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## Psychosocial Factors and Early Career College Faculty: Teacher Identity, Teaching Self-efficacy, and Sense of Belonging

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree in Education

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## Abstract

The purpose of this integrated article dissertation is to present my research into the roles played by teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and organizational sense of belonging in the early careers of Ontario college faculty. The first study presents a mixed methods investigation of the effects of employment status on these psychosocial factors. Using a survey developed from a series of instruments found in the literature, I collected quantitative data from 424 faculty, employed at 20 Ontario colleges, who were in their first three years of teaching. I also conducted focus group interviews with 27 participants in eight focus groups. My thematic analysis revealed four themes. The three themes of *teacher identity*, *teaching self-efficacy*, and *sense of belonging* were predetermined from the variables of interest in the study. The fourth theme, *support for new faculty* and all its subthemes were determined through inductive coding. The quantitative data analyses included descriptive statistics, correlations, and MANOVA. The mixed methods results showed that employment status had an effect on teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging.

The second study presents the development and analysis of a conceptual model of the effect of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging on teacher engagement and approaches to teaching. This quantitative analysis of the same data set included MANOVA, ANOVA, and path analysis. The path analysis showed differences between the full-time and part-time faculty on the predictors of teacher engagement but not for student-focused approaches to teaching. Teacher engagement was predicted by all three variables for full-time faculty. For part-time faculty, teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy predicted teacher engagement, but belonging did not. For both full-time and part-time faculty groups, a student-focused approach to teaching was predicted only by teaching self-efficacy, and not by teacher identity or teaching

self-efficacy. Furthermore, employment status did not have an effect on approaches to teaching, but it did have an effect on overall teacher engagement and the domains of engagement.

Taken together these studies establish the importance of the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging to the teaching practices of faculty in their early careers, and it highlight some differences based on employment status. The implications are that onboarding and orientation programs for both part-time and full-time new college faculty should deliberately include opportunities for developing and enhancing these psychosocial factors.

## **Lay Abstract**

For this dissertation, I researched the roles of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and organizational sense of belonging in the early careers of college faculty in order to learn more about the transition to teaching, especially from previous professional careers. In the first study, I examined the effects of being employed part-time or full-time on these three psychosocial factors. Over four hundred Ontario college faculty who were in their first three years of teaching answered my survey and 27 of them participated in focus groups. The results showed that employment status (part-time or full-time) influenced teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging. In the second study I studied the effects of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging on teacher engagement and approaches to teaching. This study showed differences between the full-time and part-time faculty on teacher engagement but not for student-focused approaches to teaching.

Taken together these studies establish the importance of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging to the teaching practices of college faculty in their early careers, and the results highlight some differences based on employment status. The implications are that orientation programs for both part-time and full-time new college faculty should deliberately include opportunities for developing and enhancing these factors to best support new faculty as they transition to teaching.

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I dedicate this journey to my Mom. The one who inspires me and encourages me and who has always held a high bar for us. I am so pleased you could share the completion of this degree with me.

And of course, my friends - St. Clair colleagues, Undergrad Roomies, DrOwlettes, Bookclubbers, and those in between - you know who you are. Like so many other times in life, it's about the people we meet along the way. You have supported and motivated me and, at times, kept me writing...our retreats must not stop!

It is with ongoing respect and appreciation that I will remember the roles that each of you played in my success.

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## Chapter 1: Introduction

“This path as a full-time professor, teacher, learning designer ... that’s the new craft that we need to become the best at.” This quote from Blake<sup>1</sup>, a newly appointed college educator, clearly illustrates the primary challenge that early career college faculty face as they transition to college teaching. Experienced professionals make a transition from being experts in their industry, profession, or discipline to being teachers of their craft, and most do this without teaching expertise or training (Cranton, 2011; Gregory & Cusson, 2013). Colleges support this transition with professional development activities, such as new faculty orientation, onboarding, or induction programs (Gregory & Cusson, 2013). Generally, these programs focus on the development of a skillset for teaching, orientation to the campus, and understanding college curriculum. However, beyond pedagogical skills, there are affective aspects of teaching that play an important role in effective teaching (Garganté, Meneses, & Monereo, 2014; Kordts-Freudinger, 2017; Korhonen & Törmä, 2016; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2011; Shoffner, 2009). This affective aspect of teaching has not been studied extensively in higher education; however, in the limited studies available positive emotions such as a sense of belonging, self-efficacy, a sense of identity, enthusiasm, and enjoyment have been related to organizational commitment and to teaching behaviours that positively influence student learning (Kordts-Freudinger, 2017; Korhonen & Törmä, 2016; Trigwell, 2012; Zhang, 2019). In this dissertation, I bring attention to some of the psychosocial factors involved in the affective domain of teaching and how these factors influence the teaching practices of early career college educators. Although these psychosocial factors have been researched in some higher education settings (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Sadler, 2013; van Lankveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset, & Beishuizen, 2017), they have not been studied

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<sup>1</sup> all names used in this document are pseudonyms

in the context of the transition to teaching in Ontario colleges. By acknowledging the role that psychosocial factors play in the transition to college teaching, I intend for my research to fill a gap in the existing literature and provide practical insights to the support and development of new college faculty on their journey toward teaching excellence.

### **Research Questions**

The overarching research questions that prompted my research were: *What shapes the teaching of early career college faculty? How can we learn more about the transition to teaching and how to support new college educators? What factors contribute to the teaching effectiveness of early career college educators?* The pursuit of these questions guided my review of the literature and led to these specific research questions:

1. *How is the teaching of early career college educators influenced by their teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and organizational sense of belonging?*
2. *What are the relationships between these constructs?*
3. *Are there differences in these relationships between full-time and part-time faculty?*

In response to these questions, I present two papers in this integrated article dissertation. The first paper addresses the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and organizational sense of belonging of full- and part-time college educators in the early stages of their careers. In the second paper, I propose and evaluate a conceptual model of the transition to college teaching, in which the psychosocial factors are predicted to influence the teaching practices of early career educators. Each paper is written as an independent manuscript and as such, there is inevitable repetition throughout the dissertation. I apologize to the reader in advance for this unavoidable circumstance.

## **Identity and Positionality as a Researcher**

My interest in this topic stems from my ongoing work with new faculty in the college system in Ontario. I have had the pleasure of facilitating onboarding and professional development for new faculty from several colleges. This experience of working with new faculty and based on my own experiences as a college educator, I became curious about the psychosocial aspects of teaching. I set out to explore these factors and investigate how they influence the teaching practices of new college educators. I was particularly interested in studying the importance of, and the interrelationships between the factors of identity, self-efficacy, and belonging because, based on my personal experience and interactions with new faculty, I sensed these factors were more important to early educators than previously recognized. My research is centred on the contention that these psychosocial factors have an influence on teaching practices, and thereby affect student learning. It follows that to provide the best transition for new college faculty these factors should be considered as an essential component to early career development and purposefully included in the onboarding and orientation programs for early career college educators.

Philosophically, I align with the pragmatist worldview. Pragmatism draws on many ideas, uses diverse approaches, adopts both subjective and objective knowledge, and clearly focuses on the consequences of the research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). Pragmatism is considered the predominant philosophical stance underlying mixed methods research because it recognizes the value in approaching research from more than one viewpoint (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) When both quantitative and qualitative research methods are used in a single study (as in mixed methods), the researcher shifts from a post-positivist philosophy (adopted when collecting quantitative data) to an interpretive or constructivist perspective when collecting the qualitative data; the pragmatist orientation is a pluralistic stance combining the two



(Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Johnson, Onwuegbuzie, Anthony, & Turner, 2007). In my doctoral journey I collected data using mixed methods. In this dissertation, I wrote the first article using the mixed methods data, the second one using only quantitative data, and collected the overall findings from both articles in a final conclusion.

### **Theoretical Framework**

I selected transformative learning theory (TLT; Mezirow, 1991) for my theoretical framework because previous researchers have shown that a transformation of perspective is often part of the professional learning and development experienced by new faculty (Cranton, 1996, 2000, 2009; Howard & Taber 2010; Kligyte, 2011), and because its constructivist underpinnings fit well with a mixed methods approach to research (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). TLT originated in the 1970s with the seminal works of John Mezirow (Cranton & Taylor, 2012; Mezirow, 1991). Mezirow based his theory on constructivist assumptions; that, as individuals, we interpret our experiences in our own way and our interpretation of our experiences determines how we view the world. Transformative learning takes place when our assumptions are challenged and, as a result, we question and revise our perceptions, resulting in a “deep shift in perspective” (Mezirow, 2012, p. 89). He used the term “frame of reference” (p.82) to describe the structure of one’s assumptions, and he referred to the time when one’s frame of reference is challenged as “a disorienting dilemma” (p.86). Mezirow (2012) further proposed that the process of transformative learning happens in stages. It is initiated by a disorienting dilemma, which is followed by self-examination, a critical reflection of roles, self-reflection and self-determination, trying on new roles, and the acquisition of knowledge and skills. This process leads to new competencies and self-confidence and, ultimately, the integration of a new perspective and perhaps even a new identity (Cranton & Hoggan, 2012; Mezirow, 2012).

TLT has been supported by the experiences of educators as they transition into their teaching careers (Cranton, 2009; Cranton & Hoggan, 2012). Several researchers have identified the early encounters of new faculty as disorienting dilemmas (Cranton, 2000; Cranton, 2011; Kligyte, 2011). The first years of an academic career have been described as confusing, exhausting, overwhelming, full of anxiety and conflicting messages (Cooley & De Gagne, 2016; Sutherland & Taylor, 2011). The dilemma presents a discrepancy between what an individual has always assumed to be true, and what has just been experienced. Faculty are likely to have assumptions that guide their teaching which can be based on their own experiences as students, or their past career (Cranton, 2000). For example, Cranton (2000) worked with new community college educators from skilled trades' backgrounds and found that their previously held "habits of mind" were challenged during their instructor training.

Cranton (2011) described the disorienting dilemma as a catalyst for change; however, in order to advance through the transformative process, critical reflection is essential when confronted with a disorienting dilemma (Mezirow, 2012). While involved in self-reflection individuals experience critical assessment of their assumptions, and if available, recognition that others have experienced something similar. The meaning we attribute to our experiences is validated through communication and interaction with others (Mezirow, 2012). According to Mezirow (2012), when transformative learning occurs, the outcome of this reflection is a new sense of confidence and competence which leads to a new perspective or frame of reference.

This transformative experience was illustrated by Kligyte (2011) who examined the journal reflections of newly appointed university academics. She categorized their reflections as either *change to practice*, such as an increasing number of pedagogical strategies, or *change to self*, such as understanding their roles as teachers, increased confidence, and acknowledging the importance

of a student-centered approach to their teaching. This change in educators was further explained by Brookfield (2002) who described how critical reflection shaped the mental health and competence of community college educators' as they developed confidence in their work. He noted that connecting with colleagues helped facilitate the reflection process and left teachers with an increased sense of engagement for teaching.

In summary, TLT provides a strong theoretical framework for investigating the experiences of new faculty as they transition into their teaching role. Through the stages of the transformative learning process, faculty can consider their identity as a teacher, interact with colleagues facing similar transitions, and gain self-efficacy to best support their teaching practice.

### **Literature review**

This literature review introduces the context of my research project—Ontario colleges and the faculty who teach there. I also present a brief overview of each of the constructs used in my research—teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, sense of belonging, teacher engagement, and approaches to teaching.

#### **Ontario Colleges/ College Faculty in Ontario**

Colleges are a vibrant part of the post-secondary education system. In Ontario there are 24 publicly funded Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology and Institutes of Technology and Advanced Learning (otherwise referred to as Ontario colleges) that provide learning opportunities in skilled trades and academic programs that focus on job preparation and occupationally relevant education and training (Colleges and Institutes Canada, 2016; Government of Ontario, 2012). Ontario colleges offer many different types of programs ranging from one-year certificates to baccalaureate degrees; however, the common underlying factor is the close relationships with community industries and response to the labour market (Colleges and Institutes Canada, 2016). As

a result, college faculty are diverse in their experience and education, and the majority of faculty members come to teaching from a previous career where they acquired strong backgrounds in their respective professions (Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE), 2014; Gregory & Cusson, 2013). Their field expertise is essential to the nature of applied learning and skills development provided by Ontario colleges. In most cases, these skilled practitioners are not trained as teachers and they have to make the transition from being experts in their field to being novice educators (CCCSE, 2014; Carusseta & Cranton, 2009). This transition presents a challenge for new educators as well as for those supporting them (Baker & DiPiro, 2018; Billot & King, 2017; Ennals, Fortune, Williams, & D’Cruz, 2016; Schaar, Titzer, & Beckham, 2015).

There is little literature specifically regarding the experiences of early career college teachers. For some insight we can draw on studies about university faculty in their early careers. Especially relevant are those who enter academia from a strong practitioner backgrounds such as nurses, teachers, occupational therapists, etc. They reported feeling new and vulnerable, under credentialed, ill prepared (Murray, Stanley, & Wright, 2014), and “thrown into the fire” (Morris & Usher, 2011, p. 244). Ennals, Fortune, Williams, and D’Cruz described the transition from occupational therapist to educator in the discipline as a “troublesome transition” (p.440). These stressful feelings may have an influence on student learning. For example, negative emotions such as anxiety and frustration have been related to less effective teaching methods; whereas, positive emotions were related to higher quality teaching practices (Kordts-Freudinger, 2017; Lancaster & Lundberg, 2019; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2011; Trigwell, 2012).

### **Early Career Educators**

My research focused on the transition that early career college educators experience when they begin teaching in a post-secondary setting. Although previous researchers have used from two

to five years when discussing new faculty the majority used three years as the cut off (Cooley & De Gagne, 2016; Hemmings, 2015; Murray et al., 2014; Ödalen, Brommesson, Erlingsson, Schaffer, & Fogelgren, 2019). Therefore, based on these previous studies, I defined *early career* faculty as those in the first three years of teaching in one's current position, either full-time or part-time. During this time, new faculty may take part in onboarding programs, professional development seminars, mentoring, and on-line learning modules to develop their skills in teaching and learning (Murray et al., 2014; Ödalen et al., 2019). Gregory and Cusson (2013) stated that formal support for new full-time college faculty lasted between two and three years at most Ontario colleges, which also supports my definition of early career being up to three years. However, the orientation and development opportunities for part-time instructors have been found to vary considerably across institutions and not be as substantial as that offered to new full-time faculty (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018; Gregory & Cusson, 2013; Schaar et al., 2015). Gregory and Cusson (2013) found that 39% of Ontario colleges did not offer any formal orientation to new part-time faculty.

### **Part-time and Full-time Faculty**

Another aspect of college teaching that warrants consideration when talking about early career transitions is the increasing number of non-full-time faculty. The terms adjunct, part-time, sessional, and contingent are used in the literature to describe this group of faculty. In this research, I used the term *part-time* to refer to all non-full-time faculty. The number of part-time faculty has increased substantially over the past several decades and many full-time faculty work part-time before acquiring a full-time position (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018; MacKay, 2014). The ratio of part-time to full-time faculty is approximately 3:1 in Ontario colleges (MacKay, 2014). Given the large number of part-time faculty, it was important to include them in my research in order to examine their transition to teaching and whether or not it differs from that of full-time faculty.

However, part-time faculty also vary in their intentions and motivations for being part-time, which has been shown to influence aspects of their work such as job satisfaction and commitment (Maynard & Joseph, 2008). Some part-timers would like to attain a full-time position, while others do not intend to work full-time due to other commitments or life circumstances. For example, some part-time faculty have full-time work in their profession or are retired from a previous career and want to share their knowledge and passion with the next generation of learners. Based on the work of Maynard and Joseph (2008), I used the terms voluntary part-time (VPT) and involuntary part-time (IPT) to divide part-time faculty into separate groups based on their personal employment intentions.

### **Psychosocial Factors Related to Teaching**

The factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging have each been studied independently to establish their influence on teaching in higher education (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Hemmings, 2015; Sadler, 2013; Thirolf, 2013). In my research, I studied the relationships between these factors, as well as their influence on two specific elements of teaching practice—teacher engagement and a student-focused approach to teaching. In this section, I present a review of relevant literature for each of these constructs.

**Teacher identity.** Professional identity has been defined as the possession of a core set of values and beliefs about one's career that distinguishes it from other careers (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). In particular, professional teaching identity was defined by Abu-Alruz and Khasawneh (2013) as a commitment to professional teaching practice. Relating to higher education, professional teaching identity has been described as a combination of unrelated sub-identities, meaning the combining of content expertise and pedagogical knowledge (Komba, Anangisye, &

Katabaro, 2013). These definitions of *identity* fit well with my research on early career college educators as they transition from being career experts to teachers in their areas of expertise.

Teacher identity is important because it affects pedagogy and practice; teachers with a well-developed professional identity have been found to have a stronger commitment to teaching, to their students, to innovative teaching, and to professional development (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Aydeniz & Hodge, 2011; Beijaard, et al., 2004; Nevgi & Lofstrom, 2015). However, the formation of teacher identity for educators in higher education is complicated by the established role identification new faculty often have as researchers or as other professionals (Aydeniz & Hodge, 2011; Cranton, 2009; Lowry & Froese, 2001; Nevgi & Lofstrom, 2015; Shreeve, 2009, Thirolf, 2012). Because college educators come with extensive backgrounds in their professional or trades careers they begin teaching with a “practitioner identity” and do not readily identify as teachers (Aydeniz & Hodge, 2011; Cranton, 2009; Gerhard & Burn, 2014). However, one’s identity is not fixed; rather, it is a continuous process based on interpreting oneself within a context (Beijaard, et al., 2004). Teaching identity appears to develop with time and experience in the teaching role, particularly for post-secondary educators because the majority do not have formal teaching backgrounds (Levin & Hernandez, 2014; Murray, et al., 2014; van Lankveld, et al., 2017). This applies to both full-time and part-time instructors and to both university and college faculty. van Lankveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset, and Beishuizen (2017) described the development of teacher identity during the transition to teaching as different for those entering higher education from a professional background compared to those becoming educators from within academia. Those entering higher education from a professional background continued to identify strongly with their profession and were in a phase of insecurity for one to three years wherein they experienced stress, uncertainty, self-doubt, and inadequacy. Similarly, Murray, Stanley, and Wright (2013)

found that nurses and allied-health practitioners underwent a shift in their identity from clinician to academic over the course of the first three years in their post-secondary role.

van Lankveld et al.'s (2017) research determined there were three elements that promoted teacher identity development within university educators during their transition to teaching. These were interactions with students, professional development activities, and a collegial work environment. By contrast, the implications of working in a university including neo-liberal approaches to higher education and a stronger regard for research over teaching, along with a negative work environment, such as feeling isolated and lacking like-minded colleagues, appeared to constrain identity development. This research is relevant because the authors found connections between the constructs of teacher identity, belonging, and teaching self-efficacy warranting further exploration. They conducted a qualitative review of 99 publications to determine the processes involved in the development of teacher identity in university professors and concluded that there were four psychological factors that underpinned teacher identity. These included a sense of appreciation, a sense of connectedness, a sense of commitment, and a sense of competence. While this review only pertained to university faculty it presents an important consideration for my work in Ontario colleges.

**Teaching self-efficacy.** Bandura (1997) introduced the concept of self-efficacy as a person's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions to accomplish a task. He stressed that it was not the actual skill or ability, but rather the future perception of competence that defined self-efficacy. More specifically, a teacher's self-efficacy beliefs are defined as a teacher's perception of their ability to influence student engagement and promote student learning (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy & Hoy, 1998; Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). Teaching self-efficacy influences teaching practice. It has been associated with teachers employing a larger variety of teaching



strategies, being more open to new teaching ideas and methods, and adopting a student-centred approach to teaching (Chang, Lin, & Song, 2011; Sadler, 2013).

The development of teaching self-efficacy appears to take place predominantly in the early teaching years and then becomes more stable with increased teaching experience (Hemmings, 2015; Morris & Usher, 2011). In a qualitative study by Morris and Usher (2011), successful faculty described the early years of teaching as being “thrown into the fire” (p. 244). Chang, Lin, and Song (2011) described the experience as “learning about teaching by teaching” (p.57). In both full- and part-time contexts, researchers have found that faculty with five or fewer years of experience had lower teaching self-efficacy than more experienced faculty (Chang et al., 2011; Tyndall, 2017). Hemming (2015) interviewed twelve early career academics to determine how they developed their teaching self-efficacy. He found that there were four themes: experience with teaching, feedback from students and peers, support from colleagues, and professional learning. Another important finding was that for self-efficacy to be affected by feedback from others, self-reflection was necessary. To foster this, the authors recommended using a teaching journal or portfolio. Support from colleagues was often best met through peer mentoring; however, they noted that mentors must be chosen carefully because a mismatch was considered unhelpful. Informal mentoring through spontaneous conversations was also found to be supportive. Finally, opportunities for professional learning were recommended.

