Renbarger and Davis (2019) advocated for practical applications, such as improving working conditions for beginner teachers. This could help retain beginner teachers by providing mentorship and self-efficacy tools. Additionally, addressing barriers to professional development, such as a lack of resources, time, or relevance, may persuade beginner teachers to stay in the profession. The first few years of a teacher's career impact their future commitment, making these initial supports essential in a profession with a high turnover rate.

Howe (2006) asserts that an induction process should guarantee beginner teachers have mentors, a light teaching load, and the opportunity to watch other educators. They should be permitted to speak with co-workers and react to the advice provided by their mentors. The mentors can assess their performance and offer suggestions for how to raise the quality of their classroom interactions. Killeavy (2006) asserted that an induction programme gives beginner teachers a chance to practice learning new topics and consulting with their colleagues so that they feel comfortable practicing their new profession. An introduction course can hone and develop skills that are underdeveloped or need to be improved.

Induction programmes at schools "include attracting better candidates, reducing attrition, improving job satisfaction, and enhancing professional development" (Howe, 2006, p. 287). International research has demonstrated that initiatives for beginner teachers have a good impact on teachers, particularly in terms of retention, job satisfaction, and commitment to teaching (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). An induction programme's primary objective is to support and help beginner teachers succeed by helping them gain new abilities.

## Benefits of an induction programme for beginner teachers internationally

Introduction programmes for beginner teachers have gained so much popularity worldwide that the ministries of education in various nations ensure the programmes operate successfully. This was shown to favour students' academic achievement in Tanzania's Kongwa district schools (Akech, 2016). Beginner teachers' performance in the classroom, classroom management, and other administrative tasks benefit significantly from the induction course (Akech, 2016). Improving student performance, encouraging classroom socialisation, and boosting student retention are benefits of implementing an induction programme for beginner teachers.

To overcome obstacles, beginner teachers need their management's ongoing support, encouragement, and enthusiasm. To promote the global community's learning, they can run online and join the professional teaching clubs that are already available (Feiman-Nemser,

2012). Best practises usually assist beginner teachers with most of their problems, and these support groups frequently collaborate to further one another's interests (Bickmore & Bickmore, 2010). Similar findings were made by another study, which revealed that contact between beginner teachers and their co-workers in the school setting helps them settle into the field (Johnson, Down, Le Cornu, Peters, Sullivan, Pearce, & Hunter, 2014).

#### Induction programmes for beginner teachers in South Africa

The literature suggests that the credentials and level of education provided to pre-service teachers by the South African educational system are inadequate. Some beginner teachers have been seen to be unable to apply their academic knowledge to the demands of the contemporary classroom (Botha & Rens, 2018). The mismatch between theory and practice suggests a need for comprehensive pre-service teacher mentoring. Beginner teachers struggle with instructional knowledge, classroom and time management, and administrative responsibilities (Botha & Rens, 2018; Modise, 2016; Condy & Blease, 2014).

A National Framework for Teacher Education in South Africa, a study by the Commission of Ministers for Teacher Education, was produced in 2005 because of the country's emphasis on the need for teacher orientation (DoE, 2005). Following the study, "every new teacher should be required to participate in a formal induction or mentoring programme for at least two years" (DoE, 2005b, p. 14). The introduction programme has not been a part of teacher preparation in South Africa. However, the necessity of beginner teacher induction and government policies to start the induction process is generally agreed upon by stakeholders (DoE, 2005b, p. 14).

Given the need to retain newly trained teachers and enhance the standard of teaching and learning in schools, the Department of Basic Education has determined that beginner teacher induction should be a top priority (DoE, 2005b). Through Teacher Development Units (TDUs), the Provincial Department of Education (PDE) is entrusted with helping beginner teachers enhance the standard of teaching and learning in classrooms with the assistance of the Circuit Offices (Chinsamy, 2002). The TDU works closely with schools through training seminars and workshops to ensure teachers' ongoing professional development. These workshops and seminars are based on inquiries from the curriculum, observations of lessons, and in-person visits to classrooms. The PDE compels local school systems to guarantee that students receive top-notch instruction. The local school district then exerts pressure on the faculty and administration of the school to guarantee that all PDE requirements are met. As a result, the success of the neighbourhood school district has been questioned because of its function as a contradictory tool that both pressures and supports

Induction workshops and professional development for beginner teachers are becoming more popular in South Africa. The teacher development policy environment in South Africa strongly emphasises mentoring and outward support for beginner teachers. Yet, many beginner teachers receive little assistance and are compelled to devise their survival tactics. As a result, it is still unclear how to implement such policy directives (Steyn, 2004; Deacon, 2015). In addition to preservice preparation at the university, beginner teachers frequently need extensive training when they enter the professional setting. Such instruction is coordinated to pick up where pre-service instruction left off. The induction programme's major objective is to assist beginner teachers in acclimating to their workplace and becoming comfortable with their jobs, abilities, and knowledge (Ingersoll & Perda, 2008). In South Africa, the legislation requires schools to play an active role in ensuring skills development within their teaching cohorts (Mashau, Mutshaeni, & Kone, 2016).

