InFORMal Teachers' Experiences With Trauma-Informed Teaching Practices: Helping Students Through Doing Past Teaching Experience

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ABSTRACT
This exploratory qualitative study will analyze the implementation of trauma-informed teaching practices (TITP) by educators in Connecticut High Schools that have not yet formally implemented TITP programs into their school’s pedagogical expectations. In addition, this study seeks to understand the extent of how teachers use TITP in their daily teaching practices. The results of this study will seek to triangulate and provide an understanding of how TITP is effectively in classrooms where it is observed. While the TITP framework supports all students, it is meant to sustain the students who have lived through or have experienced adverse childhood experiences (ACE). In this study, secondary teachers from Foster High School (FHS) (a pseudonym) will be selected based on their willingness to be a part of this study. Participants will be engaged in a variety of ways to assess their knowledge and implementation of TITP within their classrooms. Preferably, at least one teacher from each content area will be included as a participant in this study. The data collected will be used to investigate the teachers’ perspectives regarding TITP in secondary schools. Finally, themes will be analyzed using triangulation, and the findings will be based on the participants’ understanding and implementation of Trauma Informed Teaching Practices.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK
The three constructs that are the essential building blocks for the theoretical framework of this study are: (1) adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), (2) best practices for implementing trauma informed teaching practices (TITP), and (3) the four key underlying principles of TITP commonly used by secondary teachers. These constructs fundamentally shape TITP’s principles study throughout the methodology portion of this dissertation with special emphasis found within the creation of the data collection instruments. Moreover, Trauma theory explains that past adverse events can influence a person’s socio-emotional, physical, and mental health (Brandel & Ringle, 2019).

METHODOLOGY
This qualitative exploratory study aims to identify Trauma Informed Teaching Practices (TITP) that teachers implicitly implement within their classrooms. A case study is a “qualitative research design that provides an in-depth analysis of a solution for events, groups of people, or individuals by assessing a case or case in a particular setting or context” (Chigbu, p. 4, 2019). This study will analyze a group of teachers working at a Connecticut High School and their understanding of TITP.

DATA COLLECTION
This qualitative study will analyze a group of teachers working at a Connecticut High School and their understanding of TITP.

The best TITP requires teachers to achieve to create an effective, trauma supportive learning environment for ACE students. The research suggests that the successful application of the TITP is contingent upon how an educator applies instructional strategies that employ predictable, and supplying structure (Hanover Research, 2019). As a result, the study will analyze a group of teachers working at a Connecticut High School and their understanding of TITP.

PRELIMINARY FINDINGS
All participants most likely use TITP within their instruction whether they had formal TITP training or not. There is a need for all teachers to be trained in some form of TITP to support better their students' socio-emotional, academic, and mental health. Based on past teaching experiences, most teachers would welcome more transparency from the administration when they know a student is undergoing a traumatic event.

DISCUSSION
Classroom Environment. One priority for all teachers is to ensure that the classroom is safe. The physical environment and how the space is designed prevent the overstimulation of students by providing a sense of predictability, and supplying structure (Hanover Research, 2019). Identification of “Caution Signs”. TITP supports teachers to work with and comprehend the ACE effects and better equips them to teach their students better. In addition, teachers require training to effectively identify threats to students' well-being, even if that threat is one of their own.

De-Escalation Protocol. The best TITP requires teachers to design a procedure for responding to students who are displaying “caution signs” in the classroom. It is vital for teachers to have an action plan to counteract all possible inappropriate behaviors.