In addition, several studies have demonstrated that when university and college faculty attended professional development related to teaching and learning, their self-efficacy increased. Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne, and Nevgi, (2007) determined that pedagogical training was associated with increased self-efficacy and increased student-focused approach to teaching (see also Rodgers, Christie, & Wideman., 2014; Singh et al., 2013). Finally, greater teaching self-efficacy

has been associated with important outcomes such as higher levels of student achievement (Shahzad & Naureen, 2017) and job satisfaction (Perera, Granziera, & McIlveen, 2018). Overall, these studies demonstrated that self-efficacy in teaching is an important part of the early career development of college educators in that it can impact their teaching and their students' learning.

**Sense of belonging.** Belonging at work is currently gaining popularity as an important aspect of creating an inclusive, equitable, and productive workplace and is a core element of meaningful work (Schnell, Hoge, & Weber, 2019). McClure and Brown (2008) conducted a phenomenological study of belonging at work. They stated that the importance of the powerful human emotion of belonging, in the context of the workplace, has been underestimated. Their research found that there was value in helping people experience a sense of belonging, particularly at work that is new to them; that being invited to participate and learn about the workplace culture built a sense of belonging, which in turn built trust and commitment. The construct of belonging is not well researched in higher education faculty. By including belonging in my research, I will begin to fill this gap in the literature.

### **Elements of Teaching Practice**

In order to examine the influence of the psychosocial factors on the teaching practice of early career college educators, I selected two elements of teaching that have been previously shown to be directly linked to student learning—teacher engagement and approaches to teaching.

**Work engagement.** Work engagement refers to the positive psychological association between individuals and their work, and includes connectedness, high energy levels, and strong identity (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008). Drawing on the field of positive psychology, the concept of work engagement is intended to present a positive lens through which to examine employee well-being and personal investment related to work (Bakker et al., 2008). It is regarded as

a more self-directed and active construct, distinct from job satisfaction, job involvement, or organizational commitment (Bakker et al., 2008; van den Berg, Bakker, & ten Cate, 2013). In early research on work engagement, Kahn (1990) described engagement at work as personal engagement across three domains — physical, cognitive, and emotional. Kahn (1990) attributed increased engagement to individual investment of physical, cognitive, and emotional energies, such that one is physically involved in the task, using cognitive energy for the task such as creating, sharing knowledge, or drawing on experience, and being emotionally connected to others. An employee can express oneself through these three domains in their work-related roles (Khan, 1990). More recently, work engagement has been defined by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) as “a positive work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigour, dedication, and absorption” (p. 295). They described vigour as having high levels of energy and resilience at work, along with the willingness to invest effort into work. Dedication was defined as having a sense of significance, enthusiasm, inspiration, and challenge. Finally, absorption was characterized by being fully engrossed in one’s work so that time passes quickly, and it is difficult to leave. Bakker and Demerouti (2008) found that engaged employees positively influenced the engagement of colleagues they came into contact within their work.

***Teacher engagement.*** Klassen, Yerdelen, and Durksen (2013) proposed that teachers’ work engagement is unique from the work engagement of many other professions and should be studied differently. They argued that the level of social engagement required by teachers to form productive student-teacher relationships is specific to the teaching profession. Teachers’ social engagement in their work is critical for student engagement and success (Klassen, et al., 2013). Klassen and colleagues (2013) based their work engagement research on the original domains outlined by Khan (1990)—cognitive, emotional and physical engagement. They determined that teachers used little

physical engagement in their work, and instead, used substantial social engagement for building relationships with both students and colleagues. As a result, Klassen et al. (2013) developed the Engaged Teaching Scale (ETS) and tested the correlations of their new instrument with another well-known instrument of work engagement—the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES) and with the Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES). They found that the ETS had strong correlations with the UWES showing that it measured the same construct (work engagement), but in a way more specific to teachers and their work engagement with teaching. They also concluded that there was a correlation between teacher’s self-efficacy and work engagement, but the two were distinct constructs. Faculty levels of engagement are important because more engaged teachers have more engaged students; Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2005) reported that engaged teachers resulted in students who were more excited about the discipline and willing to spend time and energy on their studies.

**Approaches to teaching.** Considerable research has contributed to current views on teachers’ approaches to teaching, how they are related to teachers’ conceptions of teaching and to student learning, in the higher education context (Baeten, Dochy, Struyven, Parmentier, & Vanderbruggen, 2016; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Kember & Kwan, 2000; Kilgo, Ezell Sheets, & Pascarella, 2015; Nerland & Prøitz, 2018; Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne, & Nevgi, 2008; Stes & Van Petegem, 2014; Trigwell & Prosser, 2004; Trigwell, Prosser, & Ginns, 2005). Approaches to teaching have been described as how teachers teach and the strategies they employ in their teaching (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008; Postareff, et al., 2008; Trigwell & Prosser, 2004); whereas, teachers’ conceptions of teaching have been defined as the deep seated beliefs teachers have about teaching, which are fundamental to their purpose and strategies in teaching (Kember & Kwan, 2000; Postareff and Lindblom-Ylänne, 2008). In their notable study,

Kember and Kwan (2000) determined that teachers' conceptions of teaching informed their approaches to teaching. They determined that there were two broad conceptions of teaching: Teaching as the transmission of knowledge and teaching as learning facilitation. Teachers who conceived of teaching as the transmission of knowledge believed that teaching was a teacher-centred activity; whereas, teachers who viewed teaching as facilitation of student learning held the conceptions of teaching as a student-centred activity and approached their teaching with learner-centred strategies. Kember and Kwan (2000) concluded that teachers had a predominant approach to teaching and if conditions were suitable, a teacher would normally adopt the approach that was consistent with his or her conceptions (beliefs) about teaching, and that this approach was relatively stable. Subsequently, Trigwell and Prosser (2004) described the continuum as inclusive, meaning that as a teacher moves along the continuum towards the conceptual change, student-focused approach their teaching can include elements of the information transmission approach. Overall, a student-centred, conceptual change approach is considered to be a more complete, sophisticated, and preferred approach to teaching (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Trigwell & Prosser, 2004; Trigwell et al., 2005).

Teachers' approaches to teaching are considered a meaningful reflection of effective teaching because they are associated with students' approaches to learning (Baeten et al., 2016; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Kilgo et al., 2015; Trigwell & Prosser, 2004). Previous research has established that students were more likely to take a deep approach to learning when their teachers utilized a student-centred, conceptual change approach to teaching (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004). A deep approach to learning means students focus on constructing their understanding by engaging in the content, conceptualizing, and seeking meaning, resulting in better learning outcomes for students,

such as grades and retention (Kilgo et al., 2015; Stes & Van Petegem, 2014; Trigwell & Prosser, 2004).

This literature review has outlined the relevant issues with respect to teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, sense of belonging, teacher engagement, and approaches to teaching in higher education. This body of literature informs my work and illustrates the need for more understanding of these constructs in terms of the transition to teaching for college educators.

### **Methodology**

I approached this research using a convergent parallel mixed-method design (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). This means that the quantitative and qualitative data were collected in the same phase of the research, but the strands were separate during the data collection and analysis, and were integrated during the overall interpretation of the results (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). A mixed methods approach allows the researcher to take advantage of the strengths of both quantitative analysis and qualitative analysis and overcomes some of the weaknesses of each approach (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011). Mixed methods was the most suitable methodology for my research because it fits best with my pragmatist positionality (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011; Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2003) and I wanted to collect not only quantitative data about the transition to teaching, but I felt it was important to hear about the experiences of the new faculty since there is very little research on this topic, particularly in the context of Ontario colleges.

### **The Next Chapters**

The following chapters are written as two manuscripts for potential publication followed by an overall conclusion of the dissertation. Chapter 2 is an examination of differences between full- and part-time early career college faculty in their teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. This mixed method study outlines the results of quantitative assessments of the three

psychosocial variables addressed above as well as a thematic analysis of focus group data, based on the divisions of workload status: full-time, IPT and VPT.

Chapter 3 describes the conceptualization and evaluation of my proposed model of psychosocial factors in the transition to teaching. The model proposed that these factors predict teacher engagement and a student focused approach to teaching—two teaching practices that matter to student learning. Inferential statistics were used to determine differences in the outcome variables, and path analysis was used to compare the model parameters across the three workload status groups (full-time, IPT, and VPT).

The final chapter, Chapter 4 presents a general discussion of key ideas and integrates the findings of the two papers. The implications of this research along with its limitations and future directions for research are also discussed.

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## **Chapter 2: The Effects of Employment Status on Psychosocial Factors Related to College Teaching**

The transition to college teaching involves taking on a new role in a new organization. Most new college faculty have gained many years of experience in their profession and are likely to bring their industry identity, expertise, and sense of belonging with them. However, to complement their expertise and to enable meaningful student learning, these individuals need to step into their new role as a teacher. Teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and workplace sense of belonging are important factors in this new role because researchers have found that they are related to teaching success (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Gunersel, Barnett, & Etienne, 2013; Komba, Anangisye, & Kataro, 2013). Despite this importance, we know little about these factors with regard to college faculty in their early careers. In fact, there is a paucity of research about this transition to teaching and the experiences of new faculty, particularly in Ontario colleges. To begin to bridge this gap, in this study I investigated the relationships between teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging, and sought to determine whether these factors differed between part-time and full-time college educators in their first three years of teaching.

The context of this research is Ontario Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology and Institutes of Advanced Learning, generally referred to as Ontario colleges. These institutions are unique in the national post-secondary system (Skolnik, 2012). They differ from other colleges across Canada, Canadian Universities, US community colleges 2-year US colleges, and European colleges in that they have evolved from institutions of technical education with no pathways to other higher education to currently offering many pathways and granting Honours Baccalaureate degrees (Solnik, 2016). Due to the paucity of research regarding faculty at Ontario colleges, I drew on studies from universities and colleges around the globe, including US community colleges and

universities, as well as Europe, Australia and other Canadian institutions in order to examine the background literature about new faculty experiences.

There has been an increasing number of part-time faculty teaching in institutions of higher education over the last several decades (Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE), 2014; MacKay, 2014). Current estimates indicate the number of part-time faculty in colleges and universities across North America ranges from 50 to 73% (American Association of University Professors, 2018; Council of Ontario Universities, 2018). MacKay (2014) reported that the number of part-time faculty in Ontario colleges and institutes was two to three times that of full-time. Part-time faculty, also referred to as adjunct, non-tenure track, partial-load, or sessional faculty, are hired on an hourly or contract basis to teach college or university courses (CCCSE, 2014). In this research, I use the term part-time to refer to any non-full-time college educator.

Part-time instructors are valuable to post-secondary institutions because the flexible arrangement of hiring faculty on a semester-by-semester basis helps institutions better manage various fluctuations in enrolment and saves money (CCCSE, 2014). In addition to cost effectiveness, the up-to-date professional knowledge and operational expertise that part-time faculty bring to their classrooms are of immense benefit to college programs and students (CCCSE, 2014). However, not having permanent or guaranteed employment puts part-time educators in a tenuous position. Due to their precarious work conditions, part-timers often take contract positions at several institutions to secure an adequate income, which can leave them feeling stressed and discontent (Levin & Hernandez, 2014). Previous studies have found that, in general, part-time faculty tend to be less satisfied with their teaching employment (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). Furthermore, the challenges surrounding part-time faculty can influence student outcomes (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018; Ehrenberg, 2005; Thirolf, 2017). For example, Ehrenberg and Zhang (2005)

and Jacoby (2006) found an association between a greater number of non-tenure track faculty and lower undergraduate degree completions in four-year institutions and community colleges. Given the increasing number of part-time faculty and their importance to the college system, it would be beneficial to understand their transition to college teaching.

The vast majority of college faculty, both part-time and full-time, are hired to teach based on their professional expertise and are not formally trained as educators (Gregory & Cusson, 2013). Most institutions provide some type of orientation or onboarding for new faculty; however, the support offered appears inconsistent and lacking. This is especially the case for new part-time faculty (Gregory & Cusson, 2013; Thirolf, 2017). While the transition to teaching has been described as transformative in positive ways (Fraser, Greenfield, & Pancini, 2017; Kligyte, 2011), it is also well documented that new faculty often find this transition difficult, confusing and challenging (Boyd, 2010; Simmons, 2011), and full of anxiety and conflicting messages (Sutherland & Taylor, 2011). Acknowledging that this transitional period is often challenging for both full-time and part-time college faculty, I used transformative learning theory as a framework to explore their early career experiences.

### **Transformative Learning Theory Framework**

In his theory of transformative learning, Mezirow (1991) proposed that “adult learning takes place when the frame of reference through which we view our world and filter our perceptions is changed by experience” (Mezirow, 2000, p. 16). Transformative learning occurs when the way we view the world is challenged and, as a result, we question and revise our perceptions (Mezirow, 1991). Mezirow (2012) outlined the phases of transformative learning and described them as leading to a “deep shift in perspective” (p. 19). The transformative learning process begins with a disorienting dilemma, which is followed by critical reflection, self-reflection and self-

determination, leading to new competence and self-confidence, and finally the integration of a new perspective (Cranton & Hoggan, 2012; Mezirow, 2012).

By applying the phases of Transformative Learning Theory (TLT) to the experiences of new faculty in both universities and colleges, previous researchers have identified the initiation of an academic career as a disorienting dilemma (Cranton, 2000; Cranton, 2011; Kligyte, 2011, Sutherland& Taylor, 2011). New faculty are likely to enter their teaching positions with assumptions about teaching based on their own experiences as students or instructional experiences in their past professions (Cranton, 2006; Cranton, 2000). For example, Cosley, Shirlys, and DeGagne (2015) found that new nursing professors were surprised that their teaching role was different from the educator role they experienced in their previous work as nurses. Such assumptions are often challenged in the early semesters of teaching and, if met with critical self-reflection, this disruption in thinking can be a catalyst for change (Cranton, 2006; Mezirow, 2012). This reflective and transformational process is facilitated to an even greater degree when an individual recognizes that others have similar experiences. Interactions with those who have comparable experiences help validate the meaning drawn from the experience (Brookfield, 2002; Mezirow, 1991). Brookfield (2002) observed that the reflective process was facilitated when faculty connected with colleagues which subsequently contributed to their increased sense of engagement for teaching. Brookfield's (2002) work also highlighted Mezirow's final stage of transformative learning—that the ultimate and desired outcome of the reflection process is a new sense of confidence and competence leading to a new perspective on one's role (Mezirow, 2012).

In summary, the TLT process provides a strong theoretical framework for investigating the experiences of new faculty. The ultimate goal of educators is to gain competence and feel comfortable in their teaching role; however, most do not start this way. For example, being a new

college teacher has been described as being “thrown into the fire” (Morris & Usher, 2011, p. 244). Over time, through increased knowledge about teaching, engaging in reflection, and communicating with colleagues, transformational learning can lead to a sense of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging in the new role.

### **Employment Status**

Full-time faculty in Ontario colleges dedicate the majority of their time to teaching, including preparation, assessment, and student contact. They spend a smaller portion of time on committee work and research (Skolnik, 2016). Part-time faculty, on the other hand, are hired to teach per course or per credit hour and they usually devote very little time to committees or research. Although they share these characteristics of employment, there are many reasons why part-time faculty cannot be considered a homogenous group (Maynard & Joseph, 2008). They have various backgrounds and intentions—some are retired, some are beginning their career, some are seeking a full-time college teaching position, while others are inspired to share their professional expertise with students. Maynard and Joseph (2008) used the terms voluntary part-time and involuntary part-time to differentiate part-time faculty based on their personal employment intentions. Voluntary part-time faculty were classified as those who chose to teach part-time due to life circumstances, such as retirement or having a young family, whereas, involuntary part-time faculty were classified as those seeking full-time appointments but were only able to find part-time positions. Maynard and Joseph compared full-time faculty to voluntary and involuntary part-time faculty across job satisfaction and job commitment. They found that both voluntary part-time and full-time faculty had significantly higher job satisfaction than the involuntary part-time group; more specifically, there were lower levels of satisfaction with advancement and compensation for involuntary part-time faculty members.

Based on the above categories, I used the term *part-time* to include all non-full-time college instructors. I then separated ‘voluntary part-time’ from ‘involuntary part-time’ as per Maynard and Joseph (2008) to differentiate between non-full-time faculty based on their motives and intentions for employment. Finally, based on work by Ödalen, Brommenson, Erlingsson, Schaffer & Fogelgren (2019) and Remmik, Karm, Haamer, and Lepp (2011), I defined *early career faculty* as those who are in their first three years of teaching. This categorization included faculty who were part-time for three years or less and faculty who were in full-time roles for three years or less, although they may have had previous part-time experience.

### **Teacher Identity, Teaching Self-efficacy, and Sense of Belonging**

The factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging appear to be important elements of successful teaching (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Sadler, 2012; Thirolf, 2017). However, there is little research examining these factors *collectively* in college faculty in their early careers, or within populations of full-time and part-time faculty. If we can better understand how these factors interrelate and whether they differ in early career faculty based on employment status, it could provide insights into the importance of supporting these factors and this may have implications for professional development and onboarding for new faculty. Therefore, in this study, I explored whether differences existed between early career full-time and part-time faculty across the three factors; 1) teacher identity, 2) teaching self-efficacy and 3) sense of belonging. I also sought to determine whether interrelationships existed between these variables.

**Teacher identity.** Developing a professional teacher identity is essential to effective teaching practice (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Fraser et al., 2017; Gunersel et al., 2013). Identity influences how a teacher develops and thinks about teaching, as well as their attitude toward educational change and their commitment to teaching (Beijaard, Meijer & Verloop., 2004).



Moreover, it is worth noting that identity formation in the early teaching years has been differentiated for full-time and part-time faculty (Levin & Hernandez, 2014; Thirolf, 2012). Levin and Hernandez (2014) concluded that part-time faculty made sense of their identity differently in two different settings within their academic institutions—the classroom and the department or overall institution. In the classroom, part-time faculty gained a sense of teacher identity and built teaching self-efficacy through interactions with students. However, when considering their interactions within their department or institution, part-time faculty felt excluded, undervalued, and isolated, which negatively affected their teacher identity. Levin and Hernandez (2014) found differences based on the aspirations of part-timers when expressing their sense of identity and sense of belonging within their department/institution. Faculty who were part-time but wanted to secure a full-time position reported feelings of exclusion from the organization, which negatively affected their teacher identity. However, for part-time faculty who deliberately chose a part-time teaching role, their self-determined exclusion meant they were content to participate marginally in institutional activities.

Participating in faculty development programs can also play an important role in identity formation for both new full-time and part-time educators (Gunersel et al., 2013; Thirolf, 2012). Thirolf (2012, 2013) emphasized the importance of developing teacher identity in early career part-time faculty. She determined that one way to enhance their identity was through interactions with full-time peers at teaching and learning professional development (PD) sessions. Gunersel et al. (2013) also found that new full-time faculty could develop their identity as educators by discussing their teaching with peers in a faculty development program.

**Teaching self-efficacy.** Teaching self-efficacy is a teacher's belief about their ability to influence student engagement and promote student learning (Tschannen-Moran, Woolfolk Hoy &

Hoy, 1998; Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). Teaching self-efficacy is grounded in Bandura's (1997) overall theory of self-efficacy wherein he defined self-efficacy as a person's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions to accomplish a task. In teaching self-efficacy, the belief in one's ability to influence student outcomes determines teaching actions and behaviours (Chan, Lin, & Song, 2011; Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne, & Nevgi, 2007; Sadler, 2013). Postareff, Lindblom-Ylänne, and Nevgi (2007) examined the teaching practices of new faculty who attended a pedagogical training program and found that teachers with greater teaching self-efficacy engaged in a wider range of teaching practices. They concluded that more pedagogical training resulted in greater awareness of student-centred teaching practices, but the change was slow to take effect.

The self-efficacy of part-time faculty has been minimally researched. Hardy, Shepard, and Pilotti (2017) determined that teaching self-efficacy was an integral part of resilience and teaching success for part-time faculty teaching in online settings. They found a positive association between teaching self-efficacy and certain dimensions of teaching such as satisfaction, preparation, impact on student learning, and the desire to continue teaching. Tyndall (2017) studied the teaching self-efficacy of adjunct community college faculty and concluded that there were differences between the sources of teaching self-efficacy for experienced versus new instructors. Adjunct faculty in their early career described how feedback from students, peers, and mentors influenced their teaching self-efficacy, along with teaching related experiences, positive emotional experiences in teaching, and vicarious experiences such as watching others be successful. They discussed the need for more effective onboarding, thorough feedback, and ongoing training opportunities to increase their sense of teaching self-efficacy. They did not feel adequately supported or compensated for their time preparing to teach. They also lacked job security and experienced unfavourable working conditions such as last-minute hiring and lack of resources. These deficits seemed to accumulate to create

feelings of being overwhelmed and underprepared, which negatively influenced their teaching self-efficacy.

In summary, since teaching self-efficacy can impact teaching practices and student learning, it is an integral part of early career development in post-secondary educators (Hemmings, 2015; Singh et al., 2013). Studies have illustrated the importance of teaching self-efficacy for faculty, and yet the research is minimal in the Ontario college setting. These studies also suggest relationships between teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging that remain underexplored.