However, there are not many induction programmes for beginner teachers. A few exist, but they are mostly unorganised and informal (Botha, 2011). Newly hired teachers are "shocked at the discrepancy between the theory (ideals) and the practise (reality) of teaching" (Botha,

2011, p. 411). Teachers are left to sink or swim alone. Labour strikes by teachers (Heystek & Lethoko, 2001) and formal complaints against teachers filed with the South African Council for Educators alleging theft, misappropriation of school funds, and sexual abuse, including the rape of students and other behaviours suggest that South African teachers lack a service orientation. A lack of service orientation on the part of the teachers contributes to high teacher absenteeism rates (Modisaotsile, 2012). When the teachers are absent from school, participate in strikes without a valid reason, or sexually abuse learners, the teachers' interests become more important than those of the learners.

Badrudin (2022) studied mentoring new teachers and revealed that, despite mentors being allocated, there is a shortage of mentoring for beginner teachers in schools. The participants also mentioned the lack of consistency. They received informal mentoring through advice and direction from more experienced teachers. An inexperienced teacher is mentored by an experienced teacher in the classroom. The connection coexists with all other organisational rules that are already in place and is often informal, requiring no formal stated involvement. The survey also found that mentoring is a requirement for South African teachers according to their job descriptions, but mentoring guidelines are not officially supplied. Schools utilised the Integrated Quality Measurement System (IQMS) as a mentorship tool. However, it was discovered to be ineffective since it was not appropriately adapted for schools.

## Benefits of an induction programme for beginner teachers in South Africa

Establishing the benefits without reference is difficult because there is little proof that induction programmes or mentorship exist in South African schools. This made it necessary to launch the research project on the induction programme, under which this study falls. The research project aimed to contribute information regarding the advantages of mentorship or induction programmes for new schoolteachers. Induction, however, must carry over from orientation and be part of the teacher's ongoing professional development. In contrast to support initiatives, which normally finish after the first week of classes, induction offers continuous help for longer. Heyns (2000) and Dowding (1998) argued that the introduction to school on the first day, the first week, the first semester, and the rest of the year should change. Beginner teachers preferred a year-long induction period with mentors, according to the literature evaluation. A mentoring programme aims to provide teachers with the support systems they need to improve their effectiveness and familiarity with school procedures (Chester, 2015). This suggests that mentoring programmes allow beginner teachers to become efficient educational community members.

According to Msila (2012), mentorship provided to beginner teachers by their mentors aids their retention in South African schools. Mentors influence mentees' lives in the workplace, including serving as behavioural and educational role models (Msila, 2012). For instance, Msila (2012, p. 49) notes, "Future visionary schools will use many strategies to pursue quality, and mentoring will be one of the strategies of conscientious school leaders."

This idea is supported by a growing body of research, which demonstrates that teachers-in-training who combine both theory and teaching practices are better able to comprehend theory and put concepts they are learning in their teaching practice and promote student learning (Denton, 1982; Henry, 1983; Ross, Hughes & Hill, 1981; Sunal, 1980). However, other factors are also at play that make it possible for teachers to put what they are learning into practice. Teachers can benefit from reviewing student work samples, lesson plans, homework assignments, videos of teachers and students in action, and examples of teaching and learning (Ball & Cohen, 1999; Hammerness, Darling-Hammond & Shulman, 2002; Lampert & Ball,1998).

### Challenges experienced by beginner teachers internationally

Much of the new work on global problems focuses on why beginner teachers abandon their careers. Another key component is searching for viable solutions to the teacher shortage (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, &

Carver-Thomas, 2016). According to a recent study, lesson preparation strategies appropriate for beginner teachers can help them be better prepared for their jobs (Ödalen, Brommesson, Erlingsson, Schaffer, & Fogelgren, 2019). According to research (Burns & Darling-Hammond, 2014; Mansfield, Beltman & Price, 2014; Raba, 2016; Struyven & Vanthournout, 2014), beginner teachers struggle with classroom management because of the physical environment, inadequate administrative support, problems with student behaviours and other difficulties. The most challenging pupils to manage are those who frequently exhibit hostile behaviours. Bullying is one issue that can result from aggression, recognised as a subset of aggression (Espelage Rao & De La Rue, 2013; Thornberg, 2011). Since bullies frequently have a higher standing than the other students in the class, they are frequently supported by those who aspire to acquire fame and power over others (Garandeau, Lee & Salmivalli, 2014). This could disrupt the lesson and typically divert the teachers' attention. As a result, managing the classroom becomes a difficult chore for teachers (DeAngelis et al.,

Beginner teachers in Turkey confront a variety of difficulties, according to a study by Kozikoglu (2017), including issues with classroom management, the delivery of instruction, and facilities and physical infrastructure. Relationships with mentor teachers, parents, administrators, and co-workers were also difficult. Additionally, it was shown that new teachers had a hard time adjusting to the social and professional demands of the classroom. They also had trouble planning and coping with the students' demands, workload, and isolation.

Kozikoglu's (2017) results about how difficult it is for beginner teachers to build relationships with parents were corroborated by other scholars (Saleem, Muhammad, & Masood, 2020). Another issue is that a child's education depends heavily on parental engagement. However, for beginner teachers, family involvement poses two distinct challenges. They find it challenging to discuss their child's performance with the parents (Saleem et al., 2020). Inexperienced teachers encounter challenging situations when interacting with parents about their children's performance, conflicts, and behavioural issues. It is also apparent that there are seldom experienced teachers serving as mentors in the classrooms to assist beginner teachers in how to interact effectively with the parents of their students. These concerns put beginner teachers in a challenging position when they meet with parents (Melnick & Meister, 2008).

