

Preface

The area of research that investigates self-regulation and instruction in teacher candidates and teachers has been largely neglected, considering its relevance to teacher quality, psychological well-being, and students' academic growth. The purpose of this book is to report findings from an in depth case study that examines the associations between teacher candidate's self-regulatory skills and motivational beliefs during their clinical experiences both in the college classroom and school settings from the perspective of social cognitive theory and self-regulation theory.

Self-regulation of learning is known to be important for students in general, but also for teacher candidates and in-service teachers. Learning how to teach is not enough; teachers need to learn how to learn. Teacher education programs can be important contributors to the presence of self-regulated teachers in the classroom. Teacher candidates often have difficulty engaging in adaptive help seeking when a task becomes too difficult to be completed alone. They also have difficulty delaying gratification when distracted from completing a task by invitations to more attractive activities. Often, they maintain low levels of self-efficacy for learning and teacher self-efficacy beliefs that undermine their capability and competence to perform designated and important teaching preparation tasks.

This case study of four teacher candidates was based on an ongoing interest in the success of a teacher preparation program at a small college in an urban setting. The choice of self-regulated learning as a focus for the study is linked to the core values of the college. The enrollment reflects the population of most inner cities providing an edge in developing a program that is effective for urban schools. The college is nationally recognized for its ethnic, socioeconomic, and cultural diversity among students and faculty. The researchers provide an integral account of the self-regulatory and motivational beliefs in a case study format:

- Provide a direct account of the development of four teacher candidates during their student teaching clinical experience.
- Focus on contemporary educational theories to describe and interpret the experience of the four teacher candidates.

- Learn the educational and psychological experiences that impacted their learning and teaching experiences.
- Provide directions for future research derived from the experience of these four teacher candidates and directions for educational practices.

First, the introduction provides an overview of the institution and how the participants were chosen for this study. The following section, the literature review, focuses on the importance of social cognitive theory and self-regulation theory. The next section describes the settings, participants, and assessments used in the case study followed by the outcome of the observations and analyses of surveys and questionnaires. The discussion addresses what really matters. The major findings and educational implications of the case study provide the basis for future studies.

We wanted a book that would showcase the efforts and accomplishments of students who benefitted from a strategic approach towards their successful completion of a teacher preparation program by integrating self-regulatory strategies into the fiber of their learning experiences. The faculty and students worked together to establish a supportive network within and beyond the college whose members encouraged help-seeking, delaying gratification, monitoring self-efficacy for learning, and teacher self-efficacy.

This book is written for teacher candidates to believe that if they heard a call to teach, they can read in each paragraph that they can do it. Teacher candidates reading this book will find themselves vicariously portrayed in the journey of the four aspiring teachers described in this book. They can empathize with their struggles but will also find assurance that through self-regulation, their own journeys and dreams could have great outcomes. This book is also written for teacher educators in teaching education programs to realize that by transforming their curriculum in light of new findings on self-regulation, they could facilitate the training process of teacher candidates under their supervision and to understand that self-regulation of learning and teaching matters for teacher candidates.

This book differs from other books related to teacher candidates in several important ways:

- This book reports the journey of four teacher candidates over the span of 4 years from their initial student teaching experience until 2 years into their professional work.
- This book focuses on the important role of social cognitive theory and self-regulation theory as two umbrellas known to have substantial research evidence of successes.
- This book emphasizes the role of teacher self-efficacy, academic delay of gratification, and help seeking as pivotal factors known to buffer academic success and achievement.
- This book focuses on four teacher candidates from underrepresented ethnic groups who were not expected to survive their rigorous teaching program but who became self-regulated learners by postponing immediately attractive alternatives, seeking help when needed, and by developing self-efficacy.
- This book is rigorous in its methodology by triangulating its data sources, which include observation, questionnaires, archival sources, and reflections.

Acknowledgments

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Skills Among Teacher Candidates

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