**Sense of belonging.** Sense of belonging at work consists of the interactional processes between an employee and an occupational group or organization, and it is one of four core elements that make work meaningful (Schnell, Hoge, & Weber, 2019). A sense of belonging motivates a person to commit to a task, goal, or group, and when this need for relatedness is satisfied, the individual is likely to internalize the shared values and behaviours of the workplace organization (Gagne & Deci, 2005; McClure & Brown, 2008). There is little research exploring the role sense of belonging solely plays as factor in early career faculty; however, several researchers have shown that teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy are related to the connectedness new faculty experience with their colleagues and their institutions (Gunersel, et al., 2013; van Lankveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset, and Beishuizen (2017). Gunersel, et al. (2013) suggested that the interactions new faculty have with peers and students are beneficial to their identity development. In terms of higher education, this means faculty sense of belonging is important and appears enmeshed with teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy as a factor that influences teaching outcomes such as student learning and engagement (Cook-Sather & Felten, 2017; Thirolf, 2017). Supports such as mentoring and teamwork create the positive work environment new faculty

require as they discover their teaching role (Gunersel et al., 2013; Welling, Luoma, Ferluga, Berens, & Offenbecker, 2015). In a study that specifically investigated faculty sense of belonging, Welling et al. (2015) used mixed methods to study the belongingness of nursing faculty in their first two years of university teaching. They found that new faculty did not feel supported in their new roles and concluded that it is important to foster sense of belonging in new faculty through structured programs such as mentoring.

Furthermore, there are challenges to sense of belonging at work that appear to be specifically associated with precarious and peripheral work, such as part-time faculty positions. Schnell, Hoge, and Weber (2019) found that temporary and part-time workers experienced considerable difficulty in developing a genuine sense of belonging. Based on how vital it is to have a strong workplace sense of belonging, they concluded that more research was needed to expand on the limited empirical studies about the influence of sense of belonging and other affective aspects of the workplace. Previous studies allude to connections between the factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging; however, to date, no one has comprehensively explored the importance of these three variables in the early careers of college educators. Therefore, this study contributes to the literature by adding research that examines the relationships between these three variables in early career college faculty.

### **Research Questions**

In this study, I investigated whether there were differences between full-time and part-time early career college faculty in their teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and/or sense of belonging. My primary research question was; *Are there differences between full-time and part-time faculty in their early careers in terms of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and/or sense of belonging?* Part-time faculty were classified into two groups as described above: those who want a

full-time faculty position (involuntary part-time; IPT), and those who do not (voluntary part-time; VPT). My secondary research question addressed the relationships between the three variables: *Are teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging correlated within each employment group?*

### **Method**

A convergent parallel mixed methods research design was used to examine the relationship between employment status and the three dependent variables—teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. I collected quantitative data using an online questionnaire and qualitative data using online focus groups. This mixed methods design was chosen as it allows the collection of the quantitative and qualitative data to occur in the same phase of the research, after which both are analyzed separately. The integration of the two types of data takes place during the interpretation of the results. Consequently, the data sets complement each other, providing a richness to the data that may be otherwise overlooked (Creswell & Plano-Clark, 2011).

### **Participants**

The participants were faculty members in their first three years of teaching at 20 Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology and Institutes of Technology and Advance Learning (referred to as Ontario Colleges) across Ontario, Canada. A total of 2218 faculty were invited to complete an online questionnaire and 543 responded (a response rate of 24%). Of these, 424 participants met the inclusion criteria. The employment status groups were categorized as full-time (FT;  $n=152$ ; 36.4%), involuntary part-time (IPT;  $n=163$ ; 39%), and voluntary part-time (VPT;  $n=101$ ; 23.9%). There were eight participants who did not fit into any of the employment status categories and were excluded from the analysis. For demographic purposes, I also collected data indicating the

participants' teaching disciplines and classified them according to the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges, and University's categories. The details appear in Table 2-1.

Table 2-1

*Discipline of Questionnaire Participants*

Discipline	<i>n</i>	%
Applied Arts	75	17.7
Business	85	20
Health Sciences	78	18.4
Human Services	62	14.6
Hospitality and Tourism	21	5
Science and Engineering	61	14.4
Skilled Trades	35	8.3

The sample ( $N=424$ ) was comprised of 265 females (63.4%), 143 males (34.2%), five who gave a diverse descriptions of their gender, such as gender queer or non-binary (1.2%), and five who did not indicate gender identity (1.2%). The mean age of the sample was 40.58 years ( $SD=10.10$ ). The full-time mean age was 41.69 ( $SD=9.11$ ) while the VPT mean age was 41.65 ( $SD=10.57$ ) and the IPT mean age was 39.28 ( $SD=10.51$ ) years. The mean number of years of teaching by part-timers was 1.73 years ( $SD=.830$ , range 0-3 years) with the IPT group teaching 1.78 years ( $SD=.766$ ) and the VPT group teaching 1.63 years ( $SD=.856$ ) and the mean number of years of teaching by full-timers was 1.63 years ( $SD=.856$ ; range 0-3 years). Often, full-time faculty have had part-time experience before attaining a full-time position. In this case, the mean number of years of part-time teaching experienced by full-time participants was 3.61 years ( $SD=3.03$ ) with a range of zero to 15 years. The focus groups were comprised of 27 volunteer participants and varied between two to six participants per group. Table 2-2 provides demographic information for the eight focus groups.

Table 2-2

*Focus Group Participant Demographics*

Focus group number	Number of participants	Employment status	Discipline
1	3	Full-time	Nursing/Health Science
2	3	Full-time	Skilled Trades/Engineering
3	5	Full-time	General Academics
4	4	Full-time	General Academics
5	4	Involuntary Part-time	Nursing/Health Science
6	3	Involuntary Part-time	Skilled Trades/Engineering
7	4	Involuntary Part-time	General Academics
8	2	Voluntary Part-time	General Academics

**Procedure**

After receiving approval from each college's institutional ethics review board, I contacted an internal liaison such as a faculty developer or human resources representative who emailed the invitation to participate to faculty members in their respective colleges. The liaison also sent a reminder email two weeks later. The email contained a direct link to the questionnaire, which was housed in the Qualtrics survey platform. The online questionnaire comprised the letter of information for the study, demographic questions, and three instruments—one for each variable of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. The instruments are described in detail below. At the end of the questionnaire, participants were invited to participate in an online focus group. Those who volunteered were prompted to enter their email address in a separate survey that was not connected in any way to their data from the questionnaire.



Two-hundred survey participants offered to participate in the online focus groups. Stewart and Shamdasani (2015) recommended that focus groups be designed so that participants have similarities rather than differences as the homogeneity of backgrounds and attitudes helps facilitate group cohesiveness which is essential for effective communication and focus group success. Following their suggestions, I selected focus group participants with the intent of having rather homogenous groups based on discipline and employment status. To accomplish this, I combined employment status with the following three disciplines: 1) Skilled Trades, 2) Health Science/Nursing, and 3) General Academics, which encompassed all other programs such as Business, Human Services programs such as ECE or Police Foundations, and General Education. This resulted in groups where faculty were similar, such as involuntary part-timers from the skilled trades. When a group had more than 10 volunteers, I used a random selection strategy to choose the participants for that focus group. If a group had 8-10 volunteers, I invited all of them. As a result, eight focus groups were formed with six to 10 participants in each group; however not all volunteers showed up to participate; therefore, the final number of participants was 27 and varied between two and six participants per group. Of special note is the small sample size of Focus Group Five comprised of those not seeking a full-time position (VPT;  $n=2$ ). Of the 200 focus group volunteers, only seven were not seeking a full-time position (VPT) and, therefore, all were invited to be part of the VPT focus group. However, on the day of the focus group, only two participants were present. Despite this being a small focus group, their views are considered important in the analysis.

I collected the qualitative data through online focus group discussions which were audio recorded using Blackboard Collaborate. Each focus group session lasted approximately one to one and a half hours which followed a focus group interview protocol where groups were informed of

their homogeneity (for example, everyone in this group teaches part-time in Skilled Trades), followed by the focus group questions. The focus group questions (Appendix A) were designed to elicit participants' experiences during their early years of college teaching and their transition to teaching based on the variables of interest in the study.

### **Instruments**

I selected instruments with strong psychometric properties to measure each of the variables. Table 2-3 displays the instrument details including internal reliability measured by Cronbach's alpha as described by the authors. For two of the variables, subscales of instruments were used rather than the entire scale. I chose the subscales with the dual purpose of shortening the overall length of the questionnaire thus the time required of each participant, and to focus on specific aspects of the construct being measured.

Table 2-3

*Quantitative Instruments*

Variable	Measure	Authors	# of Items	Scale description	Sample items
Teacher Identity	Professional Identity Questionnaire (PIQ; Self-based Dimension)	Abu-Alruz & Khashau (2013)	8	Self-based dimension $\alpha=.94$ Likert Scale: 1 (strongly disagree) -5 (strongly agree) Greater score means higher teacher identity	I have a strong passion for teaching.
Teaching Self-Efficacy	Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES)-Short	Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy (2001)	12	$\alpha=0.9$ Likert Scale: 1 (nothing) -9 (a great deal) The greater the score, the higher the sense of self-efficacy, norm mean = 7.1	How much can you do to control disruptive behavior in the classroom?
Sense of Belonging	Levett-Jones Belongingness Scale Workplace Experience Tool (modified)	Levett-Jones, Lathlean, Higgins, & McMillan (2009) Welling et al (2015)	9	Esteem Between Groups Subscale $\alpha=0.9$ Likert Scale: 1 (never true)-5 (always true) Greater score means higher sense of belonging	I get support from colleagues when I need it

**Professional Identity Questionnaire (PIQ).** The PIQ was developed by Abu-Alruz and Khasawneh (2013) to measure the professional identity of teachers in higher education. This scale is the only one available in the literature that specifically measures teacher identity in post-secondary faculty (Hanna, Oostdam, Severiens, & Zijlstra, 2019). I chose the self-based subscale of this instrument because the authors described this subscale as a measure of commitment and passion and seeing oneself as a teacher. When evaluating the available instruments for measuring teacher identity, Hanna, Oostdam, Severiens, and Zijlstra (2019) determined six domains of teacher identity and defined the domain “self-image” as how and in what ways individuals view themselves

as, and feel as teachers. This is the way I wanted to operationalize *teacher identity* for this study, and therefore, this was the ideal instrument for measuring faculty identity. Furthermore, the instrument authors determined that this subscale had high levels of internal reliability ( $\alpha=.94$ ), as well as construct and content validity. The authors stated that levels of identity were high (3.5-5.0), moderate (2.5-3.5), and low (0-2.5). The aggregated scores for the eight items of this subscale resulted in scores for teacher identity.

**Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale- short form (TSES).** To measure teaching self-efficacy, I used the short version of the Teachers' Sense of Efficacy Scale (TSES; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). I selected the TSES as a measure of teaching self-efficacy as it is a brief, reliable, and valid measure, based on theory that has been used widely in education research (Klassen et al., 2011; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001). Klassen, Tze, Betts, and Gordon (2011) reviewed a number of measures of teaching self-efficacy and stated the importance of the theoretical foundation of the TSES. It is strongly aligned with Bandura's original concept of self-efficacy—the perceived capability to carry out a course of action. The wording of the TSES items reflects the perceived capability to act as an educator on three important aspects of education—student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. With permission from the authors, I made minor changes to the wording of five items to better suit the context of college educators. For example, the item “How much can you do to get students to follow classroom rules?” was changed to “How much can you do to get students to follow classroom and college policies?”

**Modified Levett-Jones Belongingness Scale Workplace Experience Tool.** After a thorough purview of the literature on sense of belonging for postsecondary educators, I found few studies had used a quantitative approach to measure sense of belonging. I chose to measure sense of

belonging at work using the Esteem Subscale of the modified Levett-Jones Belongingness Scale Workplace Experience Tool (Welling et al., 2015). Welling et al. (2015) provided an example of using this scale to measure belongingness in new faculty. I chose the Esteem Subscale because it best fit my definition of sense of belonging at work, namely, it focuses on feelings of sense of belonging with the organization and colleagues and being valued and respected by others.

### **Data Analysis**

I analyzed the quantitative data for the demographic information and the variables teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging using SPSS (IBM Corp., 2018). Means and standard deviations were generated for each employment status group (full-time, IPT, and VPT) for each of the three variables. I used Pearson's  $r$  to calculate correlations between the dependent variables and conducted a one-way Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) to distinguish differences between the three employment groups. Tukey post-hoc tests were used as this test controls for type 1 error when doing multiple comparisons (Field, 2013).

It is important to note that before analyzing the quantitative data, I screened it for missing data and outliers. Missing data were very few and were determined to be missing completely at random—only 12 unanswered items were evident for participants who completed all scales. These items were replaced using hot-deck imputation which involves the researcher finding a respondent with the same values on similar scale items and then using that respondent's score to impute the missing score (Yan, 2008). This was easy to do since there were so few missing data. Univariate outliers were observed using stem and leaf plots split by group (employment status). There were between zero and four outliers per plot but none of them were extreme outliers; therefore, none were removed. MANOVA is sensitive to outliers but can tolerate a few if they are not too extreme and there is a reasonable  $n$  (Field, 2013). On the other hand, four multivariate outliers were

identified using Mahalanobis' distance<sup>2</sup> (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013) and removed from the data set.

**Qualitative data analysis.** I transcribed the focus group interviews verbatim and assigned pseudonyms to all participants to ensure anonymity. I then analyzed the text using qualitative thematic analysis following the steps outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006). First, I read the transcripts thoroughly looking for points of interest and making memos. I used both deductive and inductive analysis in the coding process. Initially, I used deductive analysis to code the data within the themes of *Teacher Identity*, *Teaching Self-Efficacy*, and *Sense of Belonging* that were predetermined by my research questions and I organized the coded statements using MaxQDA software. Subsequently, I used inductive analysis to code the data within these themes and to form any new codes from recurring ideas. In the second round of coding, I further analyzed the data by using a recursive process, reading and re-categorizing the data, resulting in the final code structure which is presented in the results section below. A second coder independently followed my exact coding scheme to code segments of the data and determine inter-rater reliability. She coded approximately half of the transcripts for three focus groups. This resulted in a 94% match of comparable codings. The remaining 6% of codings were revisited and discussed until agreement about more precise codings was reached, thus attaining 100% inter-rater codings.

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<sup>2</sup> Mahalanobis' distance is a measure of the distance of a case from the centroid of the data set, where the centroid is the intersection of all the means of the variables. If a case lies outside of the distribution of the other cases it is considered an outlier (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

## Results

The overall results of both the quantitative and qualitative analyses are presented below. I have organized the quantitative results by first presenting the descriptive statistics, followed by the results in relation to the research questions. Then I present thematic analysis of the qualitative data. Finally, I present a summary of the mixed methods results where I include any connections and/or overlapping salient points between the quantitative and qualitative data.

### Quantitative Analysis

**Descriptive statistics.** The means and standard deviations for each dependent variable are presented in Table 2-4. The reliabilities for the three quantitative measures were strong, with Cronbach's alphas ranging from .80 to .89. These reliabilities are slightly lower than those stated by the instruments' authors, who found alphas ranging from .90 to .94 (see Table 2-3).

Table 2-4  
*Internal Reliabilities, Means, Standard Deviations for each Variable*

	$\alpha$	Full-time ( $n=151$ )	VPT ( $n=97$ )	IPT ( $n=162$ )
Teaching Identity (1-5 Likert scale)	.84	4.24 (0.46)	3.66 (0.65)	4.06 (0.57)
Teaching Self- efficacy (1-9 Likert scale)	.89	7.48 (0.81)	7.20 (0.97)	7.35 (0.86)
Belonging (1-5 Likert scale)	.80	3.57 (0.40)	3.23 (0.51)	3.43 (0.47)

*Note.* Scales were Likert: Identity: 1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree; Self-efficacy: 1-Nothing to 9-A lot; Belonging: 1-Strongly Disagree to 5- Strongly Agree.

**Research question #1.** *Are there differences between full-time and part-time faculty in their early careers in terms of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and/or sense of belonging?*

A one-way MANOVA was conducted using the dependent variables of Teacher Identity, Teaching Self-efficacy, and Sense of Belonging and the independent variable of Employment

Status. The data met the assumptions of normality, linearity, singularity/multicollinearity, homogeneity of variance/covariance, and equal cell size as discussed here:

**Normality.** The K-S test for normality was significant for some variables and groups, which challenged the assumption of normality; however, with a large sample the central limit theorem applies (Field, 2013; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013). In other words, the sampling distribution approaches normality even when the raw scores do not. Field (2013) states to not to rely on tests of normality (K-S test) with large samples, but rather look at the P-P plots. I reviewed the P-P plots and found that they depicted normality for all variables and all employment status groups. Furthermore, Field states with large samples there is no need to be concerned if your data does not reach normality. Skewness and Kurtosis values were also examined through SPSS (IBM Corp., 2018), and some values were closer to one; however, Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) state that the influence of skewness and kurtosis in large samples is less of a problem. Significant skewness in a variable with a large sample does not deviate enough from normality to make a substantive difference, and the impact of positive kurtosis disappears in samples of 100 or more. Furthermore, Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) state that the univariate F is robust to modest violations of normality as long as there are at least 20 degrees of freedom for error in the univariate ANOVA. My ANOVA had 407 degrees of freedom for error. Further, they state that MANOVA is robust to nonnormality when the sample size is about 20 per cell even with unequal n's. My cell sizes were 151, 162, and 97. Therefore, the assumption of normality was met by each of the three groups in the MANOVA.

**Linearity.** To check for linearity, I assessed the scatterplots and bivariate correlations at each level of the independent variable (the three employment status groups). I used the bivariate scatterplots of each dependent variable against the others and observed output to see that the



scatterplots were oval in shape, not curvilinear. Therefore, there were no violations of this assumption.

***Singularity/ non-multicollinearity.*** To check for multi-collinearity I reviewed the correlations of the dependent variables with each other. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) state that data should be somewhat correlated and correlations should be  $< .9$ . In my data, the correlations ranged from .360 to .820 (see Table 2-5).

***Homogeneity of variance/covariance.*** Field (2013) and Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) recommend disregarding Box's M and Levene's tests as criteria for meeting the assumptions of homogeneity of covariance and variance when the sample size is large, as these tests are too strict for a large  $n$ . Instead, Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) state that the assumption of homogeneity of variance is met if, for each dependent variable, the sample variances compared across the groups, have a ratio of less than 10:1 of the largest variance to the smallest. My ratios for the variances for the dependent variables are 1.40, 1.49, and 1.92, well under 10:1. They further state that when the differences in variances are small and using a two-tailed test, Manova is robust even with unequal sample sizes.

***Equal cell size.*** Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) state that sample sizes are considered relatively equal when they are within a ratio of four to one, from largest to smallest. My ratio is 1.67 to one. Therefore, the groups are considered equal in size. Another interesting point made by Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) is when collecting data in a non-experimental design, it is possible that the number of participants per cell is representative of the group distribution in the research setting. I would agree this is the case for my research as the greater number of faculty are part-time than full-time, and the majority of part-timers are involuntary (would prefer to be full-time), and those who are voluntarily part-time are the fewest in number. Tabachnick and Fidell (2013) state

that when the cell sizes represent the population you should not manipulate them because it would distort any differences and reduce generalizability. For this reason, it is best to retain the full cell distribution.

The one-way MANOVA revealed significant differences between the three employment status groups [Pillai's trace  $V = .16$ ,  $F(6, 812) = 11.41$ ,  $p < .001$ ; partial  $\eta^2 = .078$ ]. Independent ANOVAs showed there was a significant effect of employment status on teacher identity [ $F(2, 407) = 32.09$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .136$ ], teaching self-efficacy [ $F(2, 407) = 3.10$ ,  $p = .046$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .015$ ], and sense of belonging [ $F(2, 407) = 20.46$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial  $\eta^2 = .091$ ]. Subsequently, I used Tukey's posthoc test to differentiate the significant differences between the Employment Status groups for each of the dependent variables and I state these results in mixed methods fashion (along with the qualitative findings) for each variable in the subsection titled Integration of Quantitative and Qualitative Data.

**Research question #2.** *Are teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging correlated within each employment group?*

The correlation matrix is presented in Table 2-5. There were significant correlations between all three dependent variables, ranging from .36 to .82.

Table 2-5

*Pearson Correlations for Teacher Identity, Teaching Self-efficacy, and Sense of Belonging in each Employment Status Group*

Employment Status	Dependent Variable	Teacher Identity	Teaching Self-efficacy	Sense of Belonging
Full-time (n=151)	Teacher Identity	1		
	Teaching Self-efficacy	.513*	1	
	Sense of Belonging	.630*	.436*	1
IPT (n=162)	Teacher Identity	1		
	Teaching Self-efficacy	.518*	1	
	Sense of Belonging	.596*	.438*	1
VPT (n=97)	Teacher Identity	1		
	Teaching Self-efficacy	.360*	1	
	Sense of Belonging	.817*	.370*	1

\* Correlation is significant at  $p < .001$  (2-tailed).