According to a study by Du Plessis and Sunde (2017) on the difficulties faced by beginner teachers, some new teachers in Australia felt overburdened by their tasks and occasionally wondered if they would succeed in the field. They had problems with classroom management and colleagues' and parents' expectations. Before commencing the work, no orientation was provided, but they were still expected to be aware of the guidelines. One participant in the survey admitted they did not like their job since they were assigned to teach subjects they were not suited to. The beginner teacher expressed thoughts of leaving the industry towards the end of the year: "I am thinking of leaving at the end of this year" (Du Plessis & Sunde, 2017, p. 142)

The same study by Du Plessis and Sunde (2017) found that beginner teachers in Norway faced many of the same difficulties, such as feeling out of place and underqualified for their positions. In their study, a new teacher admitted, "I was unfamiliar with the profession... After some time, I discovered two resources to help me survive: my common sense and a knowledgeable co-worker (Du Plessis & Sunde, 2017:142). The survey also showed that beginner teachers in Norway experienced a sense of abandonment, were put in a "sink or swim" position, and found it difficult to control their concerns. Beginner teachers in the survey claimed that it was customary for them to be assigned the most challenging courses, which made classroom management difficult.

Saleem et al (2021) studied beginner teachers' classroom management strategies and difficulties in Pakistan. They discovered that because beginner teachers have little experience with behaviour management and classroom management, they view student behaviour as the most challenging. The school's lack of resources and facilities, in the opinion of the inexperienced teachers, made the problem worse. Additionally, beginner teachers mentioned how difficult it is to teach in a crowded classroom. In addition, they discovered that despite their lack of practical experience, individuals had independently devised various management strategies.

Nevertheless, they noted in the survey that training gave them the confidence teachers needed to manage their classes effectively. Beginner teachers spoke about the problem of too many kids in the classroom, saying it was difficult for them to focus on each one and provide the necessary help. Beginner teachers acknowledged that it was difficult to maintain order and carry on with lesson plans in overcrowded classrooms (Saleem, Muhammad, & Qureshi, 2021).

Beginner teachers encounter the difficulties discussed in this section everywhere, especially in developing countries. Teachers are forced to work longer and harder because of overcrowding, which shortens pupils' time in class (Marzano, 2005). Classes with more than 50 students are typical in India. The teachers stated that marking the attendance book typically takes 15 minutes. The remainder of the time is spent maintaining order to promote a positive learning environment (Mooij, 2008). According to Malawian and Ugandan teachers, a hundred students were being taught in each class. Teaching the crammed classes in this context was challenging because of the many underage and overage students (Kremer Brannen & Glennerster, 2013).

Many teachers operate in specialist professional settings where it is difficult to focus on the lesson plans and curriculum. This makes it difficult to direct their behaviours toward the students' thinking. Because teachers' backgrounds and exposure to subject matter substantially impact students' achievement, it is crucial to comprehend and solve these issues (Kang & Zinger, 2019). Oztürk and Yldrm (2013) note that the shift from basic education to professional practise for beginner teachers is frequently "troubling." According to several researchers (Murshidi, Konting, Elias & Fooi, 2006; Wanzare, 2007; Scherff, 2008), the early stages of teaching are also known to be the most difficult times for new graduates in their careers (Dickson, Riddlebarger, Stringer, Tennant & Kennnetz, 2014). During this time, they experience the difficulty of the teaching task. Beginner teachers require the emotional and professional support of their loved ones, friends, colleagues, and other educators (Gordon & Maxey, 2000).

According to Lang (2001), hearing beginner teachers' voices is essential when creating a high-quality teacher education programme. These voices should include their concerns, stressors, and triumphs. In her research, Lang (2001) refers to starting teachers as newly qualified educators and discusses the various natural shocks that come with being a teacher. Patterns like 'sink or swim' are also used to describe this real-life shock that novice teachers feel (Maciejewski, 2007; Smith & Ingersol, 2004; Joiner & Edwards, 2008).

Understanding their needs and obstacles throughout their first year of teaching is crucial to providing beginner teachers with the required assistance. Teacher education is essential to implementing all other school changes, even though it is just one of many factors needed to enable high-quality teaching. To advance knowledge of teaching, share best practises, and increase equity for kids, policymakers must work towards solid teacher preparation that is broadly accessible rather than a rare occurrence only available to a lucky few (Darling-Hammond, 2006). It is clear from the literature study that beginner teachers confront difficulties when they first begin their teaching professions. Classroom management is simply one of the difficulties teachers need assistance with as they start teaching.

## Challenges experienced by beginner teachers in South Africa

Botha and Rens (2018) focused on beginner teachers and probed whether joining the profession was the proper choice for them and whether they were destined to be teachers. Their findings showed that the participants struggled with ineffective classroom management and could not establish trusting bonds with their students. To connect with

children, one participant said that it was "still difficult to work with learners from different backgrounds, cultural differences, racial differences, and religions" (Botha & Rens, 2018, p. 5). Beginner teachers' training does not adequately prepare them. As a result, they are shocked when they arrive at work. They frequently encounter a substantial gap between their education at institutions of higher learning and when they first enter the classroom.