For interpretation of the correlation coefficients, I used the guidelines presented by Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2011). They state that values of .20-.35 indicate only a very small relationship between the variables even if it is statistically significant, values of .35 to .65 are useful when combined with other correlations in a regression but in standing alone they offer little prediction as they are only slightly higher than guessing or by chance. Correlations of .65-.85, on the other hand, are interpreted as high with group predictions being accurate especially at the top of the range. Finally, correlation values of over .85, although rarely seen in education research, indicate a very close relationship between the two variables. For all three employment groups the highest correlation was between identity and sense of belonging ranging from .596-.817 indicating a moderate to high relationship between these variables. The correlations between teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy and between teaching self-efficacy and sense of belonging were low to

moderate for all three groups (ranging from .360-.518). Further, I examined the differences between these correlations across employment status groups using z-scores (Field, 2013) and found only one significant difference. The correlation between sense of belonging and identity for the VPT group was significantly higher than the full-time group's correlation ( $z=-3.08, p=.001$ ), and higher than the IPT group's correlation ( $z=-3.54, p<.000$ ). There were no significant differences between the other correlations. In other words, the relationships between the variables are very similar across the groups except for teacher identity and belonging for the VPT group. This group had a higher correlation (.817) between these variables, and interestingly, had the lowest scores for these two variables.

### **Qualitative analysis**

I analyzed the qualitative data using thematic analysis with the predetermined themes of *teacher identity*, *teaching self-efficacy*, and *sense of belonging*. Subsequently, I used inductive coding to identify the subthemes that emerged, as well as to identify the fourth theme of *support for new faculty*. Table 1-6 illustrates the four overall themes and their subthemes.

Table 2-6

*Themes and Subthemes of Focus Group Analysis*

Themes	Subthemes
Teacher Identity	Shift towards a teacher identity Blended identity Joy of teaching
Teaching Self-efficacy	Factors that influence teaching self-efficacy
Sense of Belonging	Detractors from sense of belonging Enhancers of sense of belonging Interactions with students Ownership for sense of belonging
Support for New Faculty	Lack of support Good support Importance of new faculty professional development Mentoring

Based on my analyses, two primary subthemes emerged under teacher identity; 1) *shift towards a teacher identity*, and 2) *a blended identity*. Surprisingly, a third subtheme emerged which focused on participants' statements about their passion for teaching and positive feelings about sharing their discipline with their students. This was a surprise finding because none of my interview questions asked specifically about this idea. Because these statements clearly reflected their enjoyment of teaching, I labeled this subtheme *joy of teaching*. I then decided to include *joy of teaching* under the theme of teacher identity based on the work of Thirolf (2012). She determined that a main contributor to the development of early career community college faculty members' teacher identity was professional fulfillment gained through their love for teaching and their positive relationships with students.

Within the theme of teaching self-efficacy, I identified the subtheme of *factors that influence teaching self-efficacy*. Within the theme of sense of belonging, there were four subthemes. Both *detractors of sense of belonging* and *enhancers of sense of belonging* were discussed in all eight focus groups. Another subtheme within sense of belonging was related to the influence of

students; many faculty stated that their sense of belonging came from *interactions with students*, especially in the classroom. Finally, the subtheme *ownership for sense of belonging* was evident from the discussions. Participants indicated they felt their sense of belonging was largely due to their own actions rather than the actions of others.

A final overall theme that emerged from the inductive analysis was that of *support for new faculty*. Participants discussed many situations where they felt support was lacking; however, some participants made statements about the value of the support they received as a new educator. Four subthemes within the theme of support were identified 1) *lack of support/onboarding*, 2) *good support*, 3) *the importance of new faculty professional development*, and 4) *mentoring*. In general, these themes appear to indicate that there are differences between full-time and part-time faculty with respect to their early career experiences.

### **Integration of the Quantitative and Qualitative Results**

In the section below, I discuss the findings for the themes of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, sense of belonging, and support for new faculty in more detail and I integrate those findings with the respective quantitative data. For each theme, I first present the quantitative data followed by relevant qualitative data. For each of the themes, I selected quotes that were representative of the overall findings. Some of the focus group discussions provided insights into differences and similarities based on employment status. Because the VPT focus group contained only two participants, I have identified all of their quotes. All other quotes stated by part-time faculty were from the IPT group. For all quotes, I changed the names of the participants to maintain their anonymity.

**Teacher identity.** Overall, the mean scores on the PIQ indicated moderately high levels of teacher identity for all groups (ranging from 3.66 to 4.24 out of 5). More specifically, the Tukey

post-hoc test results revealed significant differences between all three groups. The full-time group was significantly higher than the IPT ( $p=.005$ ), and the VPT group ( $p<.001$ ), and the IPT group was significantly higher than the VPT group ( $p<.001$ ). This finding was supported by the qualitative data from the focus groups. For example, new full-time faculty were learning to view themselves as teachers. The majority described their shift toward a teacher identity and away from their previous professional identity, while the majority of part-timers described having a blended identity between teaching and their professional career. The following two quotes illustrate the shift in identity experienced by full-time faculty:

I would say for sure there has been a shift for me. I am a dental assistant by trade and I worked in the field for 8 or 9 years, and prior to becoming full-time, I had to let that go. So I feel over the last couple of years my identity as a professor has really developed and I start to see myself now more as a teacher (Allison, Full-time, Health Sciences).

After teaching almost 2 years now, I think it was after the first year, as soon as I started to let go of my first career on the outside, which was plumbing, and I started shifting towards letting that go, and I became full-time I almost became more professor than than a plumber. It actually took one day in two of my classes where students put their hand up and said “professor Eli” that I said that’s right I am now a teacher and I have to change my mindset a little bit...I realize that this is my profession now, it took a while to let it go. I am not letting it go totally, but teaching is first now. It was strange to see that. I had to point out to someone once, we had to introduce ourselves and I said I am Eli and I am a plumber, but I also teach, so even though I said it second, it is the first. (Eli, Full-time, Skilled Trades)

In addition, several full-time faculty discussed the importance of retaining their professional identity while taking on the role of educator. They felt that while college management understood

the importance of their industrial/professional expertise, management did not support faculty in remaining current in those professions.

My identity was evolving as I went from industry into teaching part-time then into a full-time faculty position, and I struggled with identity because the college really values industry expertise and connections and your professional networks with other associations, and that is the attraction of coming to the college, and you come in and then you get sort of socialized to teaching, you know teaching theory, the classroom, and course outcome management and all of the pedagogical components of learning and teaching and your identity starts to sort of shift and I have been struggling with maintaining my industrial relevance as I have become more involved on the teaching side, and I think that is sort of a critical thing for the colleges to have that balance...as a full-time faculty, I am not sure there is a very strong understanding of having industrial identity the way the system is set up. I think we have to fight to retain that industrial identity and keep it fresh; it's not supported in a very strong way in the operational model of the institution. (Ron, Full-time, Legal Studies)

I am an early childhood educator so for me I still identify as an early childhood educator but that is a really important part of who I am as a faculty because I am teaching courses, no matter what they are, they are with the intent of people being able to be an early childhood educator. The other piece for me is really just staying in contact with the community and being sure to stay on committees and stuff that really allows me to stay up to date and really focused on that field and I find that the biggest challenge, even though those committees were part of my portfolio before I was a college teacher, now it's very different because at times I can't commit to the meetings because my teaching schedule always changes, so I find that I really have to work on that part. (Melissa, Full-time, Early Childhood Education)



The majority of part-time groups, including the VPT group as well as a few full-timers, described their identity as blended between their profession and their teaching. One part-time group, in particular, described how their work identity was aligned more with their profession than with teaching. Interestingly, some felt that teaching part-time at the college elevated their identity within their profession. This quote by a part-time instructor in the Skilled Trades illustrates the overall tone of this discussion: “for my profile as an HVAC mechanic, people are impressed by it (teaching) so it is something I’m proud to be.” These quotes, one by an IPT and one by a VPT participant summarize the blended identity perspective: “I think teaching complemented my business professional identity and my personal identity, as now it is another aspect of who I am” (Trisha, Part-time, Tourism and Hospitality). “So I find that both of my positions tend to inform one another, which is nice” (Craig, VPT, General Academics). Finally, this quote by Kate, a full-time faculty in her first year of teaching, is indicative of blending professional and teacher identity:

I worked in a med lab for 22 years, and I also have a Bachelor of Education, so I think that my identity is intertwined. I feel that I am an expert in my field in what I do but that I also have the ability to teach. I think that if I was teaching electives or something else, I would see myself more as a teacher, but I see myself more as a professional in the medical administration program in which I teach. (Kate, Full-time, Office Administration)

It was uncommon for participants to not relate to a professional identity; however, it is important to note that a minority of participants became full-time college teachers directly from their own post-secondary graduate education or previous teaching experience, for example teaching in subjects such as mathematics or English. Only two participants stated that they were not strongly associated with a profession and described how their situation aligned only with a teacher identity. This is one of their quotes:

I have an absence of the industry identity. I am an expert in math education and I have been studying how people learn math... I don't see it too much as a deficit, but I do notice that I am missing some perspective. I try, I am going with the students on a trip this fall to some job sites and I try to get involved in things that give me more perspective on what they are doing in the field but I do notice that I don't fall into that category. (Lydia, full-time, Skilled Trades)

The third subtheme within *Teacher Identity* was *joy of teaching*. Both full-time and part-time faculty commented on their love of teaching the next generation of potential professionals in their disciplines and related this to their view of themselves as teachers. The fulfillment and joy experienced while teaching appeared to facilitate their identity as a teacher: "Designing and developing and delivering this type of content was a legitimate use of my love for the marketing subjects. So finding a different outlet for a subject area that I really love personally" (Blake, full-time, General Academics).

I am teaching what I wanted to do in life so I'm very happy with my career...I am having a joy passing this on and hoping to make other successful students become great contributions to our society. With my job I got to travel around the world...and I like passing on all these life experiences to students whether young or old, because there is so much, so much that I have taken in in my 30 year career that I can't see me going anywhere else right now, this is what I wanted to do. And now that I have the opportunity to do it I am trying to do it the best that I can. Like I said, make myself from a good teacher to a great one. I want to leave a legacy. (Tom, full-time, Skilled Trades)

“The high point as I saw it, was teaching- I love teaching. I love being able to share the material. I come with experience on this material, do they see why they are learning it...do they get it?” (Frank, VPT, General Academics).

Taken together these results indicate there were differences in professional teacher identity between the employment status groups. The evidence showed that although all groups had moderately high identity scores, full-time faculty had the highest and they were more likely than part-timers to shift towards a teacher identity in their early careers, and yet they recognized and wanted to retain their previous professional identity to some extent. Part-time faculty were overall more likely to have a blended identity and viewed teaching as a lesser part of their overall work identity. Specifically, the VPT group identified the least with a teacher identity. This is logical because these part-timers demonstrated no desire to take on a full-time teaching position and made statements suggesting that they maintained a strong identity to their profession and have not yet acquired a strong teacher identity. From the thematic analysis, there was a clear subtheme around the enjoyment both full-time and part-time faculty expressed about their teaching, which appeared to be related to their passion for their disciplines, their positive relationships with students, and seeing themselves as a teacher of their craft.

**Teaching self-efficacy.** For teaching self-efficacy, the results of the Tukey posthoc showed that the only significant difference was that the full-time group was significantly higher than the VPT group ( $p=.036$ ). The IPT was not significantly different from the full-time group ( $p=.428$ ), nor from the VPT group ( $p=.330$ ). Overall, the scores on the 9-point Likert scale were relatively high (means between 7.2 and 7.48), showing moderately strong teaching self-efficacy for all groups. The effect size of the difference in the ANOVA was only .015 for teaching self-efficacy which is

considered small. Field (2013) states that effect sizes are considered small at .01, medium at .059 and large at .138.

The focus group discussions were dominated by explanations of factors that positively influenced teaching self-efficacy. These included the importance of formal feedback from students, peers, and managers, student informal feedback, and faculty's content expertise, usually resulting from many years of practical experience within their discipline. All of the focus groups discussed the influence of time and experience in the classroom as the main contributor to their growing teaching self-efficacy. The following quotes illustrate the perceptions of the full-time and part-time faculty regarding gaining teaching self-efficacy in their early careers: "Confidence comes from time in the classroom. More confidence makes you a better, smoother teacher" (Durant, part-time, Skilled Trades).

I feel that confidence will come with the more times I teach the class...I feel like my confidence will only grow with the more teaching I do and the more students I am exposed to. Confidence for me is still building. And I think that I will be more relaxed. I really rehearse a lot, I really need to be on. I look forward to the day when I go into a class I can be very chill and it seems natural (Laura, part-time, Skilled Trades).

So I think for me in terms of the belief of my ability, I certainly had confidence coming in because of my adult education background... But having the experiences of the last few semesters and being about to build some of those skills further in terms of integrating some active learning, has really built on that confidence... having a number of semesters behind me and choosing some training from the college that was really relevant and using the student feedback to really build and boost has made a difference (Melissa, full-time, Early Childhood Education).

I had that aha moment that really got me off the ground and running and seeing myself as an educator and being confident in that role, which came not only from the feedback from students but also from the support through my faculty. I think all of those things contributed to realizing and coming into this identity was for sure one of the high points for me (Allison, full-time, Health Science).

In summary, the combined results from the quantitative and qualitative data regarding teaching self-efficacy indicated that all groups had moderately high teaching self-efficacy and that it continued to grow with time and experience in the role. Participants from all groups agreed that time in the classroom, along with feedback from peers, managers, and students, contributed to their teaching self-efficacy.

**Sense of belonging.** Overall, the scores for sense of belonging were in the moderate range for all groups (3.23-3.57 out of 5). Furthermore, there were significant differences between all three employment status groups. The results of the Tukey post-hoc tests indicated that the full-time group had significantly higher belonging than the IPT group ( $p<.000$ ), and higher than the VPT group ( $p<.000$ ), and the IPT group was significantly higher than the VPT group ( $p=.014$ ). The qualitative data supported these findings by revealing participants' feelings about their sense of belonging to the organization and its influence on their teaching. Firstly, all groups discussed aspects of their work environments that enhanced or detracted from their sense of belonging. Being part-time was a major concern discussed by both full-time and part-time participants as a detractor from sense of belonging. These full-time participants reflected on their previous part-time experience: "I worked part-time teaching late evenings, and you felt very disconnected being a part-time professor. As a part-time professor you felt out there and vulnerable" (Walt, Skilled Trades).

In that part-time mode in all three colleges, it was a little bit rough because you almost felt like you were the outsider. I had courses where I was to teach a math course, and I would basically get the course outline and best of luck, there it is, they send you on your way to go teach it (Eli, Skilled Trades).

These three quotes are from part-time faculty and describe contextual elements that contribute to or detract from their sense of belonging:

Being a part-time instructor, only teaching a few courses, it can be very lonely in the actual job because you're not running into a lot of the same people, the shared space, where we do our marking and so on, tend to be empty. The full-time people have their offices or cubicles and have more opportunities for working on a particular assignment together with other instructors. To have those opportunities would be nice, but it is a scheduling thing, a commuting thing, so there are positives and negatives to the whole sense of belonging, if you seek out the opportunities like professional development workshops that is great, but in terms of just the day to day of the teaching it can feel a bit lonely (Craig, part-time, General Academics).

For part-timers, I think it is very hard to feel like you belong in the department because we are not there all the time. Full-timers have their own desk, they have their own area; part-timers are usually off to the side at a temporary work station. We don't go to the same meetings, we're not part of the same meetings, we can choose to go if we want to go but we aren't paid for that so often we are not at those things. So for me, belonging, it can be quite isolating. Because you're not with your colleagues that much, especially when you are part-time. I feel belonging as a part-timer is really hard, you have to do a lot of your own work to reach out to people (Laura, part-time, Skilled Trades).

I was offered an office, you walk in the office, there's 20 desks, and they are all occupied by people because there are more part-time (faculty) than there are spaces basically. So I got over not having a desk. I just learned that I can go into my lab any time and occupy a desk...And then when I go for lunch there is no real place to have lunch, and that is kind of a downer, but I find friends that I associate with now and we sit in a chair with no desk, that is pretty sad (Dale, part-time, Skilled Trades).

In both full-time and part-time contexts, other influences were seen to enhance or detract from one's sense of belonging. Connecting with other faculty, having a space to work, a name tag, and being mentored were described as enhancing belonging. However, mentoring was also perceived as unhelpful if the mentor was a poor match. Many participants discussed the role of others in the workplace — their colleagues, peers, mentors, and managers— in building their sense of belonging within their department and institution overall. Joanne is a part-time nursing instructor who had a mentor: “mentors can impact your sense of belonging—positively or not”. Allison, a full-time professor in Health Sciences described the importance of informally meeting other faculty in the work environment:

I feel that for me there is a sense of belonging...It's mainly connecting with other faculty— informally connecting in the office area and when you need support they are there for you. Those are the things I find most influential.

Finally, in this quote, Kenzie, a full-time professor in Nursing sums up her connections between sense of belonging, teaching self-efficacy, identity, and support:

I think that when you have a sense of belonging, your confidence level sort of correlates and increases, there is a bit of a positive relation there between the two. The more that you feel you belong to the institution in which you work, the more likely you are to take that extra

step, to go above and beyond for a student, or for a co-worker, or a fellow staff member, whatever the case, because you also identify with and you have built your identity on the institution as well, you sort of coincide the two and merge the two together, so it sort of increases the likelihood that you will do things like that. And then I think that it also increases your capabilities, essentially your abilities, which I think helps to solidify your identity, that professional identity that you have made, if you have these connections and you know that if there is something you need you can go to this person, and you know your mentor will be there, if you have a class that didn't go particularly well or you have an assignment and you are not sure about how to grade it, if you have that person to go to who contributed to your sense of belonging then you are more effective all around.

Several faculty mentioned the role of their program coordinator or chair in establishing their sense of belonging. In this quote, Ron, a full-time professor in Legal Studies, summarizes his perspective:

There is back and forth depending if it (my sense of belonging) is positive or negative. I feel a big part is in terms of being a part of the faculty or program itself. I have a really good program coordinator right now who makes us feel part of a team. I teach in two different programs and in the second one, I don't feel as associated with the program or the faculty. I think leadership is part of it.

Furthermore, both full-time and part-time participants discussed the role of students as a major contributor to their sense of belonging, leading to the subtheme *interactions with students*. This was especially true for the part-time faculty. In fact, for the VPT group, connecting with students was the only factor they felt was important to their sense of belonging. This quote by Frank, a VPT instructor sums up his group's discussion:



Regarding my peer group at my college, I have a day job, I have a very busy life, I go to the college, I teach my class, I deal with my students before and after class, and I go home, I don't have interaction with peers, pretty much not at all actually, so I don't know what it's like, I can't even answer about it. I have interaction with my chair, I have questions from him, and his secretary who is very busy. But I don't have a sense of peer identity, belonging to the group... I build my sense of belonging completely with the students, my classroom, the emails between them, the marking of their assignments that is my experience.

Similarly, some full-time faculty stated the importance of students to their sense of belonging. This seemed particularly important if they did not have strong relationships with their colleagues. One full-time participant stated:

I think it (belonging) does influence my teaching but for me the biggest thing is still the students. I was turned off and upset about not belonging or feeling supported, and it was the students who made me deliver the best I could. So at the end of the day that still outweighs whether I hate the place or I love the place...because at the end of the day it is representative of you (Eli, full-time, Skilled Trades).

Through inductive analysis, I identified the subtheme *ownership for sense of belonging*. In many discussions, the participants stated they felt their sense of belonging was the result of their own actions. Each of these quotes speaks to this ownership, which was evident in both full- and part-time focus groups:

I also think it's important, not just about belonging to the institution, but what are you bringing to that institution... I kind of think of it as what am I contributing to that sense of belonging to the institution, instead of what is it providing to me? (Aiden, full-time, General Academic)

I have a tendency to not necessarily feel a sense of belonging in any of my programs, because yes you are contract, you don't have an office, you are working out of a bag, so I choose to have my sense of belonging in my class. And I want to mention that I had a mentor at one of the colleges and they have meetings and I have not had meetings at the other colleges, so I think a sense of belonging is something that I am in control of (Kani, part-time, Health Science).

I have really had to work hard at establishing relationships with other teachers, so you know, it's on me. I basically put the energy in to reach out, to ask for help or ask for advice, but that is all on me. So belonging I feel like as a part-timer is really hard, you have to do a lot of your own work to reach out to people (Laura, part-time, Skilled Trades).

I guess my sense of belonging...any sense of belonging was what I built. I was leaving my past career and going into teaching and I went there as many days of the week as possible and I tried to involve myself. So my sense of belonging comes from trying to make a name for myself and reaching out and finding people, like having a mentor. There is no mentor program in place, but I found, informally, a full-time who really reached out. I have a sense of belonging with my contract colleagues and that is because I have put in a lot of time being at the college (Jackson, part-time, General Academic).

My advice to anyone new coming in is to get involved. When you get those invitations to go for breakfast, when you get those invitations to go for openings, to be a part of that. I think we all have to take some responsibility for that as well, for our sense of belonging. Our sense of belonging is not an onus on everyone else, although they play a role, I think we need to take responsibility for it ourselves as well (Melissa, full-time, Early Childhood Education).

The quantitative and qualitative data combined provide a clear picture of the similarities and differences between the employment groups regarding their sense of belonging. As one might predict, full-time faculty felt the strongest sense of belonging and the qualitative data provided evidence of the factors that influence it. Part-time faculty seek a greater sense of belonging if they are also seeking a full-time teaching position. In contrast, those who do not want a full-time position appear to be less concerned about sense of belonging to the organization and groups within it.

**Support for new faculty.** The final theme that emerged from the inductive thematic analysis was support for new faculty. There were no quantitative data collected regarding support because it was not one of the variables examined in this study. However, this tangential finding is worth reporting because it was a predominant point of conversation and appears to intersect with the themes of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. Within the theme of support, there were four subthemes lack of support, good support, importance of new faculty professional development, and mentoring. The majority of discussions in both full- and part-time focus groups reflected a lack of support.

Coming in (to full-time) as a part-timer there was almost no onboarding to full-time. And part-time is that you teach a class and you don't necessarily get to meet many other people in the faculty depending on when everybody is working...I found it very difficult even though I had experience with teaching and marking and development of courses there was basically no onboarding and it became very difficult. There was some online process and things like that but I thought that was frustrating (Matt, full-time, General Academic).

The biggest challenge I had was the lack of mentoring, and also not really knowing your place, particularly stressful points where you were dealing with a student issue, and you

didn't have a lot of experience and you are using your best judgment and you are looking for those sounding boards. You would do things and then you would find out that they were the wrong things after the fact. You obviously didn't have the training or the support to do the work. So a lot of the time you were getting negative feedback from the administration, and that was sort of frustrating in the beginning for me (Aiden, full-time, General Academic).

In these three quotes, participants explained their perceptions of the difference between part-time and full-time faculty onboarding and orientation to their teaching role:

One thing I can say is that the part-time teachers are not treated the same way as the full-time teachers. The full-time teachers actually get a formal introduction and orientation at the beginning of the school year, which I think would be beneficial to all teachers because we are all teaching in the same system (Laura, part-time, Skilled Trades).

Moving (from part-time) into the college, as a full-time instructor, I feel like there is definitely more support but still some inconsistencies with how faculty members see it, more clarity on how things like assessments should be handled and other kind of technical, or I guess policy oriented things, that I felt were never fully explained to me and I just kind of learned as I went. You hear it all the time, I was just thrown in the deep end, first semester of teaching you have a teaching load that seems impossible to manage and people get really stressed out and burnt out ... I have heard it from so many people. So I think it is important. And also in my experience, there have been lots of initiatives; my college has many, many initiatives to onboard people and at the same time you are always still stressed so I don't know somewhere there is a disconnect (Lydia, full-time, Skilled Trades).

Onboarding is so important; I wish that my experience was better. In any profession or new job it is so important, and I reflect that it really wasn't a great experience. I think someone mentioned earlier, like here is the manual, here is the educators manual for the college, and that is what it was. I know that there are some online courses that I could take that are specific to the diversity of the college and so forth, but you know, it wasn't a perfect relationship with my mentor, I seemed to source out my own group of people to learn from. I wish that it were different, better, but I am not sure how I could specifically articulate that. It could be better than it was (Joanne, part-time, Nursing).

The second subtheme was *good support* where participants commented about the quantity and quality of help they received as they began their teaching careers. Positive comments were more frequent from full-time faculty; however, a few part-time faculty discussed it as well. The following participant comments demonstrate how the support of others facilitated feelings of connectedness and sense of belonging easing the transition to their new role: "I felt very supported by the organization. Everyone was more than willing to help" (Beth, full-time, Nursing).

I felt very supported by the administration at the college and my faculty...there are many opportunities for professional development. We have a new faculty academy that we went to where we're able to establish many other connections with faculty in other programs and other campuses so I would say just to summarize, that I felt supported and enjoyed my first couple of years immensely (Allison, full-time, Health Science).

In addition, some faculty stated that having good support was a matter of "luck" because of a coordinator or other faculty member who went out of their way to help them in their first semesters of teaching. "I did feel supported; the professors who had taught the course before shared all of their resources so that was lucky" (Beth, full-time, Nursing).

The following quotes further illustrate how the factors of sense of belonging, teacher identity, and teaching self-efficacy appeared embedded in the participants' perceptions of good support:

I had a really great experience, the colleagues and everyone there at the school is super supportive which is great. I have a buddy, they didn't assign a buddy to me but it is someone I met up with before I started and she really helped me out a lot... there is a lot to learn (Laura, part-time, Skilled Trades).

If I was to sum up succinctly, I would say the associate dean might say here's a course outline, go make a great class. We are not good sharers of material, we are not good sharers of powerpoint slides, we can be a little "siloed", so I've got a lot of freedom but I've tried to share more of the resources (Jackson, part-time, General Academic).

For me, I would say the biggest thing is faculty involvement and faculty support. It was quite hard at times being a part-time faculty for 4 years because there are things that you are not directly included in, and so you don't have quite as many opportunities, and you are not rubbing shoulders with the full-time faculty. But now being full-time, I really enjoy the comradery and I feel that I could approach anybody in our faculty and ask a question and have a positive response and I really enjoy that and I appreciate that (Julie, full-time, General Academics).

I was very lucky with my first class, having an amazing coordinator, so that I had a lot of onboarding, I asked a lot of questions and I was able to, so once I got through my first class I found that I felt confident just knowing my expectations going into every class (Kani, part-time, Health Science).

In summary, within the theme of support, participants discussed the factors they found supportive such as the sharing of resources, professional development training, and helpful colleagues who acted as mentors. In contrast, absence of these elements led to feelings of a lack of support.

The subtheme *the importance of new faculty professional development* emerged from many statements about the value of faculty professional development (PD), both ongoing PD and the onboarding process for new faculty. In several cases, participants discussed how attending PD activities enhanced their teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging:

I have been in the field for a long time so the content I am teaching is easy for me to teach and communicate to students. But there is another skill with teaching which is more like classroom management, dynamics, that is another thing that fortunately my college has ongoing professional development and I have taken the time to capitalize on that (Laura, part-time, Skilled Trades).

It (belonging) really changed for me when I had an opportunity with my college to get involved in a training program with other faculty. I hate to say it but I used to think of it kind of negatively. My department would think about it as you are not really a teacher, you don't have a master's or teaching degree. But when I got into the group with people from different backgrounds teaching across the college, and there were people in the class who had their Masters, they had a lot more education, so they didn't have to be in those programs, but they were really into learning and they still did it. So sharing that moment with them, sharing their experience, taking ideas, and they took some of my ideas and

agreed with it and told me I was on the right track and I saw ideas that would work for me (Eli, full-time, Skilled Trades).

However, not all faculty expressed an interest in attending PD. In this case, the VPT group was discussing their sense of belonging relative to their college/program. The following quote from one of the participants sums up the discussion:

I see the PD provided at my college and I say I don't have time for this and I don't know how much value there is so I don't go and I don't know even who would go. My interactions with people are non-existent. I get there straight from my day job, so I don't have the ability to interact, or the opportunity even if someone were around to interact with. I don't know if there are, I have not made the effort to reach out, that's on me. So I don't have a sense of belonging at all. It doesn't matter to me, I go on campus, I teach and I go home (Frank, VPT, General Academics).

Finally, several participants commented on the importance of being mentored by other faculty, either formally or informally. This was the final theme about support. Having a mentor was described as a valuable contributor to sense of belonging and teaching self-efficacy in the early semesters of teaching.

I tried to involve myself so my sense of belonging comes from trying to make a name for myself and reaching out and finding people like having a mentor. There is no mentor program in place, but I found informally a full-time who really reached out and we are really honest about not just my performance but what this all entails (Jackson, part-time, General Academic).

If you have these connections and you know that if there is something you need you can go to this person, and you know your mentor will be there, if you have a class that didn't go



particularly well or you have an assignment and you are not sure about how to grade it, if you have that person to go to who contributed to your sense of belonging then you are more effective all around kind of thing. Kenzie, full-time, Nursing).

Overall, these qualitative findings of support for new faculty indicate that both full- and part-time faculty experienced gaps in the levels of support offered to them as they transitioned to their new role as a college educator. Both full- and part-time groups discussed how being part-time was more challenging due to less active support from administration and peers. In general, they described faculty PD/onboarding and mentoring as helpful supports to their transition to teaching. Furthermore, within their statements, there was evidence of how support was connected to their teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging.

### **Discussion**

In this study, I explored the differences between early-career full-time and part-time college faculty across three psychosocial factors that have been shown to influence teaching: teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging using a mixed methods design. The results indicated that employment status had an effect on these psychosocial factors. Full-time faculty were higher in their teacher identity and sense of belonging than their part-time counterparts. Additionally, teaching identity and belonging were highly correlated for all employment status groups. Faculty stated that all of these psychosocial factors develop with time and experience in the role of teaching, and made suggestions for support during the transition to teaching.

These psychosocial factors have been studied in post-secondary educators (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Hanna et al., 2019; Sadler, 2013; Thirolf, 2017), but not collectively, and not specifically in early career college faculty, nor in relation to employment status. This research fills a

gap in the literature by confirming the importance of these factors, delineating differences between employment status groups, and suggesting ways to support faculty in their early careers.

### **Employment Status**

Previous researchers have shown that there are differences in the motivations of part-time faculty and, therefore, they should not be treated as a homogenous group (Maynard & Joseph, 2008). I followed the suggestion of Maynard and Joseph (2008) and collected data from both voluntary (VPT) and involuntary part-time (IPT) faculty, as well as full-time faculty. The sample appeared to be representative of the Ontario college faculty population. The majority of college educators acquire a faculty position after substantial years in their profession. In this study, the average age of these early career educators was 41.7 years, ranging from 23-65 years. Carusetta and Cranton (2009) found new community college educators ranged in age from late twenties to early sixties.

Furthermore, there is a growing number of part-time faculty teaching in post-secondary institutions (American Association of University Professors, 2018; Council on Ontario Universities, 2018; MacKay, 2014). For this study, the sample breakdown was 35.8 % full-time and 64.2% part-time faculty, which is comparable to MacKay's report (2014) that two-thirds of Ontario college faculty were part-time. Interestingly, the full-time group had between 0 and fifteen years of part-time teaching experience before their full-time appointment, with an average of over three years. This fits the pattern of most colleges where many (but not all) full-time faculty have previous part-time experience, some for a substantial number of years. Overall, the results indicated that employment status has an effect on teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging in early career faculty.

### **Teacher Identity**

In this study, the full-time group identified with being a teacher more than their part-time colleagues. Within the part-timers, the IPT group identified more strongly as a teacher than their VPT counterparts. It is not surprising that this is the case since the VPT group expressed how they continued to identify with their profession or other life interests more than teaching. This is similar to the findings of Levin and Hernandez (2014) who found VPT faculty had lesser teaching identity and greater satisfaction in their part-time teaching roles. In this study, many comments from the focus groups supported a shift towards a teacher identity for full-time faculty, whereas part-time faculty were more likely to express a blended professional identity. These findings support Murray, Stanley, and Wright's (2013) contention that the identity of early career nursing faculty shifted from clinician to educator during the first three years of teaching. Similarly, van Lankveld et al. (2017) found that university teachers coming from a profession initially maintained a strong identity with their former profession and believed it added credibility to their teaching. An important related finding from my study was that although full-time faculty viewed their identity as shifting toward teaching, they expressed a desire to maintain a sense of their previous professional identity, especially if this was related to their specific subject matter. For example, a carpentry professor who wanted to maintain his carpentry skills, or an early childhood education professor who wished to remain connected to the early childhood community through committee work. While many felt that college administrators want faculty to have content expertise and community affiliations, they did not feel that administrators adequately supported initiatives that connected faculty to their previous professions.

### **Teaching Self-Efficacy**

In general, differences in teaching self-efficacy were less clear. All three groups had moderately high teaching self-efficacy scores and the only difference between the groups was

between the full-time group and the VPT group. The IPT group was not significantly different from the full-time group, nor the VPT group. In this situation it could be that although the IPT group are much like their VPT colleagues, they are working towards being like their full-time counterparts. In the focus groups, participants from all groups talked about their teaching self-efficacy increasing over time and factors that influenced their teaching self-efficacy, such as feedback and networking with colleagues. Overall, the qualitative findings from this study align with the previous suggestion that teaching self-efficacy develops with time and experience in the classroom (Hemmings, 2015; Morris & Usher, 2011). Based on the premise that full-timers have most likely had more hours in the classroom as a result of their full-time position, as well as very often having had prior part-time experience, it is conjectured that their more extensive teaching experience contributed to their greater teaching self-efficacy. The VPT group discussed how they spend less time at their colleges and attend less PD and these factors may be the reason for their lower teaching self-efficacy. All groups discussed the factors influencing the development of positive teaching self-efficacy including both formal and informal feedback from peers, managers, and students, as well as confidence in their subject matter, which resulted from years of experience in their disciplines. Similarly, Morris and Usher (2011) found that positive experiences in the classroom, positive student evaluations, and praise from students and peers built teaching self-efficacy in early career faculty. Developing healthy teaching self-efficacy in the early years of a new career is important; Bandura (1997) stated that once developed, it is unlikely that occasional setbacks will undermine beliefs in one's capabilities. Morris and Usher (2011) found that within the early years of their positions, faculty developed a stable perception of their instructional capabilities and were subsequently less susceptible to fluctuations. Likewise, in this study, I found that faculty perceived

that their teaching self-efficacy was in process. Further research could investigate the longitudinal stability of teaching self-efficacy in both part-time and full-time faculty.

### **Sense of Belonging**

The results for sense of belonging were similar to those for teacher identity in that full-time faculty felt the greatest sense of belonging, followed by the IPT group, and finally the VPT group. It was evident that creating a sense of belonging was difficult for many part-timers. Part-time faculty generally spend less time at their colleges and have fewer interactions with their colleagues; however, the consensus was that they desired more contact and more opportunities to take part in activities such as team meetings and professional development. This desire was more evident in the IPT group than the VPT group who expressed that they were content to show up, teach and leave. The qualitative evidence supports the lower scores of the VPT group on the teacher identity and sense of belonging measures. Considering previous research (Levin & Hernandez, 2014; van Lankveld et al., 2017), it makes sense that these individuals relate most strongly to their established profession, and less to their teaching role. Many of them only teach three to six hours per week and described their relationship to the college as minimal. They seem content with this relationship and do not care as much about a sense of belonging, being invited to meetings, or attending PD sessions.

An additional finding here was the ownership that both full-time and part-time faculty felt for their sense of belonging. They believed they had a role to play in their sense of belonging, by reaching out and trying to make connections with their colleagues. At the same time, however, they expressed the need and appreciation for colleagues, mentors, and managers who reached out to them. They highly valued PD and onboarding opportunities, as not only a means to develop their teaching skillsets but as important ways to get to know other faculty and to feel included in their

organizations. There was a clear desire for PD opportunities by all faculty, but it was also clear that most part-time faculty would like more opportunities to interact with their full-time colleagues. In contrast, the small number of VPT faculty conveyed their less enthusiastic interest in PD, not because it did not interest them, but rather because they felt they did not have time for it. The challenge for colleges will be to address this concern while meeting the scheduling needs of all groups. As described earlier, the sample size of the VPT focus group is unique and noteworthy. There was an adequate number of survey participants, although it was the smallest of the three groups; however, only seven participants volunteered for the VPT focus group, and only two showed up on the day of the discussion. This could be because faculty who are part-time and not seeking a full-time position may be less committed to extraneous activities within the college, including participating in this study. To expand upon these findings, further research with this group using a greater sample size is needed.

### **Teacher Identity & Sense of Belonging**

The high correlation between teacher identity and sense of belonging is not surprising because throughout the literature there are references to this connection (Gunersel et al., 2013; van Lankveld et al., 2017). The VPT group had the strongest correlation between teacher identity and sense of belonging, and the lowest scores for both measures; this correlation was the only one that was significantly different from the other groups on any of the variables. When interpreting this finding, the focus group discussions can provide insight. The VPT group described their time at the college as brief and focused on their teaching. They related to their professional identity more strongly than to teaching and did not worry as much about belonging to the institution.

Furthermore, like previous studies (Levin & Hernandez, 2014; Thirolf, 2013), participants discussed how connections with students were important contributors to both their sense of

belonging and their teacher identity. Both full- and part-time faculty connected strongly with the teaching role by sharing their love of their discipline with students. Working with students contributed to faculty members' sense of connection to their institutions, but this appeared to be even more important to part-timers who wanted a full-time position. In addition, comments from participants, particularly those who were part-time, illustrate the importance of frequent, positive, interactions with other faculty. A lack of interactions with other faculty led to feelings of isolation and weakened their sense of belonging and their teacher identity. These comments also help to explain why the quantitative scores on both teacher identity and belonging were lower for part-timers compared to their full-time colleagues, and why VPT scored lower than the IPT. While van Lankveld et al. (2017) found that teacher identity was strengthened by a collegial and supportive work environment, Levin and Hernandez, (2014) and Thirolf (2013) concluded that a lack of consistent, positive contact with colleagues led to a decreased sense of identity. The results of this study build on the extant literature by adding the views of a larger group of college faculty and explicitly connecting identity development with a sense of belonging.

### **Connections to Transformative Learning Theory**

The underlying theoretical framework for this study is Meizrow's (1991) transformative learning theory (TLT). Transformation of perspective can be part of professional learning and development for new faculty (Balmer & Richards, 2012; Cranton, 2009; Cranton & Hoggan, 2012). In this study, it was evident that new college faculty underwent the stages of transformational learning. The first stage is a disorienting dilemma. It was apparent that many participants considered their early years of teaching to be difficult. Words like "frustrating, inconsistent, thrown in the deep end" were used to describe their experiences. The second stage is critical reflection/self-reflection. Most participants in this study described experiences of self-reflection either through

their own contemplation or through organized faculty development activities. Mezirow (2009) described how self-reflection is critical for one to move to the next stage which is gaining new competence and self-confidence. In discussing their teaching self-efficacy, most participants agreed they were gaining confidence in their teaching roles as a result of more time and experience in the classroom. Further, many suggested that teaching self-efficacy was enhanced by discussing teaching with like-minded colleagues and mentors. As Brookfield (2002) suggested, this is a crucial step in transformative learning and is enhanced when reflection involves interactions with others who are undergoing a comparable experience. This study further illustrates Brookfield's notion that faculty undergo a transformation of perspective within their teacher identity, gaining teaching self-efficacy, and the importance of a sense of belonging. The final stage of TLT is the integration of a new perspective and even a new identity (Mezirow, 2012). Building on their new found competence, participants described their shift in identity or blending of identities as their teacher identity was formulated.

By framing the experiences of new faculty in TLT, this study may help faculty in their early careers, as well as their mentors and facilitators of faculty development activities. Recognizing the stages of transformative learning that are common in the experience of new faculty can help facilitators prepare new hires and better support them through their early career transition. For example, deliberately creating opportunities for self-reflection and interactions with other new faculty.

### **Implications of this Research**

The primary implication from the findings of this study is the need to support faculty in their early careers. Both full-time and part-time groups commented on their lack of support during their first semesters, and all groups agreed that the support provided to full-time faculty was more



substantial than for part-timers. Overall, part-time faculty desired greater onboarding and support; however, the added challenge for colleges is to provide this support in a way that part-time faculty can access and benefit from it since many in this study stated that they do not consider PD something that they have time for. It is noteworthy that support took on many forms such as mentoring, knowing who to go to for help, having a physical workspace, and attending training sessions. There were indications that supporting new faculty in their early careers also facilitates the development of their teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. Furthermore, since these factors are correlated, we can design faculty development activities to enhance these factors, and it is likely that by influencing one factor, the other factors will be positively affected.

### **Limitations and Strengths of this Study**

As in all research, there are limitations to this study. As mentioned, the small size of the VPT focus group means that the qualitative data collected may limit any interpretation. However, the VPT survey sample was adequate for the analyses performed. In addition, this research was limited to a cross-sectional study with one point in time data collection and did not collect data over time, which may be beneficial when considering a transition such as the transition to teaching.

A strength of this study is its generalizability due to the breadth of data collection from 20 out of 24 Ontario colleges. The overall sample appears representative of early career college faculty in terms of age, gender, and breadth of teaching disciplines. In addition, the ratio of the sample in terms of employment status is representative of the college faculty population; there are more part-timers than full-timers, and the majority of part-timers are IPT. The mixed methods research design also added to the strength of this study as the qualitative findings provided some clarification and richness to the quantitative results.

### **Future Research**

Although this study answered some of the questions about the effect of employment status on psychosocial variables of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging, there are several ways this research can be expanded. Firstly, this research considered early career of college faculty to be those in their first three years of teaching, but did not distinguish between year one, year two, or year three. Expanding this research with a sample of new faculty in each of these early years may tell even more about the development of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging in the context of the transition to college teaching. Likewise, following a cohort through these early years could provide interesting research from a longitudinal perspective. Furthermore, now that there is evidence that the psychosocial variables of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging are relevant in the context of the transition to college teaching, future research could involve studying how these variables influence teaching practices, job satisfaction, commitment, or performance.