Beginner teachers in South Africa, according to Baffour and Achemfuor (2013), feel frustrated with their workplace, which has a detrimental impact on their job satisfaction. They frequently have a sense of job-related stress because of this.

Meier and West (2020) claim that one of the most serious issues that South African teachers deal with is overcrowding, measured by the average number of learners per teacher, and negatively impacts academic success, particularly in rural and township schools. Bakasa (2011) states that class size significantly correlates with learner achievement. Due to teachers' inability to give each student their full attention, overcrowded classrooms poorly impact learners' academic achievement (Fakude, 2012).

Compared to other nations, South African teachers have one of the lowest levels of content-subject knowledge (Nsengimana, Rugema, Hiroaki & Nkundabakura, 2020). Beginner teachers cannot teach what they do not know, which is an issue (Taylor, 2021). Due to their insufficient experience, beginner teachers cannot appropriately assess learners' progress or aid in it. In South Africa, insufficient education and support remain a major issue, contributing to beginner teachers' low retention (Du Plessis & Mestry, 2019).

Another issue facing beginner teachers is a shortage of resources. Learning is challenging in South Africa's public schools because most lack proper lab space and textbooks (Dhurumraj, 2013). According to Nyandwi (2014), resources are required to disseminate information and facts and to pique learners' interests in disciplines that call for laboratory work. According to Dhurumraj (2013), the availability of resources is essential for the effectiveness of both theoretical and practical schooling. Due to a lack of resources, it is challenging for new instructors to do their duties to the best of their abilities.

Another difficulty is that inexperienced teachers are unconfident in their capacity to carry out activities in the classroom (Baecher, 2012). According to research, beginner teachers struggle significantly with self-efficacy and anxiety, and the first few years of teaching are considered crucial for professional growth (Faez & Valeo, 2012). When pressure from their employers arises, these teachers either increase their confidence in their abilities or leave their positions (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). This has sparked discussions about whether preparatory programmes, organisational culture, educational policies, and the standard of the schools can assist them in strengthening their competences and adjusting to shifting workloads and core curricula (Cochran-Smith, 2013). The literature cited above has shown that classroom management, overcrowding, and a lack of resources are only a few beginner teachers' difficulties when joining the teaching profession in South Africa.

## IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study explored how an induction programme supports beginner teachers' self-efficacy in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district schools.

## V. METHODS

### Research approach

Qualitative research is defined by Berg and Howard (2012) as having meanings, concepts, definitions, metaphors, symbols, and descriptions of objects. This definition shows that qualitative research has all the components required to elicit recall, facilitating problem-solving. Participants' responses to open-ended questions, in-depth interviews (audio or video), field notes, and observation are utilised as qualitative data instruments to gather information from them in their natural

environments. The participants' observation and the focused group structure of the qualitative research approach produce a more profound knowledge of behaviours. As a result, the qualitative research methodology offers a wealth of information on actual individuals and circumstances. (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014; De Vaus, 2014).

Additionally, qualitative research is highly suited for delivering factual and descriptive information because it relies on the researcher gathering non-numerical primary data, such as words and pictures, which acts as an instrument (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The benefit of a qualitative research approach is that theory emerges from the data, allowing the researcher to develop and reconstruct procedures as needed based on the data they have generated, as opposed to testing data that other researchers have generated elsewhere. Even with little or no background knowledge about the participants, their expressions and experiences are simple to understand (Leedy & Ormrod, 2014).

#### Research method

Semi-structured interviews

Semi-structured interviews are utilised in research projects, according to Maree (2016), to validate data that emerges from other data sources. It rarely lasts long and is typically predicated on a line of inquiry the researcher created before the interview. There are some open questions posed, and they are then followed by additional investigation and explanation. Thus, this researcher was able to grasp better how an induction programme could increase teacher efficacy in the Thabo Mofutsanyane district's schools using semi-structured interviews.

#### Selection of participants

This study was a component of a more extensive investigation into the induction programme tested in the Free State's Thabo Mofutsanyane district. With funding from The Vlaamse Interuniversitaire Raad University Development Cooperation (VLIR-UOS), the Department of Basic Education (DBE), the Free State Department of Education (FSDoE), Flemish Association for Development Cooperation and Technical Assistance, University of the Free State, and Ghent University rolled out an induction model field test for the first-year graduates of the teacher education programme in the Free State Province. The study dealt with professional identity and its crucial role in teacher retention. The FSDoE invited schools that took part in the test field in the towns of Bethlehem and Qwaqwa to attend a workshop for an induction programme. Beginner teachers are educators who have been appointed to post level one by the Department of Basic Education and are in their first three years of teaching, according to the information provided in the invitation to schools. The researchers used a purposive sample technique to look for new teachers in the Thabo-Mofutsanyane district. Purposive sampling strategy was used for the semi-structured interviews. According to Creswell (2012), researchers must consider their research aims when selecting a sampling strategy. The goals of this study were taken into consideration when choosing the participants. Forty-seven participants from the sessions held in both Bethlehem and Qwaqwa filled out consent forms. Only fourteen of the forty-seven participants were interviewed by the three Master's students involved in the research. The examination of these interviews led to the creation of this report.

#### Data collection procedures

The initial plan was to conduct face-to-face interviews with the participants. Three interviews were required, with the first phase in the middle of 2020 and the second in 2021. The COVID-19 pandemic forced a revision in this strategy, thus delaying the interviews. In January 2021, the initial round of interviews was done telephonically. The COVID-19 lockdown rules made it impossible for the researcher to meet with the participants personally. In August 2021, a second round of interviews took place. These interviews included both telephone and in-person components. By abiding by COVID-19 rules, such as maintaining a social distance of 1.5 metres from the participants, this was made achievable. Due to eased COVID-19 protocols, the final round of interviews was performed in person in August 2022. This final round of interviews was viewed as an exit interview, with participants sharing

their experiences and suggestions for improving the induction programmes for beginner teachers.

The overall research endeavour included three rounds of interviews. The first set was intended to be introductory, to gather information on the participants' expectations about the induction model. The second set of interviews sought the participants' general experience with the induction model and what had changed for them since beginning the induction process. The final step was for participants to reflect on the induction as a whole and make recommendations on how to improve or strengthen the induction programme in the future. The researcher had hit data saturation after only collecting data from the first and second interviews.

In a study, interviews confirm data from other sources (Maree, 2016). The researcher learned more about how an induction programme might boost the self-efficacy of beginner teachers through interviews. The interview questions were organised so that pertinent information could be solicited.

## Data analysis and presentation

The researcher used thematic analysis to analyse and identify patterns observed in the data, then arranged and described the data in depth. Thematic analysis proved to be a versatile and valuable research method, with the potential to give a rich and detailed yet complex data account. It entailed reviewing and rereading all the collected data from the interviews, compiling a preliminary list of themes that emerged from the data, and rereading the data to ensure that it corresponded with the participants' words and the study questions. Bird (2005, p. 227) describes it as "a critical stage of data analysis within qualitative interpretative methodology." Furthermore, this entailed connecting the themes to direct quotes and notes and researching the categories present in the themes to interpret them.

### VI. RESULTS

#### **THEMES**

PHASE 1 (T1): It started in October 2020.

## First years' teaching experiences for beginner teachers

The responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that beginner teachers encountered positive and negative experiences during their first years of school teaching.

## Positive experiences

## Increasing beginner teachers' self-efficacy

Some participants' responses showed that their self-efficacy was increasing during their first years of teaching, while others needed help developing it. Some beginner teachers mentioned that they were motivated by the learners' progress, while others struggled to find the best teaching strategies for learners with learning barriers. The following responses from semi-structured interviews help illustrate this point:

"The learners... Because you can see in their faces when you are busy explaining that something is clicking in their mind. That is the motivating part" (Participant 6).

"The exciting part of my work is observing my learners progressing and others excelling" (Participant 8).

Some participants revealed that they used different teaching strategies, which seemed to be working as the learners could pass. One participant shared the following.

"My teaching strategies were working because most learners could pass" (Participant 4).

Another participant revealed that if teachers work hard, this is reflected in their results at the end of the term or year, which indicates their success in helping the learners. The following responses from semi-structured interviews help illustrate this point:

"Now I have seen that if you work hard and you see what the learners need, and you help them in that way, then your results would show the same thing, that you are successful and can help them" (Participant 2).

"I could stand in front of the class and teach independently, and my learners did pass" (Participant 13).

"As for last year, my second year, everything was smooth because I had to use the same method I used in my first year and then improve on some of my difficulties or challenges" (Participant 10).

However, not all the participants could find the right teaching strategies for their learners, as they also had learners with barriers in their classrooms. The following responses from semi-structured interviews help illustrate this point:

"Sometimes there are slow learners in class, and sometimes the learners do not understand your teaching method" (Participant 14).

"Some learners have difficulties understanding me; some are still slow in writing. For example, from Grade 2 to Grade 4; so if you are a new teacher, it will be difficult to just go in class and teach learners" (Participant 9).

Therefore, some participants indicated that they felt motivated by their learners to continue doing the job when they saw them pass. Others felt their hard work paid off at the end of the term or year when the learners passed. One participant mentioned that they could adopt the strategies they used in the previous year and improve them according to what did not work well in the last year. However, not all the participants felt they had the right teaching strategies, as others struggled with learners who had barriers to learning.

#### Expectations of the induction programme

The responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that beginner teachers expected to be inducted formally, based on the curriculum, but found the induction to be more than expected. Some participants also anticipated that they would be given knowledge about the teaching profession and the administrative tasks at the school. The participants shared the following;

"I thought that it would be based more on, like, maybe the curriculum, the DBE (Department of Basic Education) books, you know, but I found that it is more" (Participant 2).

"Oh, my expectation was to be given more knowledge about the teaching profession, like what is expected from a teacher, like how to be, okay – What can I say? – which one is correct, being a good teacher and being the right teacher; I think there is a difference between those two" (Participant 4).

The participants' responses also indicated they expected emotional support and guidance during the induction programme. For example, they hoped to receive advice on handling overcrowded classrooms and practical ideas on handling real-life problems that they encountered at schools. The following responses from semi-structured interviews help illustrate this point:

"Okay, I expect it to be more practical. Like to give us the ideas that are practical that we can be able to apply in a real-life situation which we face in a school environment" (Participant 4)

"Okay. Maybe they can just tell us more on how to handle these overcrowded classrooms, because that one is hard and you have to produce results in an overcrowded classroom, yes" (Participant 5).