## Conclusion

This study initiated an exploration of the transition to college teaching by considering three psychosocial factors that are related to early career teaching (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Murray et al., 2014; Singh et al., 2013; Thirolf, 2012). This exploratory study attempted to provide insights into the experiences of early career college educators by investigating the relationships between these variables and their potential links to employment status. The results indicated that Ontario college faculty in their early careers have found the transition to teaching both challenging and rewarding. They have suggested that the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging play an important role in the transition to teaching. The challenge for colleges is to find ways to implement faculty development so that both new full-time and new part-time faculty can be supported in their new role, including the development of these psychosocial factors.

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### **Chapter 3: A Conceptual Model of Psychosocial Factors Affecting Teacher Engagement and Approaches to Teaching**

The transition to teaching for new college educators involves developing a skillset that meets the demands of teaching and learning in higher education. This skillset requires not only pedagogical skills, but also the affective attributes of teaching (Garganté, Meneses, & Monereo, 2014; Kordts-Freudinger, 2017; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2011). However, the affective dimension of faculty development is an area of research that is under examined. Specifically, little is known about psychosocial factors and their influence on teaching practice in the early years of college educators' careers. Understanding more about the role these factors play will add to the knowledge about the transition to teaching. In this paper, I describe the development and assessment of a conceptual model of the transition to teaching for early career college educators that encapsulates three important psychosocial factors—teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. These factors have been shown to influence teaching practice, and as such, have an influence on student learning (Morris & Usher, 2011; Perera, Vosicka, Granziera, & McIlveen, 2018; van Lankveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset, & Beishuizen, 2017). By combining these factors into a model, I was able to investigate the relationships between them and their effect on the teaching practices of early career college educators. I evaluated the model for full-time and part-time faculty separately, to compare the factors in the model based on employment status. Better understanding of the interrelationships between these psychosocial factors, and how they shape the teaching practices of early career college educators is important because their teaching practices are a reflection of their instructional abilities, which ultimately influence student learning. It follows that if these factors are shown to be significant influences on teaching practice, they should be

considered relevant when supporting new faculty in their transition to teaching and may expand the way onboarding for new faculty is approached and enacted.

The context for this study is Ontario colleges. The 24 colleges in Ontario, Canada are formally referred to as either College of Applied Arts and Technology or Institutes of Technology and Higher Learning. Ontario colleges are unique in their position in post-secondary education. They offer higher learning opportunities ranging from certificates and apprenticeships to baccalaureate degrees (Skolnik, 2016). There is little research about the experience of faculty in Ontario colleges, and therefore I have drawn on the literature from the broader higher education context, including North American community colleges, 2-year colleges, and universities, as well as more globally including higher education in Europe and Australia. Specifically, this study examines the influence of employment status (full-time or part-time) on the domains of teacher engagement and approaches to teaching of early career college educators. There is little research on the teaching practices of college faculty in general, and particularly those starting to teach in the Ontario college system. Knowing more about these teaching practices and any differences between the groups will begin to fill this gap in the literature.

In the following sections, I introduce the components of a conceptual model of psychosocial factors involved in the transition to college teaching. First, I set the stage for the transition to teaching for Ontario college educators by describing the instructional context of Ontario colleges and the relevant challenges faced by new faculty. Then I explain the importance of each psychosocial factor and why each one belongs in the model, followed by the selected outcome measures. I describe the theoretical interrelationships between the factors as well as their potential influence on teaching practices. This is followed by the research questions and how the model was

evaluated. Finally, I present the results of testing the model and discuss the implications of the findings.

### **Ontario college educators**

The majority of college educators begin their teaching career after many years in a profession (Center for Community College Student Engagement (CCCSE), 2014; Gregory & Cusson, 2013). For example, skilled trades' experts such as electricians or millwrights, and professionals such as lawyers, pharmacists, executive assistants, and firefighters take on the challenge of teaching college courses that will prepare the next generation in their discipline. The majority of these new college educators begin teaching without any teacher training, which can make the transition to their new role stressful (CCCSE, 2014; Gregory & Cusson, 2013).

Furthermore, in contrast to their university colleagues who spend time on research, teaching and service, teaching is of utmost importance in the role of Ontario college faculty as it is their primary responsibility and comprises the majority of their work (Gregory & Cusson, 2013). Therefore, it is essential for new hires to have opportunities to develop their teaching skills. Once hired, new faculty are usually presented with opportunities to enhance their teaching skills and knowledge of their institution through orientation and onboarding programs (Gregory & Cusson, 2013; Schaar, Titzer, & Beckham, 2015). However, making the transition to a teaching career not only requires a new professional skillset, but also a new way of thinking about, and connecting with, one's occupation (Ennals, Fortune, Williams, & D'Cruz, 2016). This aspect of becoming a successful teacher is not often emphasized in new faculty onboarding despite the literature, albeit a limited number of studies, that points to its significance in the transition to teaching (Billot & King, 2017; Gunersel, Barnett, & Etienne, 2013; Sutherland & Taylor, 2011). In this research, I examine the

influence of three psychosocial factors on the teaching practices of Ontario college faculty in their early careers to begin to illustrate the importance of these factors to new faculty.

The early years of teaching have been defined in the literature as less than three years and up to five years (Gale, 2011; Murray, Stanley, & Wright, 2014; Ödalen, Brommesson, Erlingsson, Schaffer, & Fogelgren, 2019). In this research, I chose the first three years of teaching to be considered *early career* based on previous studies and the fact that in many institutions new full-time faculty receive onboarding support for the first two to three years (Gregory & Cusson, 2013). However, the complexity of what constitutes the definition of *early career* is realized when considering the diversity of experiences that lead to college teaching. Many new hires come straight from their profession/industry without any teaching experience; while a large portion of them begin in a part-time role and secure a full-time position after several semesters of teaching part-time (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018). In addition, some college faculty may have backgrounds that involve aspects of teaching such as supervising apprentices or being a nurse educator. Even with experience, teaching at the post-secondary level has been described as unique from other forms of teaching (Morris & Usher, 2011; Murray et al., 2014; van Lankveld et al., 2017). For example, Murray, Stanley, and Wright (2014) found that new nursing faculty felt vulnerable and lacked teaching confidence despite having experience as clinicians who taught as part of their role as nurses.

### **Employment status**

In post-secondary settings across North America, there has been an increasing number of non-full-time faculty employed to teach at all levels (CCCSE, 2014; MacKay, 2014). Specifically, in Ontario colleges the part-time faculty outnumber full-timers by a ratio of more than two to one (Colleges Ontario, 2019; MacKay, 2014). Both colleges and their students can benefit from part-



time faculty because they have relevant and up-to-date knowledge and skills from their discipline and cost the institution relatively less (CCCSE, 2014). However, this precarious work position is challenging for the faculty in terms of compensation, job satisfaction, long working hours, connecting to the organization, and working at more than one institution (Bakley & Brodersen, 2018; Bickerstaff & Chavarin, 2018; Levin & Hernandez, 2014; Thirolf, 2017). For example, Bakley and Brodersen (2018) found that adjunct community college faculty felt underequipped for the role of teaching and undervalued by their colleagues and administration which lessened their job satisfaction. Levin and Hernandez (2014) and Thirolf (2013) found that a lack of interactions with full-time faculty negatively influenced the teacher identity of part-time faculty. These studies suggest that the working conditions of part-time faculty may influence their teaching and create differences from full-time faculty.

One such working condition is orientation as a new hire. New full-time faculty have a much greater likelihood of attending an orientation, participating in an onboarding program, or having a mentor (Bickerstaff & Chavarin, 2018; Gregory & Cusson, 2013; Hitch, Mahoney, & Macfarlane, 2018). Gregory and Cusson (2013) reported that only 39% of colleges in Ontario who answered their survey offered new faculty orientations for part-time faculty, but 100% offered it to full-time hires. Likewise, Bickerstaff and Chavarin (2018) found that only 54% of part-time faculty at six American community colleges reported that they attended an orientation when they were first hired.

Although a number of terms (such as adjunct, sessional, partial load) are used in the literature, in this paper I use the term part-time to refer to all non-full-time faculty. Several researchers have explored the differences in part-time faculty and determined that the part-time group cannot be considered homogenous (Bickerstaff & Chavarin, 2018; Maynard & Joseph, 2008). Based on their motivations for teaching part-time and their intentions for a full-time position,

Maynard and Joseph (2008) divided part-timers into two groups. Voluntary part-time (VPT) were those who had other commitments outside of their educator role and did not strive for a full-time position, whereas involuntary part-time (IPT) were those who had the intention of acquiring a full-time faculty position. They found that VPT were more like full-time faculty in terms of job satisfaction, whereas IPT were less satisfied. Expanding on their findings, it seems reasonable to propose that there may be differences in the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging based on the intentions of part-time faculty. For this reason, I adopted the categories of VPT and IPT for this study.

### **Components of the conceptual model**

In this section, I describe each of the components of the conceptual model of psychosocial factors related to the early career transition to teaching. The model focuses on the development of teaching via the three psychosocial factors (teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging), and it uses teacher engagement and student-focused approach to teaching and as outcome measures. For each of these components, I outline their respective definitions and provide a rationale as to why each one is included in the model.

**Teacher identity.** Professional identity has been described as possessing a core set of values and beliefs about one's career that makes it distinctive from other careers (Beijaard, Meijer, & Verloop, 2004). Specifically, in teaching, Abu-Alruz and Khasawneh (2013) defined professional teacher identity as a commitment to the professional practice of teaching. In higher education, professional teacher identity has been described as a combination of sub-identities, such as the combination of content expertise and pedagogical knowledge (Komba, Anangisye, & Kataboro, 2013). Developing a professional teacher identity is an important part of being an effective educator (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Beijaard et al., 2004; Komba et al., 2013). Teachers with a well-

developed professional identity have been found to have a stronger commitment to teaching, to their students, to innovative student-centred teaching, and to professional development (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Beijaard et al., 2004; Nevgi & L fstr m, 2015).

Developing a professional identity as an educator is an ongoing and complicated process requiring reflection, interpretation, and the reinterpretation of one's current and aspiring self (Beijaard et al., 2004; Brookfield, 2002; Murray et al., 2014). In their systematic review of the literature regarding the development of a teacher identity in university professors, van Lankveld et al. (2017) found four factors that either strengthened or constrained the development of teacher identity in higher education contexts. In the 59 studies reviewed, they found that while professional development activities, contact with students, and collegial and supportive work environments strengthened teacher identity, non-supportive or isolating work environments impeded such development. Furthermore, they acknowledged the role of experienced colleagues helping new faculty as an important influence on teacher identity.

Because most college educators have worked in other professions prior to becoming teachers, and typically have not participated in teacher training, they are more likely to have a professional identity associated with their discipline, rather than a teacher identity. Boyd (2010) investigated workplace learning and identity development of new professional nurse and teacher educators. He found that the transition from practitioner to new faculty was accompanied by loss of status from "expert" in their previous career to "feeling new" in their teaching career. Even new faculty who had teaching roles in their previous careers explained that they had to reconstruct their pedagogy to one befitting that of higher education. Furthermore, their credibility as a practitioner led them to retain their professional identity rather than embrace a new identity as an educator.

Previous research has shown that new college faculty tend to develop their identity as an educator “on the job” (Gunersel et al., 2013; Smith & Boyd, 2012). Once teaching has begun, these individuals gain from a multitude of teaching experiences where they learn about themselves as teachers, about their students as learners, and about the complex nature of learning. Boyd (2010) described this reconstruction of identity during the transition from professional to higher education roles as “becoming” a professional educator. Similarly, Murray et al. (2014) found that early career academics who transitioned to university teaching from professions with strong identities such as nursing, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, or teaching required extended time to become socialized within their academic roles. Moreover, when new lecturers were asked about their transition to higher education, Smith and Boyd (2012) learned that clinical professionals held on to their initial professional identity, which slowed their adoption of a new academic teacher identity. In addition, the authors described previous professional identities as important to credibility for new lecturers as they built their new identity trajectory as “teachers” and worked to maintain their previous professional identity, in a sense adopting dual identities. These university educators are comparable to early career college faculty in that they step into teaching from their previous careers. However, beyond this similarity, teacher identity is even more important to college faculty since teaching is their primary role; whereas university professors usually have research and service components to their identity (Alexander, Karvonen, Ulrich, Davis, & Wade, 2012).

These findings contribute to the notion that teacher identity is a relevant factor in the early career of college faculty. Therefore, given that most college educators begin teaching with strong professional identities, it is apparent that teacher identity is an important psychosocial factor to include in a model depicting the transition to teaching for early career college educators.

**Teaching self-efficacy.** Bandura (1997) defined self-efficacy as a person's belief in their ability to organize and execute actions to accomplish a task. In other words, self-efficacy reflects one's confidence in the ability to control the factors that influence one's competency for a task. It follows, then, that a teacher's self-efficacy is defined as their perception of their ability to influence student engagement and promote student learning (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001; Woolfolk Hoy & Spero, 2005). It has been shown that a teacher's belief in their ability to influence students affects their teaching activities and behaviours (Chang et al., 2011). For example, greater teaching self-efficacy has been associated with teachers employing a larger variety of teaching strategies, being more open to new teaching ideas and methods, and adopting a student-centred, learning-facilitation approach to teaching (Chang et al., 2011; Sadler, 2013). This is important because a student-focused approach to teaching has been shown to engage students in deeper learning. In contrast, a teacher-centred approach to teaching has been shown to lead to mainly surface learning (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004). Furthermore, greater teaching self-efficacy has been associated with higher levels of student achievement (Shahzad & Naureen, 2017), teacher job satisfaction (Perera, Granziera, & McIlveen, 2018), and work engagement (Perera et al., 2018; Salanova, Bakker, & Llorens, 2006).

In higher education contexts, researchers have found that teaching self-efficacy is an important part of the early career development of college educators, (Chang et al., 2011; Hemmings, 2015; Rodgers, Christie, & Wideman, 2014; Sadler, 2013; Singh, De Grave, Ganjiwale, Supe, Burdick, & Van Der Vleuten, 2013). Chang et al. (2011) found that early career faculty with five or fewer years of teaching experience had lower self-efficacy for teaching than more experienced faculty. Morris and Usher (2011) interviewed university professors about the factors that influenced the development of their teaching self-efficacy and how it changed over time. They found that self-efficacy developed when faculty experienced teaching success and stabilized within the first four

years of teaching. Furthermore, their results substantiated Bandura's (1997) conception of self-efficacy as contextual in that faculty self-efficacy was lower if they were asked to teach in a new situation. Despite their previous experience, faculty may still experience lower self-efficacy when they begin teaching in the new context of the college classroom.

In addition, there are several other factors that influence teaching self-efficacy during the transition to becoming a college educator. Previous studies have determined that participating in professional development that is related to teaching and learning was associated with increased teaching self-efficacy (Hemmings, 2015; Postareff, Lindblom-Ylance & Nevgi, 2007; Rodgers et al., 2014; Singh et al., 2013). Hemmings (2015) found, for example, that teaching experience, feedback from peers and students, and support from colleagues all contributed to the development of teaching self-efficacy in early career academics. Based on these previous studies, teaching self-efficacy is an important construct to include in a model of the psychosocial factors influencing early career educators' transition to teaching.

**Sense of belonging.** Teaching does not take place in a vacuum, rather it takes place within the context of a discipline, a department, and an organizational culture (Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009). A sense of belonging has been described as a powerful human emotion that is often underestimated, and yet it is essential for faculty to succeed, particularly in a new role (McClure & Brown, 2008; Roxå & Mårtensson, 2009). In order to best perform this new role, faculty must feel they are a part of their organization and that what they do on campus makes a difference (Cook-Sather & Felten, 2017). However, Remmik, Karm, Haamer, and Lepp (2011) stated that "novice academics are usually unsure how they fit into an organization" (p. 195). McClure and Brown (2008) suggested that being invited to participate and learn about the workplace culture built a sense of belonging, which in turn, built trust and commitment within the organization. A sense of belonging is a key

element to meaningful work (Schnell, Hoge, & Weber, 2019) and is therefore related to job satisfaction (Hudson, 2013) and commitment to the organization (Merriman, 2010). As well as contributing to the functioning of the organization, Welling, Luoma, Ferluga, Berens, Offenbecker, & The (2015) related faculty sense of belonging to student and faculty retention, both of which contribute to the overall success of the educational institution.

Many researchers consider a community of practice and formal mentoring programs as practical applications of the construct of sense of belonging (Remmik et al., 2011; Welling et al., 2015). The importance of a community of peers is found throughout the literature. For example, Roxå & Mårtensson (2009) reported that meaningful conversations with peers built an environment supportive of teaching and learning. Monk and McKay (2017) concluded that new faculty orientation programs were essential in providing support for new faculty, but focused on institutional processes, whereas the issues of identity and belonging were addressed in an informal community of practice. They suggested that building belonging through a community of practice helped new faculty be more successful in meeting the challenges of their early careers. Furthermore, collaborative reflection within a community of peers was found to facilitate socialization into the role of teacher, lead to new understanding about teaching, and realize the affective and cognitive outcomes of faculty development programs (Billot & King, 2017; Onyura, Ng, Baker, Lieff, Millar, & Mori, 2017). Similarly, mentoring has been shown to be an essential component to supporting the transition of new faculty (Cooley & De Gagne, 2016; Welling et al., 2015). Welling et al. (2015) discovered that while new faculty did not feel supported in their roles at the beginning of their careers, their belonging increased after being matched with a mentor. Based on these studies, I concluded that a new faculty member's sense of belonging was an important psychosocial factor in the transition to teaching and has implications for teaching

practice. Therefore, a sense of belonging is the third psychosocial factor included in my conceptual model of the transition to teaching.

In summary, by searching the previous literature, I concluded that the three psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging are worthy of further exploration. My contention is that these factors should be examined in a conceptual model to study their effect on teaching practices and clarify their role in the transition to teaching for early career college faculty.

### **Outcome variables: Teacher engagement and student focused approaches to teaching**

The three psychosocial factors outlined above have been related to teaching practice in previous studies (Nevgi & Löfström, 2015; Ödalen et al., 2019; Postareff et al., 2008; Thirolf, 2017). Furthermore, two elements of teaching that have been shown to be important to student learning are; a) teacher engagement, and b) the extent to which a teacher is learner-focused in their approach to teaching (Rhoades, 2012; Uiboleht, Karm, & Postareff, 2018). Although the connections between these two elements of teaching and the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging have been loosely explored in previous research, they have not been explicitly studied to substantiate their interrelationships. Here, I describe these two outcome variables and their connections to student learning.

**Teacher engagement.** Teacher engagement is the work engagement experienced by teachers (Klassen, Yerdelen, & Durksen, 2013). The construct of work engagement has been gaining attention as an important factor in organizational success as well as individual success (Bakker & Bal, 2010). Work engagement refers to the positive psychological connections individuals have with their work, such as high levels of energy and strong identity (Bakker, Schaufeli, Leiter, & Taris, 2008). Engaged employees exhibit positive emotions, such as



enthusiasm and optimism, which influence self-efficacy (Salanova et al., 2006), job performance (Bakker & Bal, 2010; J., 2014), and overall job satisfaction (Li, Wang, Gao, & You, 2017; Perera, Granziera, et al., 2018). In addition, when one is engaged in their work, it affects the positive engagement of those around them (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008).

Teachers' work engagement differs from the work engagement of many other professions because of the level of social engagement required (Klassen et al., 2013). Klassen, Yerdelen, and Durksen (2013) suggested there are four domains of teacher engagement: cognitive, emotional, social engagement with students, and social engagement with colleagues. They defined each of the domains of engagement. Cognitive engagement is the effort and intent that teachers expend in their work. Emotional engagement is defined as teachers' affective responses to their work, such as feeling happy and loving teaching. Social engagement refers to teachers' perceptions of their connections to others in the workplace and is split into two domains—social engagement with colleagues and social engagement with students. Klassen et al. (2013) proposed that although all dimensions of engagement are important for job satisfaction and motivation, social engagement is instrumental in forming productive student-teacher relationships which are crucial to facilitating student engagement and success. In addition, Nakamura and Csikszentmihalyi (2005) proposed that engaged teachers transmit their engagement to their students, resulting in students who are more excited about the discipline and willing to spend time and energy on their studies. Furthermore, Rhoades (2012) argued that engagement must take place collaboratively amongst faculty as well as individually to best enhance student degree completion. He listed professional preparation, the way in which faculty are recruited, professional development, and performance evaluations as ways to increase faculty engagement so that students would be positively affected.

Bearing in mind the positive influence that teachers' work engagement has on individual workplace success, student engagement, and thereby student achievement, it can be considered a vital element in teaching. Therefore, it is important to study teacher engagement as a construct that shapes the success of early career college educators and, thus, I chose it as an outcome measure in this model.