"As a new teacher, there are things that we go through, and I feel like we need emotional support due to the things that involve education and everything" (Participant 1).

Therefore, the participants had different expectations of what the induction programme would entail, from curriculum development and knowledge about teaching to being given emotional support when dealing with the learners and the school environment.

#### Negative experiences

## Reality shock

The researcher also asked beginner teachers to share their transition experiences from being a pre-service to an in-service teacher. The responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that beginner teachers experienced a real shock when they started teaching regarding curriculum implementation and class management. Some participants mentioned that the content they were taught at university differed from what they had to teach in school. The participants shared the following;

"I think it was implementing the curriculum, implementing the process, the planning into the real class environment because when you are taught at school how to do the planning and everything when there are no learners, you would just have to implement what you have written down" (Participant 1).

"What we were taught in university was not the same exactly as what we experienced in class" (Participant 12).

"In life science, the thing that we are doing is not the same as the one that we are doing at the university" (Participant 8).

"I realised that most of the things that we were taught at the university were different from the things that we had to teach. So, it needed a lot of time to digest and to get used to new things" (Participant 9).

"In the first year, it was more, like, the knowledge you brought from university is not the knowledge you use in the class. So, that is what we struggled with most of the time because you do not have more knowledge about the subjects to teach to the learners" (Participant 6).

Some participants indicated that they experienced real shock when teaching in a real-life setting for the first time since everything was difficult. Other participants mentioned that they had difficulties dealing with the parents of their learners. The participants shared the following.

"I would say that things that were difficult for me were dealing with the real-life experience of teaching as opposed to theory because I already know all the stuff and the content for the learners in theory" (Participant 14).

"The most difficult thing was to apply theoretical knowledge to the diversity of learners in class" (Participant 4).

"The experience at the work environment is not similar to what I have learned at the university. I just learned about the CAPS document at the surface, but they did not go in-depth" (Participant 10).

"In tertiary education, I was not trained for primary level. I was doing the FET phase. I am working at the primary level, and it is very challenging to take instructions to the young learners for their comprehension because I have been practising with the FET learners" (Participant 11).

"I did experience praxis shock because I encountered problems, especially regarding the learners' parents with their complaints" (Participant 10).

"Even the parents... there are parents who come to school and will ask for you and insult you; you can see that these parents need fighting" (Participant 13).

Therefore, the participants experienced a real shock when they started teaching due to curriculum-related problems or applying the knowledge they learned at university in the classroom. Some mentioned that the content they were taught at university differed from what they had to teach in schools. Others were shocked by the parents' behaviours towards them and felt that university had not prepared them to deal with such situations.

## Overcrowded classrooms

The responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that beginner teachers considered overcrowded classrooms a negative experience in their first year of teaching. They mentioned that they had large numbers of learners in their classes, up to 80 in some schools. This made it difficult for them to manage the classes, resulting in poor teaching and learning. One participant mentioned that overcrowding in the classes resulted in poor learners' discipline as the participant was afraid to discipline the learners. The participants shared the following:

"For me, when you get into the classroom as a first-time teacher, and you find 42 learners, and you are on your own- you know- it was a little bit tricky because you are even afraid to discipline these learners since you are told that you must not be too strict, you must not do this, you must not do that" (Participant 2).

"In our school, we have many learners, and we are sort of overcrowded because, in my first year, it was like 80 learners in one class" (Participant 1).

"When we were in teaching practice, the classes were not overcrowded as they are now in school, so I was a bit scared and nervous" (Participant 12).

"In grade 10, classes were too big, you cannot manage classes, they are too big" (Participant 7).

Therefore, beginner teachers experience difficulties with overcrowded classrooms, one of the challenges teachers in public schools in South Africa face. It is challenging to control a classroom with up to 80 learners and produce good results.

## Learners' discipline

The responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that beginner teachers considered the learners' lack of discipline a negative experience they faced in schools in their first year of teaching. The participants mentioned that they had a considerable challenge regarding learners' discipline. One participant stated they were conflicted about what to do, as chasing a misbehaving learner out of the classroom infringed on their right to education. Another participant mentioned that they did not know the right or wrong way to discipline the learners. The participants shared the following;

"It was quite challenging, especially when it comes to disciplining and sharing duties and everything, so it was quite hectic" (Participant 1).

"We can start with the learner behaviours, how to control a learner" (Participant 13).

"You are in a class, and then, you do not know how to discipline a learner, and then maybe you will chase him out of the classroom, and it causes problems for you as a teacher" (Participant 9).

"It was tricky because you are even afraid to discipline these learners because you are told that you must not be too strict, you must not do this, and you must not do that. So, you do not know what is wrong or right, especially regarding discipline" (Participant 2).

Therefore, beginner teachers struggled with learners' discipline as they were confused about instilling discipline in them. Others mentioned that they did not know the right or wrong way to discipline the learners.

#### PHASE 2 (T2)

#### First years of teaching experience for beginner teachers

The responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that beginner teachers encountered positive and negative experiences during their first years of school teaching.

#### **Positive**

## Increasing beginner teachers' self-efficacy

The semi-structured interview responses revealed beginner teachers' self-efficacy increased as they continued the induction programme. They were motivated by the fact that they were helping the learners to have a brighter future through education and seeing the learners happy. The participants shared the following;

"Well, one thing that motivates me is that I know that, by teaching learners, I am helping them develop their future" (Participant 2).

"When the learners are happy to see me in class, it motivates me a lot" (Participant 8).

"It motivates me to do my work when I get to know my learners, talk with them, and motivate them" (Participant 7).

"I enjoy teaching; I think my job was all about teaching" (Participant 4).

Some participants mentioned that the learners' progress gave them motivation. The participants shared the following;

"From where I started until now, I have seen progress in learners, which motivates me more to do my work" (Participant 4).

"I am motivated by when I see my learners progressing. When our learners are progressing, that was the exciting part of my work" (Participant 5).

Some participants indicated they were motivated since they learned new teaching skills. Those participants had a different degree from a Bachelor degree in Education and followed it up with a Post Graduate Certificate in Education to become professional teachers. One participant shared the following;

"Yes, I am, even though I am still busy gaining some... okay, I am obtaining some of the skills since I am busy with my Post Graduate Certificate in Education. You know, it motivates me a lot to deal with learners and do some psychology at the campus on how to deal with learners, and how to deal with their different mindsets" (Participant 1).

When asked if they had what it takes to be successful, most beginner teachers believed they had what it takes to thrive since they could use technology to their advantage to get the necessary resources to help with teaching and learning. The participants shared the following;

"As a beginner teacher, I have what it takes to succeed. Because we now live in the technological world, we know more about finding information, searching for information, and the internet" (Participant 3).

"Yes, I do, because first, I am qualified for my job, and second, I am a lifelong learner. I still learn, and I am willing and open to learning; I am open to new things or challenges" (Participant 4).

"As a new teacher, I have what it takes to succeed because, like as I said, every day I am gaining more experience, and then I reflect on my teaching and

then try to correct what I did well and what I did not do good" (Participant 2). "I feel that if you work and are motivated to do the work, then you can

succeed. It does not depend on someone else" (Participant 7).

Some participants believed they had what it takes to become successful as they gained more teaching experience and reflected on their teaching practices to see how they could improve. The participants shared the following;

"I think I improved because I have changed my way of teaching completely since my first year. In my first year, I stood there and told them a bunch of knowledge, and now I am teaching them with experience" (Participant 3).

"I feel that as a beginner teacher, I can succeed, I can go further. Every time you learn something new, you will manage that as well. Your teaching style changes from where you start to where you see what is working" (Participant

"I have what it takes to succeed as a new teacher because every day, I am gaining more experience, and then I reflect on my teaching and then try to correct what I did not do well" (Participant 5).

"I am now a little bit knowledgeable on how to differentiate teaching strategies. Previously, I only used one strategy, even though it did not work for other learners" (Participant 2).

"I've seen that if you work hard and you see what the learners need, and you help them in that way, then your results will show the same thing, that you are successful and can help them" (Participant 4).

"In my first year, I was wondering how I am going to stand in front of a class. Now, I can walk into any class and start teaching" (Participant 1).

Some participants indicated that even though they did not receive supervision or mentorship, they could help all the learners pass grade 12 during their first year of teaching. One participant shared the following;

"I have achieved so much compared to the fact that I am new in the field and had no supervision, no mentorship, but I did achieve great things, you know. During my first year in Grade 12, my learners got 100% passes. So, even though I am a beginner teacher and have no mentor, I think my results speak volumes" (Participant 5).

Some participants revealed that they could improve their results even with learners who had learning barriers. The participants shared the following;

"I was given a class of these learners that were known as the notorious ones since they would disrespect teachers, but I have managed to get some of them to level six in accounting. They were regarded as a class of slow learners, the ones that were failing, the failures, the repeaters, the old ones, but I managed to get some of them to level six in accounting. That made me feel good about myself" (Participant 2).

"My learners are excelling. I am marking their work. There is one who got 96 out of 100, and the other one got 94. I like that their marks are so high. So, that makes me feel good when teaching" (Participant 7).

Therefore, the results showed that some beginner teachers' selfefficacy increased as they continued the induction programme. They were motivated by the fact that the learners were progressing and passing. Also, they believed they had what it took to be successful in their careers.

## Learners' discipline

During T2, this study found that learners' discipline became a positive experience, unlike in T1. Participants mentioned that they could discipline the learners and did not struggle anymore with discipline. The participants shared the following;

"Now, with discipline, I am fine because the learners are not as many as before. They are 35 to 40, and so it is manageable" (Participant 4).

"I now know how to deal with these learners more than in the past. You know, some things... you learn them in the classroom, that if you come across these behaviours, this is what you need to do" (Participant 3).

"All these behavioural issues and all the experiences that I have come across taught me how to respond, and the nice part is that you get to teach about 20 learners, which is controllable" (Participant 5).

Therefore, the responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that fewer learners in the classrooms also enabled beginner teachers to

control or manage the learners' behaviours. Hence, during this stage, the learners' behaviours became positive and were no longer as negative as during T1.

## Negative

## Reality shock

Beginner teachers were asked to share their experiences of transitioning from being a pre-service teacher to an in-service teacher. The responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that some beginner teachers experienced a real shock when they started teaching in schools regarding curriculum implementation and the lack of understanding of the CAPS document as they felt they did not learn much about it at the university level. The participants shared the following;

"Yes, there was a gap in the curriculum and the learning environment itself" (Participant 2).