**Approaches to teaching.** A teacher's approach to teaching can be conceptualized as being either student-focused or teacher-focused (Trigwell, Prosser, & Ginns, 2005). A student-focused, or student-centred approach to teaching entails teachers challenging their students to actively engage in course content and concepts through strategies such as active learning, problem-based learning, explorative activities, or critical reasoning (Baeten, Dochy, Struyven, Parmentier, & Vanderbruggen, 2016; Nerland & Prøitz, 2018). A teacher-focused approach to teaching occurs when a teacher focuses on the content and its transmission to the students. This approach involves the teacher organizing the content in a way they can present it to students rather than facilitating students to change their conceptions about the content (Trigwell, 2012). The approaches are hierarchical and inclusive because a student-focused approach to teaching can incorporate elements of a teacher-focused approach, although the reverse is not true (Trigwell & Prosser, 2004).

Furthermore, a teacher's approach to teaching influences their students' approaches to learning (Trigwell et al., 2005). Embracing a student-centred approach to teaching has emerged as a meaningful part of effective teaching practice because it is associated with students' increased responsibility for their learning and facilitates deep learning (Baeten et al., 2016; Nerland & Prøitz, 2018; Trigwell, 2012). Trigwell and Prosser (2004) identified a deep approach to learning as learning that builds understanding and leads students to conceptual change. Deep learning is more desirable than surface learning where information or skills are simply repeated. A deep approach to

learning means students focus on constructing their own understandings by engaging in the content, conceptualizing, and seeking meaning, resulting in better learning outcomes for students, such as higher grades and retention (Baeten et al., 2016; Kilgo, Ezell Sheeys, & Pascarella, 2015; Trigwell et al., 2005). Early research on the approaches to teaching established that students are more likely to take a deep approach to learning when their teachers embrace a student-centred, conceptual-change approach to teaching (Gibbs & Coffey, 2004). As such, a student-focused approach to teaching is an important aspect of successful teaching for college educators (Nerland & Prøitz, 2018; Postareff et al., 2008).

More recently, researchers have explored the connections between emotions in teaching and approaches to teaching (Garganté et al., 2014; Trigwell, 2012). Garganté, Meneses, and Monereo (2014) studied the affective aspects of university teaching by correlating professors' emotions about their teaching with their approaches to teaching using the Approaches to Teaching Inventory (ATI). The ATI has two subscales, one measuring teacher-focused teaching labeled "information transmission teacher-focused (ITTF)" and one measuring student-focused teaching labeled "conceptual change student-focused (CCSF)". These authors found significant positive correlations between student-focused teaching and professors' emotions regarding their motivation for teaching, evaluation of oneself as a teacher, and performance of teaching, but no significant relationship between these emotions and teacher-focused teaching. Similarly, in a qualitative study, Postareff and Lindblom-Ylänne (2011) found that university teachers with learner-centred approaches to teaching reported more positive emotions in teaching such as enjoyment and enthusiasm, as well as increasing confidence; whereas, those with content-focused (teacher-focused) approaches to teaching profiles expressed fewer positive emotions and described teaching as stressful and demanding. An instructor's approach to teaching is not always clearly student-focused or learner-

focused since teachers can be high on both constructs, low on both, or high on one and low on the other. Postareff and Lindblom-Ylänne (2011) took this into account and found that faculty with these dissonant or developing profiles expressed varying levels of enjoyment, but again, more stress and dissatisfaction.

Overall, these studies show the positive relationships between a student-focused approach to teaching, teachers' positive emotions, and higher quality teaching practices (Nerland & Prøitz, 2018; Postareff & Lindblom-Ylänne, 2011) as well as to students' deep approach to learning (Uiboleht et al., 2018). These relationships substantiate student-focused teaching as an outcome measure in this model of early career teaching.

I chose these two elements of teaching as outcome variables in the conceptual model because they both have been shown to reflect teaching practices that influence student learning, and their relationships to the psychosocial factors warrant further exploration. While previous research has suggested that relationships exist between the psychosocial factors of identity (Nevgi & Löffström, 2015), self-efficacy (Klassen et al., 2013; Li et al., 2017), and/or belonging (Perera, Vosicka, et al., 2018), and elements of teaching practice these factors have not been combined or studied in a holistic model. In the following section, I outline the interrelationships described in the extant literature between the factors I included in my conceptual model.

### **Relationships between Factors in the Conceptual Model**

Previous research has described relationships between the factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging in early career university faculty, and some have connected these factors to teacher engagement or approaches to teaching (Boyd, 2010; Gale, 2011; Nevgi & Löffström, 2015; Remmik et al., 2011; van Lankveld et al., 2017). In their review of identity research in higher education, van Lankveld et al. (2017) concluded that developing a teacher

identity was facilitated by belonging to a supportive team and having a sense of connectedness to other teachers, which led to increased feelings of confidence in teaching. They also stated there was a strong link between teacher identity and characteristics of teacher engagement—a sense of commitment and a deep interest in teaching.

Furthermore, Remmik et al. (2011) touched on the importance of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging to new faculty; however, they did not explicitly study the potential interrelationships amongst these factors. They asked part-time and full-time early career university faculty about their experiences of being new and found that novice university lecturers experienced confusion in establishing an academic identity because they did not always define themselves as teachers at first. The researchers determined that an important part of professional identity was belonging to a community and that novice educators benefitted from formal and informal mentoring to help them develop their teacher identity, teaching practice, and confidence in their abilities. Over time and with support, new faculty's identities as teachers became more evident.

Moreover, Gunersel et al. (2013) associated professional teacher identity with a sense of belonging and a learner-centred approach to teaching. They rooted their qualitative research in Baxter Magolda's (2007) theory of self-authorship, which is defined as "the internal capacity to define one's own belief system, identity, and relationships" (Baxter Magolda, 2007, p. 69). They studied how a faculty development program affected the self-authorship of new faculty identities. In other words, how new faculty saw themselves as educators, how they related to their discipline, as well as how they related to their colleagues and students in their new roles (Gunersel et al. (2013) determined that in order for teaching experiences to influence teaching practices, educators need a community where they can discuss and reflect on their experiences. They stated that self-authorship of identity as an educator is important as it leads to consistencies between one's intrapersonal

identity, interpersonal relations (belonging), and teaching practice. Faculty perceptions about teaching are part of their identity as educators and invariably guide their teaching practice. When educators recognize their role in the construction of knowledge, their practice potentially becomes more learner-centred (Gunersel et al., 2013). Continuing to relate teacher identity to approaches to teaching and self-efficacy, Nevgi and Lofstrom (2015) found that student-focused teachers were more likely to develop as reflective teachers when participating in faculty development programs. This was most important for those with lower teaching self-efficacy in their early careers.

The relationships between teaching self-efficacy and the outcome measures of teacher engagement and student-centred teaching have also been studied (Klassen et al., 2013; Perera, Granziera, et al., 2018; Postareff et al., 2007; Rodgers et al., 2014). For example, Rodgers, Christie, and Wideman (2014) found that newly appointed college faculty at one Ontario college showed increased levels of teaching self-efficacy and student-centred approaches to teaching after participating in a faculty development program. Likewise, Postareff et al. (2007) determined that pedagogical training was associated with increased self-efficacy and increased student-focused approaches to teaching; however, the training needed to be lengthy (lasting one year) and changes were slow to take place.

Throughout these studies, there are often inferences about the importance of a sense of belonging to teaching success, teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, teacher engagement, or approaches to teaching. For example, Gale (2011) found that garnering a sense of belonging through interactions with students, support from peers, and professional development developed teacher identity and confidence. He asked faculty with less than five years' experience to describe their transition to academia. New faculty reported that the instances that most influenced their early career occurred as a result of teaching, interactions with their students, or the management of this

activity. The second greatest influence in participants' early careers was participating in a higher education teaching certification program. Attending such professional development validated new faculty role identity as teachers, particularly when they came from a previous profession where they had established a career identity. Interestingly, the third major influence on the transition to teaching was the faculty peer group; in other words, a community of practice and sense of belonging. Colleagues who worked in close proximity created a network for teaching, organizational, and emotional support.

This relationship was expanded on by Perera et al. (2018b) who assessed the structure of work engagement in teachers. They proposed that teachers' high levels of social engagement with colleagues enhanced their job satisfaction because their connectedness informed their sense of belonging at work. In a separate study of Australian teachers, Perera, Granziera, and McIlveen (2008) found that work engagement of teachers was positively correlated with teaching self-efficacy.

My extensive review of the literature has demonstrated that many interrelationships have been found between the five components that I argue should be included in a conceptual model of the transition to teaching. Given this evidence, the next step was to explore the potential influence identity, self-efficacy, and belonging may have on teacher engagement and student-focused approaches to teaching.

### **The Conceptual Model of the Transition to Teaching**

The conceptual model presented here is a theoretical consideration of the psychosocial factors that appear to influence teaching practices during the transition to teaching of early career college faculty. By designing this model containing these five elements, I propose that teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging may significantly influence teacher

engagement and student-focused approaches to teaching. Unearthing these potential influences is important because teacher engagement and approaches to teaching have been shown to positively influence teachers' performance and student learning (Garganté et al., 2014; Gibbs & Coffey, 2004; Klassen et al., 2013; Ödalen et al., 2019). By empirically evaluating the model, I can determine the strength of the relationships between the three psychosocial variables, as well as whether or not these factors predict teacher engagement and student-focused approaches to teaching. This assessment may also reveal whether one of the psychosocial factors is more influential, and whether these relationships vary depending on employment status of full-time, IPT or VPT.

The intention of this conceptual model is to bring to light the importance these psychosocial factors may have on the teaching practices, and thus the potential success of early career educators. While faculty development training would appear to provide a full suite of skills for college instructors, such programs do not explicitly aim to enhance these psychosocial factors that appear to make a difference. By verifying this model, it may substantiate the importance of these psychosocial factors in the transition to teaching and subsequently lead us to explore how institutions, and those working with new faculty, can contribute to the development of psychosocial factors during new faculty onboarding. It may also have implications for the types of psychosocial topics that could be included in faculty development programs for early career college educators.

### **Research Questions**

In this study the research questions addressed are: How is the teaching of early career college educators influenced by their teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and organizational sense of belonging? What are the relationships between these constructs? Are there differences in these relationships between full-time and part-time faculty? These questions were investigated



through the testing of a conceptual model of the psychosocial factors influence on teaching practices of early career college educators. The hypotheses are:

1. The psychosocial factors of teacher identity, self-efficacy, and sense of belonging are positively correlated for full-time and VPT and IPT groups.
2. Teacher engagement and a student-centred approach to teaching are positively correlated for full-time and VPT and IPT groups.
3. The approaches to teaching are more student-centred for full-time faculty than part-time faculty, and the IPT group is higher than the VPT group.
4. The teacher engagement of full-time faculty is higher than that of both part-time groups, however, the IPT group has higher engagement than the VPT group.
5. The domains of teacher engagement (cognitive, emotional, social with students, and social with colleagues) are higher for full-time faculty than either of the part-time groups, and the IPT group is higher than the VPT group.
6. The psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging (independent variables) significantly predict teacher engagement and student-centred approach to teaching.

## **Method**

### **Participants**

Faculty members in their first three years of teaching at 20 colleges across Ontario, Canada were invited to complete an online questionnaire. Out of a total 2218 invited faculty, 543 responded (a response rate of 24%). Of these, 424 participants met the inclusion criteria. That is, they were full- or part-time faculty at one of the participating colleges, who had taught for three years or less in their current role as a college educator. With this criteria, full-time faculty teaching three years or

less may have had any number of part-time years of teaching, and part-time faculty had been teaching three years or less.

From the original 543 participants, 41 were removed because they had more than three years of teaching in their current role of part-time or full-time. After screening the data, I determined that 74 participants completed less than one full scale and were therefore removed from the data set. For the remaining participants with missing data, I determined that the data were missing completely at random, and the missing data accounted for less than 5% of the individual's data points. Therefore, I used hot deck imputation to replace missing data points (Yan, 2008). Hot deck imputation can be used when data are missing at random and involves replacing the respondents missing value with a value on the same item from another participant who has nearly similar values on other items on the scale. This was easily accomplished in this data set because there were only 12 unanswered items for participants who completed all other parts of the scales. Following this, four participants were removed as multivariate outliers determined by Mahalanobis' distance<sup>3</sup>. Finally, eight participants did not include their employment status so they were eliminated from further analysis, resulting in a final sample size of 416 for the model analysis. Two participants were missing at least one complete engagement subscale so they were eliminated by SPSS (list wise deletion) for the analysis of engagement ( $n=414$ ).

The mean number of years of teaching was 1.78 ( $SD= .766$ ), 1.63( $SD= .856$ ), and 1.63 years ( $SD=.856$ ) for the IPT, VPT, and full-time groups. Often, full-time faculty have had part-time experience before attaining a full-time position. In this case, the mean number of years of part-time

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<sup>3</sup> Mahalanobis' distance is a measure of the distance of a case from the centroid of the data set, where the centroid is the intersection of all the means of the variables. If a case lies outside of the distribution of the other cases it is considered an outlier (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

teaching by full-time participants was 3.61 years ( $SD=3.03$ ), with a range 0-15 years. The sample was comprised of 268 (63.2%) females, 146 (34.4%) males, 5 (1.2%) who reported their genders in non-binary terms, and 5 (1.2%) who did not answer. The mean age of the sample was 40.52 years ( $SD=10.06$ ), with a range of 23-65 years. The employment status groups were defined by the following categories: 152 (36.4%) full time, 163 (39%) part-time who want a full-time position (involuntary part-time, IPT), and 101 (23.9%) part-time who do not want a full-time position (voluntary part-time, VPT); eight participants did not indicate their employment status and were excluded from the group comparison analyses.

In addition, to gain information about their onboarding experiences, I asked the participants about their mentoring experiences. They were asked if they had a mentor, and if that mentor was formal, informal, or both (presented in Table 3-1). They were also asked about their highest level of training as a teacher to further describe the sample (presented in Table 3-2).

Table 3-1

*Number and Percentage of Participants in Each Employment Status Group who had a Mentor and the Type of Mentor*

Employment Status	Full-time <i>n</i> =152	IPT <i>n</i> =163	VPT <i>n</i> =101	Total <i>n</i> =416
No Mentor	50 (32.9)	114 (69.9)	75 (74.3)	239 (57.5)
Yes Mentor	101 (66.4)	49 (30.1)	26 (25.7)	176 (42.3)
Formal	33 (21.7)	0	2 (2)	35 (8.4)
Informal	40 (26.3)	49 (30.1)	23 (22.8)	112 (26.9)
Both	28 (18.4)	0	1 (1)	29 (6.9)

Table 3-2

*Number and Percentage of Participants Reporting Highest Level of Training as a Teacher by*

*Employment Status Group*

Highest Level of Training	Employment Status Group			
	FT <i>n</i> =152	IPT <i>n</i> =163	VPT <i>n</i> =101	Total <i>n</i> =416
None	14 (9.2)	31 (19)	28 (27.7)	73 (17.5)
Within College	56 (36.8)	47 (28.8)	27 (26.7)	130 (31.3)
Adult Ed Certificate	15 (9.9)	14 (8.6)	12 (11.9)	42 (9.9)
B. Ed.	24 (15.8)	27 (16.6)	8 (7.9)	59 (14.2)
M. Ed.	29 (19.1)	20 (12.3)	11 (10.9)	60 (14.4)
PhD or EdD	14 (9.2)	24 (14.9)	15 (14.1)	53 (12.7)

## Materials

The online questionnaire was comprised of the letter of information for the study, seven demographic questions, and five measurement instruments, one for each construct in the model, as described below. I chose these instruments because they have strong psychometric properties and fit my definitions of the constructs. I will address each measure in turn below.

**Teacher identity.** Teacher identity was measured with eight items from the self-based dimension of the Professional Identity Questionnaire (PIQ; Abu-Alruz & Khashau, 2013). I chose this self-based dimension because the items best fit my definition of identity—how does one feel as a teacher? A sample item from this scale is; *I can only see myself as a faculty member working in a college setting*. The instrument authors determined that this subscale had high levels of internal reliability ( $\alpha=.94$ ), as well as construct and content validity. The authors defined levels of identity measured by the scale were high (3.5-5.0), moderate (2.5-3.5), and low (0-2.5).

**Teaching self-efficacy.** The well-researched Teacher Sense of Efficacy Scale- short (TSES; Tschannen-Moran & Woolfolk Hoy, 2001) was used to measure teaching self-efficacy. This measure is comprised of 12 items that ask about teacher self-efficacy regarding student engagement, instructional strategies, and classroom management. With permission from the authors, I made minor changes to the wording of five items to better suit the context of college educators. For example, the item *How much can you do to get students to follow classroom rules?* was changed to *How much can you do to get students to follow classroom and college policies?*

**Sense of belonging.** Sense of belonging was measured by the Esteem scale (9 items) of the Levett-Jones Belongingness Scale Workplace Experience Tool, which was modified by Welling et al., (2015) to evaluate the belongingness of new faculty. The authors reported the reliability (Cronbach's alpha) to be .90. A sample item from this scale is; *I feel understood by my college colleagues.*

**Teacher engagement.** Engagement in teaching was measured by the 16-item Engaged Teachers Scale (ETS, Klassen, et al., 2013). This scale has reportedly strong reliability ( $\alpha=.94$ ) for the overall scale as well as for the four dimensions of engagement measured by the subscales. These are Cognitive Engagement ( $\alpha=.84$ ), Emotional Engagement ( $\alpha=.87$ ), Social Engagement with Students ( $\alpha=.83$ ), and Social Engagement with Colleagues ( $\alpha=.79$ ). A sample item from the Emotional Engagement Subscale is *I am excited about teaching.*

**Approaches to teaching.** The 22 item Approaches to Teaching Inventory- Revised was used to measure faculty approaches to teaching (ATI-R; Trigwell & Prosser, 2004). This scale has two subscales. Eleven items measure student-centred approach to teaching on the Conceptual Change Student-Focused (CCSF) subscale which I used for the model. The second subscale is the Information Transfer Teacher-Focused Subscale (ITTF) comprised of 11 items. Both subscales

were used to describe approaches to teaching and compare them across employment groups; however, as described earlier, only the CCSF subscale was used in the model as a measure of student-centred approach to teaching. An example of the CCSF scale is; *I make available opportunities for students in this subject to discuss their changing understanding of the subject*. An example of the ITTF subscale is; *In this subject my teaching focuses on the good presentation of information to students*. The authors reported reliabilities for the two subscales as CCSF  $\alpha = .86$  and ITTF  $\alpha = .83$ .

### **Procedure**

After receiving ethics clearance from each of the participating institutions, a recruitment notice was sent by email by an internal liaison, such as the director of the teaching centre or a human resources representative. The liaison initially forwarded the recruitment notice to potential participants within their institution and followed up with a reminder email two weeks later. The notice included a link to the letter of information and survey instrument. The instrument was housed in the Qualtrics online platform at Western University. Data were collected between April and September 2017.

**Statistical analysis.** Descriptive and inferential statistics were analyzed using SPSS (IBM Corp., 2017). Descriptive statistics included the frequencies for the demographic questions, and the means and standard deviations for each of the scales and subscales. Bivariate correlations were conducted to analyze the relationships between; 1) the independent variables of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging, 2) the dependent variables of teacher engagement and student-focused approaches to teaching, 3) the engagement subscales, 4) the approaches to teaching subscales. I used one-way Multivariate Analysis of Variance (MANOVA) to determine the effect of employment status on the engagement subscales. ANOVAs were used to examine

potential differences between the employment status groups (full-time, VPT, IPT) on the engagement and the approaches to teaching subscales. A one-way ANOVA was used to analyze possible differences in global engagement between the employment status groups. Path analysis was completed using MPlus (Muthen & Muthen, 2018). Path analysis is an extension of multiple regression that, in its simplest form, allows the researcher to determine the effects of more than one independent variable on more than one dependent variable (Stage, Carter, & Nora, 2004). In this study, I was assessing the influence of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging on teacher engagement and student-focused approach to teaching. A multi-group path analysis (maximum likelihood estimation) was conducted using the employment status groups of full-time, IPT, and VPT to determine if the dependent variables differed in their prediction of the outcome variables between the groups.

## **Results**

### **Descriptive Statistics**

The means, standard deviations, and internal reliabilities (Cronbach's alpha) for each of the five variables are presented in Table 3-3. Reliability for each measure was high, ranging from .80 - .90. The distributions of the scores were assessed for normality and linearity using observation of the histograms, box and stem plots, Q-Q plots, and bivariate correlations, as well as sample size. The assumption of normality was met as the distributions were considered normal, and skewness and kurtosis were negligible, given the large sample size of approximately 100 or more per group, and over 200 overall (Field, 2013; Ghasemi & Zahediasl, 2012; Tabachnick & Fidell, 2013).