"It is all about content for your major subjects. They do not go in-depth with CAPS document, I think" (Participant 8).

"Whatever they teach us at school, we do it even here. But now, when you have to take it into practicality, things seem to be no longer the same. I think the practical part is the one that is lacking" (Participant 1).

"Maybe they can help the teachers to learn how the CAPS document and all those things work because, at the university level, you do not go into the CAPS document. You just go through the content" (Participant 6).

#### Not reaching the subject pass target

The responses from semi-structured interviews revealed that beginner teachers' failure to reach the subject pass requirements, or the target set, was another negative experience in their first year of school teaching. The participants shared the following.

"I am not getting 100%, but learners are improving in my subject" (P2).

"I finished marking accounting for Grade 11, and I saw that my learners have failed. It makes me look like a failure, an incompetent teacher" (Participant 5).

"I was able to move these learners from level one, others from level one to level three, and others from level one to level two, which they have never experienced before. So, now I feel bad because my learners are failing"

"I wanted to focus more on these learners since most were failing. I told myself that I want to see them passing, even though you know learners, how they are; they would complain when they have to work" (Participant 4).

Therefore, beginner teachers had a negative experience as the learners failed and could not reach the subject pass target.

## Comparing results between phase 1 and phase 2

During T1, the subtheme learners' discipline was a negative experience that beginner teachers faced during their first years of teaching. They struggled to control the learners' behaviours due to classroom overcrowding. However, during T2, that negative experience turned into a positive one. This came because of the COVID-19 pandemic, which reduced the number of learners in the classrooms, making it easy to manage the learners' behaviours. During T1, overcrowding was a subtheme under the negative experiences; however, during T2, overcrowding was not experienced because of the reduced number of learners in the classroom due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The new negative experiences observed during T2 were not reaching the subject pass target, and some beginner teachers struggled to get the target pass for the subject they taught. The COVID-19 lockdown contributed to this because learners were at home for a long time without being taught.

## VII. DISCUSSION

Self-efficacy is essential in the development of beginning teachers during their first years of teaching. According to the reviewed literature, beginner teachers require high levels of self-efficacy in their first year of teaching to be successful, as self-efficacy assists beginner teachers in overcoming the daily problems they confront in the workplace (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). The study's findings agreed with the reviewed literature in that self-efficacy is one of the most important

factors that help beginner teachers stay in the profession (Fackler, Malmberg, & Sammons, 2021). Beginner teachers demonstrated high levels of self-efficacy in their narrated reports of daily obstacles and reports of their support to help their learners achieve. One participant felt their teaching tactics were effective as the learners progressed through the school year. This demonstrated that beginner teachers could employ various instructional tactics to assist their learners in remaining motivated and passing. Another participant stated that they were motivated to stay in the profession by helping the learners to achieve in their studies to have a brighter future. Finally, the findings confirmed what the reviewed literature suggested: self-efficacy plays a role in the growth of beginner teachers. According to the research findings and the reviewed literature, self-efficacy is critical in developing beginner teachers as professionals. According to the reviewed research, beginner teachers with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to stay in the profession and manage daily obstacles (Krasniqi & Ismajli, 2022). The findings concurred with the literature, and the participants demonstrated, on average, strong levels of selfefficacy, which enabled them to deal with the daily demands of their work. This is not to say that there should be no induction programme for beginner teachers. Induction programmes should be available to help beginner teachers build their self-efficacy. This is because some beginner teachers lack self-efficacy; an induction programme would help them acquire it through coaching and mentorship. Based on the findings and the examined literature, the researcher concluded that selfefficacy and induction go hand in hand. Even though some beginner teachers had high levels of self-efficacy, they needed to be thoroughly initiated to increase their self-efficacy. This demonstrated that there was a link between self-efficacy and an induction course. Beginner teachers with low self-efficacy required induction to help them build their selfefficacy. As a result, the researcher provides clear proof that beginner teacher induction activities improve their preparedness for obtaining professional skills and overall contribution to learner growth.

## VIII. CONCLUSION

The study sought to assess and reveal these trials to assist beginner teachers with obstacles in their first years of teaching and investigate how their self-efficacy might be built and strengthened through an induction course. To put it differently, this study showed that even if some beginner teachers have high levels of self-efficacy, they still require mentorship to succeed in their teaching careers. An induction course is not only required for beginner teachers to enter the teaching profession, but it also serves as a useful tool for them to succeed in their careers. Furthermore, there is no research on induction programmes or institutionalised induction processes in South Africa. Given these findings, building and improving beginner teachers' self-efficacy throughout an induction programme can be a tool for future studies, particularly those concentrating on beginner teachers' self-efficacy.

In summary, significant work remains to be done throughout the country to create an introduction process for beginner teachers. For beginner teachers to succeed, they must be trained and supported. Furthermore, the study discovered that most beginner teachers begin their careers with high levels of self-efficacy; however, this does not indicate that there should not be an introduction programme to improve those teachers with high levels of self-efficacy and grow those without high levels of self-efficacy. The researcher believes that it would be beneficial for other researchers to participate in research initiatives to develop and increase the self-efficacy of beginner teachers.

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