Looking more carefully at the belonging scale, there was one item that was negatively correlated with the rest of the scale. This item stated: "I get support from my colleagues at my college when I need it." For all employment status groups, this item did not match with the rest of

the scale and the Cronbach's alpha would improve if this item was deleted. After checking the raw data, I confirmed that there was no mistake in the data entry nor was it a reverse scored item. I chose to leave this item in the scale since the reliability of the scale was still very good at .80 (and therefore the path analysis was not affected) and it provides interesting insights into the belonging measure and analysis.



Table 3-3

*Reliabilities, Means, and Standard Deviations for the Scales and Subscales across Employment*

*Status Groups*

Variable Scale/Subscales	Employment Status Group			
	Full time (n=152)	IPT (n=163)	VPT (n=101)	Total (n=416)
Teacher Identity				
PIQ ( $\alpha=.84$ )	4.24 (.46)	4.05 (.57)	3.67 (.64)	4.03 (.60)
Teaching Self-efficacy				
TSES ( $\alpha=.89$ )	7.48 (.82)	7.36 (.87)	7.20 (.97)	7.36 (.89)
Belonging				
BSWE ( $\alpha=.80$ )	3.82 (.52)	3.56 (.62)	3.33 (.63)	3.60 (.62)
Teacher Engagement				
ETS-Total ( $\alpha=.91$ )	5.27 (.57)	5.19 (.60)	4.74 (.73)	5.11 (.66)
CE ( $\alpha=.79$ )	5.47 (.59)	5.50 (.55)	5.25 (.64)	5.43 (.59)
EE ( $\alpha=.92$ )	5.30 (.80)	5.47 (.66)	5.05 (.97)	5.30 (.80)
SES ( $\alpha=.78$ )	5.26 (.61)	5.29 (.67)	5.06 (.74)	5.22 (.67)
SEC ( $\alpha=.90$ )	5.01 (.81)	4.50 (1.22)	3.54 (1.5)	4.46 (1.32)
Approach to Teaching (ATI)				
CSSF ( $\alpha=.83$ )	3.89 (.64)	3.93 (.68)	3.80 (.62)	3.88 (.63)
ITTF ( $\alpha=.863$ )	3.82 (.56)	3.92 (.58)	3.79 (.68)	3.86 (.60)

Note: Scales are PIQ- Professional Identity Questionnaire, 1 (strongly disagree) - 5 (strongly agree); TSES- Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (short version), 1 (nothing) - 9 (a great deal); BSWE-Belongingness Scale Workplace Experience Tool (Esteem Subscale), 1 (never true) - 5 (always true); ETS-Engaged Teacher Scale 0 (never) - 6 (always);; CE- Cognitive Engagement Subscale; EE- Emotional Engagement Subscale; SES- Social Engagement with Students Subscale; SEC- Social Engagement with Colleagues Subscales; ATI- Approaches to Teaching Inventory 1 (rare or never) - 5 (almost always); CCSS Conceptual Change Student-Focused Subscale; ITTF- Information Transmission Teacher-Focused Subscale

**Correlations**

The correlation coefficients (Table 3-4) support hypothesis 1—the psychosocial variables of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging were positively and significantly correlated for all three employment groups. These results showed significant and high correlations between

teacher identity and belonging. Although they are significant, the correlations between teacher identity and self-efficacy, and between belonging and self-efficacy are considered modest (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011).

Hypothesis 2 stated that the dependent variables of student-focused approach to teaching and teacher engagement would be positively correlated. The correlation coefficients between these two variables were significant for all three employment groups ( $r=.345$ ,  $r=.409$  and  $r=.306$ ,  $p<.001$ , for the full time, IPT, and VPT groups, respectively) supporting hypothesis 2. Although these correlations were significant, the effect sizes are considered to be modest (Cohen et al., 2011). Values of .20 -.35 indicate only a very small relationship between the variables even if it is statistically significant, values of .35 to .65 are useful when combined with other correlations in a regression but in standing alone they offer little prediction as they are only slightly higher than guessing or by chance (Cohen et al., 2011). Correlation values of .65-.85 are interpreted as high, with group predictions being accurate especially at the top of the range.

### **Common method variance**

In this study I also considered the potential influence of common method variance. Common method variance (CMV) is a source of systemic error that can cause common method bias (CMB). CMB can potentially inflate the relationships between variables in survey research where the data is collected from a single sample using self-reported measures (Tehseen, Ramayah, & Sajilan, 2017). Tehseen, Ramayah, and Sajilan (2017) recommend examining the methods and data for sources of CMV when collecting survey data from a single sample of participants where all items are responded to in a single setting. In this research there were several procedural remedies used to reduce CMV (Tehseen, et al., 2017). These were; 1) the instruments selected were already published instruments with strong psychometric properties. For example, they had good item

construction and lacked ambiguity, 2) not all scales used the same Likert end points, 3) the survey instruments were presented in matrices to break habitual answering, 4) the anonymity of participants was assured in the letter of information which reduces social desirability (a factor that can increase CMV). Further to these procedural remedies, I used the following statistical methods to test for CMB. First, I conducted Harman's single factor test using SPSS (IBM Corp., 2018) principle component analysis. This analysis showed that there were 14 distinct factors accounting for 64% of the total variance, and the first unrotated factor accounted for 25% of the variance in the data. These results indicated that CMV was not a concern in this study since there was not a single factor accounting for more than 50% of the variance (Tehseen, et al., 2017). Secondly, I used correlation matrix observation to determine that the range of correlations between the five variables was 190-.750. Since the correlations among constructs was less than .90 CMV was not considered to be an issue in this study (Tehseen, et al., 2017).

Table 3-4

*Correlations Coefficients for Teacher Identity, Teaching Self-Efficacy, and Belonging across Employment Groups*

Employment Status Group	Variable	Variable		
		Identity	Self-Efficacy	Belonging
Full time (n=152)	Identity	1		
	Self-efficacy	.474**	1	
	Belonging	.628**	.427*	1
IPT (n=163)	Identity	1		
	Self-efficacy	.522**	1	
	Belonging	.586**	.444**	1
VPT (n=101)	Identity	1		
	Self-efficacy	.360**	1	
	Belonging	.820*	.324**	1

\*significant at  $p < .05$ ; \*\*significant at  $p < .01$

### **Analysis of approaches to teaching**

The CCSF and ITTF means for each group are displayed in Table 3-3. The one-way MANOVA indicated there were no differences between the employment status groups on either CCSF or ITTF (Pillai's trace=.012,  $F(2,810)=1.19$ ,  $p=.313$ ); thus, hypothesis 3 was not supported.

### **Analysis of teacher engagement**

As described previously, the ETS provides an overall teacher engagement score as well as scores on four subscales of engagement. These means and their standard deviations are shown in Table 3-3. Differences between the employment status groups for overall teacher engagement was determined using one-way ANOVA and Tukey's HSD post-hoc test. The one-way ANOVA identified significant differences between the groups [ $F(2,403)=22.98$ ,  $p < .001$ , partial eta-

squared=.326]. Specifically, Tukey's HSD post hoc showed that the VPT group ( $M=4.74$ ,  $SD=.73$ ) had significantly lower overall engagement than the IPT group ( $M=5.19$ ,  $SD=.60$ ;  $p<.001$ ) and the full-time group ( $M= 5.27$ ,  $SD=.57$ ;  $p<.001$ ). There were no significant difference between the full-time group ( $M= 5.27$ ,  $SD=.57$ ) and the IPT group ( $M=5.19$ ,  $SD=.60$ ;  $p=.582$ ), thus, hypothesis four was partially supported.

The Engaged Teacher Scale (ETS) has four subscales: Cognitive Engagement (CE), Emotional Engagement (EE), Social Engagement with Students (SES), and Social Engagement with Colleagues (SEC). I analyzed the differences between the employment status groups on each of the four ETS subscales using a one-way MANOVA. The means and standard deviations for the subscales are presented in Table 3-3. Hypothesis 5 was only partly supported. The MANOVA results showed significant differences between the employment status groups (Pillai's trace=.219,  $F(8,818)=12.58$ ,  $p<.001$ , partial eta squared=.110). The subsequent tests of between-subject effects showed there were significant effects of employment status on all four subscales [Cognitive engagement  $F(2, 411)= 6.47$ ,  $p=.002$ , partial eta<sup>2</sup>=.110; Emotional Engagement  $F(2, 411)=8.82$ ,  $p=.000$ , partial eta<sup>2</sup>=.041; Social Engagement with Students  $F(2, 411)=3.85$ ,  $p=.022$ , partial eta<sup>2</sup>=.018; and Social Engagement with Colleagues  $F(2, 411)=45.88$ ,  $p<.001$ , partial eta<sup>2</sup>=.18]. I then performed a series of Tukey's HSD post hoc tests to determine the differences within each subscale. These are addressed in turn below.

For the Cognitive Engagement (CE) Subscale, there was no significant difference between the full-time group and the IPT group ( $p=.864$ ); however, the VPT group had significantly lower scores than the full-time group ( $p=.01$ ) and the IPT group ( $p=.002$ ). For Emotional Engagement (EE), once again, there was no significant difference between the full-time group and the IPT group ( $p=.132$ ); and again, the VPT group had significantly lower scores that the full-time group ( $p=.038$ )

and the IPT group ( $p < .001$ ). The results for the Social Engagement Students (SES) subscale showed no significant difference between the full-time group and the IPT group ( $p = .939$ ); however, the VPT group had significantly lower scores than the IPT group ( $p = .024$ ) but not the full-time group ( $p = .056$ ). Finally, for the Social Engagement Colleagues (SEC) subscale, the full-time group was significantly higher than the IPT group ( $p < .001$ ), and the VPT group ( $p < .001$ ). The IPT group was also significantly higher than the VPT group ( $p < .001$ ).

These results partially support Hypothesis 5. Of note, there were no significant differences between the full-time group and the IPT on Cognitive Engagement, Emotional Engagement, or Social Engagement with Students. The only significant difference between the IPT and full-time group was on Social Engagement with Colleagues. The IPT was significantly higher on all four measures than the VPT group.

### **Path analysis**

The path analyses results are displayed using path diagrams in Figures 1 through 3 for the full-time, IPT, and VPT groups. The path coefficients and correlations with solid lines were statistically significant at  $p < .05$ . The dashed lines represent path coefficients from the proposed model that did not reach statistical significance ( $p = .05$ ).

As demonstrated by the path coefficients, hypothesis 6 was partially supported—teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging had statistically significant effects on teacher engagement in the full-time group. However, for both the IPT and VPT groups, teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy had statistically significant effects on engagement, whereas belonging did not. The second dependent variable, student-centred approach to teaching, was predicted by teaching self-efficacy for all three employment groups (FT:  $\beta = .448, p < .001$ ; IPT:  $\beta = .349, p < .001$ ; VPT:  $\beta = .475, p < .001$ ), but not by identity nor belonging.

Finally, the explained variance of the model was high. For the full-time group, the explained variance was 21.9% for student-focused approach to teaching and 55.7% for teacher engagement; for the VPT group, the explained variance was 22.7% and 69.1% respectively, and for the IPT group the explained variance was 20.5% and 64.3% respectively. This high explained variance is a strength of the model, showing that a large portion of the model's total variance is explained by the dependent variables rather than error. This was especially true for the dependent variable of teacher engagement, with more than 50% of the variability in teacher engagement being explained by teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging. Yet it is also notable that 20% of the variance in student-focused teaching was explained by the variables, and significantly by teaching self-efficacy.

To summarize the results, the analyses determined that Hypotheses 1 and 2 were supported. On the other hand, Hypothesis 3 was not supported and Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 were partially supported.

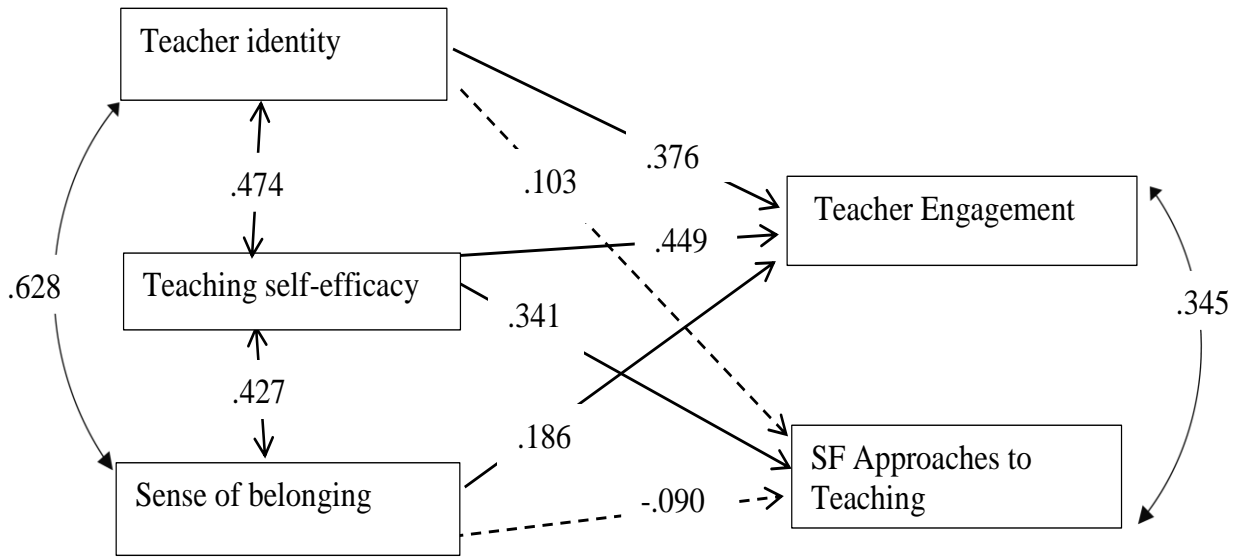
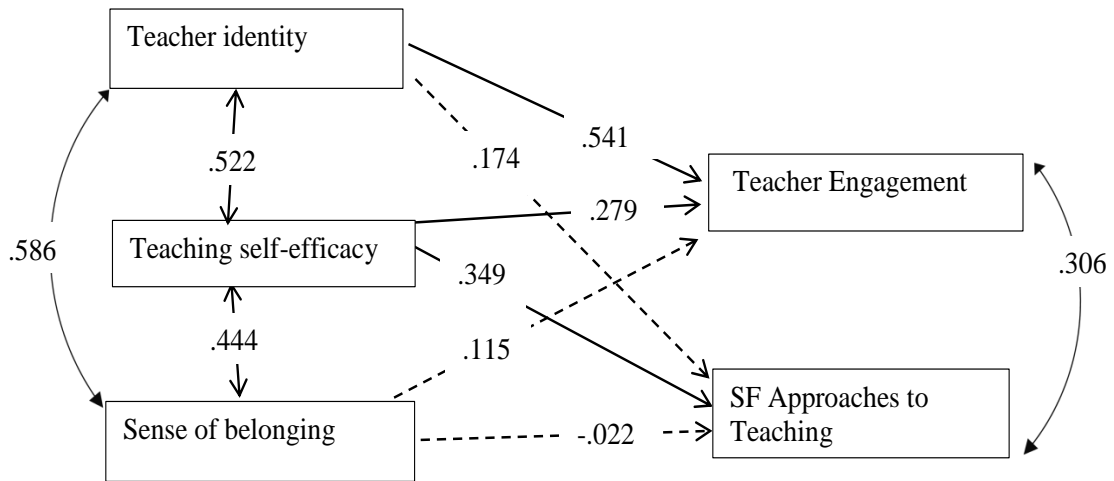
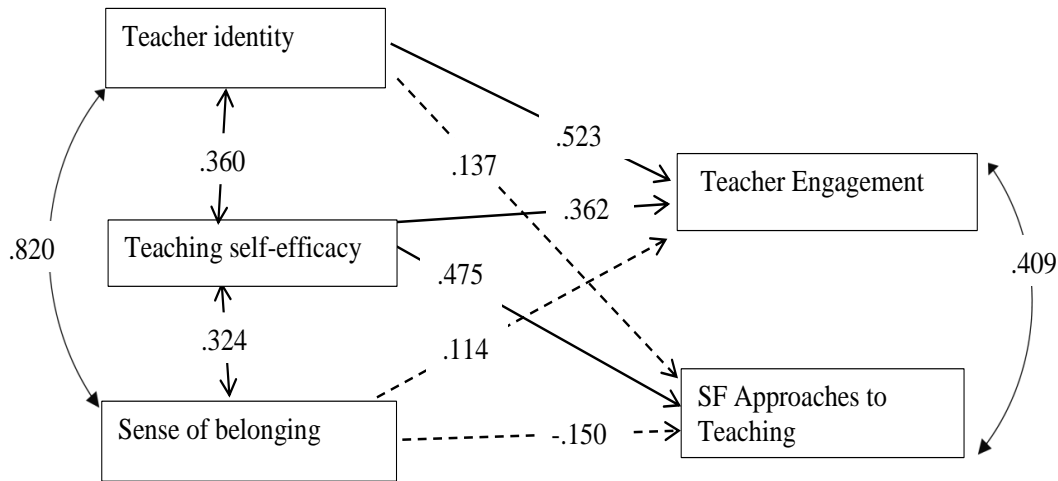


Figure 3-1: Path diagram of the model showing  $\beta$  coefficients and correlations for the full-time group. Standardized  $\beta$  coefficients are single arrow. Correlations are double arrow. Solid lines are significant ( $p < .05$ ). Dashed lines are non-significant ( $p = .05$ ).





*Figure 3-2:* Path diagram of the model showing  $\beta$  coefficients and correlations for the IPT group. Standardized  $\beta$  coefficients are single arrow. Correlations are double arrow. Solid lines are significant ( $p < .05$ ). Dashed lines are non-significant ( $p = .05$ ).



*Figure 3-3: Path diagram of the model showing  $\beta$  coefficients and correlations for the VPT group. Standardized  $\beta$  coefficients are single arrow. Correlations are double arrow. Solid lines are significant ( $p < .05$ ). Dashed lines are non-significant ( $p = .05$ ).*

## Discussion

The purpose of this study was to examine the influence of three important psychosocial variables on the teaching practices of early career college educators and determine differences based on employment status. Developing a model and using path analysis for its evaluation has the advantage of investigating the relationships between multiple independent and dependent variables (Stage et al., 2004). The results partially support the hypotheses that the psychosocial variables of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy and sense of belonging significantly predict the teacher engagement and student-focused approaches to teaching of college faculty in their first three years of teaching.

The descriptive statistics show that all employment status groups had relatively high levels of teacher identity, with scores around four on the five-point scale. This was somewhat surprising

given that the participants were all early in their teaching careers and much of the previous research indicates that identity shifts from being a professional to being a teacher over the first years of teaching (Levin & Hernandez, 2014; van Lankveld et al., 2017). For the full-time group, one reason for this may be that they had previous part-time teaching experience. They averaged three years of part-time experience and ranged from zero to fifteen years. For the part-time groups they had been teaching for an average of over one and a half years. Also, the demographic data indicated that the full-time group had more background related to training as a teacher. They reported 44.8% had training including an Adult Education Certificate, Bachelor of Ed., or Masters of Ed. This percent was less for the IPT group (37.5%) and even less for the VPT group (35.7%). This pedagogical training was not direct college teaching experience; however, this training may have raised their levels of teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy. Perhaps at this point the shift in identity is well underway. Likewise, teaching self-efficacy was moderately high (slightly over seven on the nine-point scale), and sense of belonging was moderate for all groups. For the outcome variables of student-focused approach to teaching and teacher engagement, the means were also moderately high for all groups.

Overall, the results of this study provide insights into the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging in relation to the transition to teaching for early career college educators. The model presented and assessed in this study showed these factors significantly predicted teacher engagement of full-time faculty. However, for part-time faculty the results were slightly different—identity and self-efficacy had significant effects on teacher engagement for both IPT and VPT faculty but belonging did not. At first this may seem surprising given the importance of belonging; however, part-time faculty have stated that they do not develop their sense of belonging with their institution or their peers, but rather with their students (Levin &

Hernandez, 2014; Thirolf, 2012). The items of the Sense of Belonging subscale used in this study generally asked about belonging to one's department, interacting with colleagues, and fitting in at work, but not about students. Given the findings of previous studies (Levin & Hernandez, 2014; Thirolf, 2012) it is likely that part-time faculty achieve their sense of belonging from the students, but this aspect of belonging was not tested by the measure used. In other words, sense of belonging as measured in this study does not contribute to teacher engagement for part-time faculty. Add to this the finding that social engagement with students was not significantly different between full-time and IPT or VPT, but social engagement with colleagues was different. The full-time group was more engaged with colleagues than both part-time groups and the IPT group was significantly more engaged with colleagues than the VPT group. It is probable that belonging is most related to these social dimensions of engagement, although this level of detail was not investigated in this study, it would be interesting for future research.

Although part-time faculty were less socially engaged with their colleagues, this does not discount the importance of collegial support. One item of interest on the belonging scale asked about getting support from colleagues when needed. This item stands out because its scores were negatively correlated with the other items on the scale, and its mean was low (a mean of 1.98 overall on the five-point Likert scale). This indicates that both part-time and full-time early career faculty did not feel adequately supported by their colleagues. Some reasons for this finding might be that faculty, regardless of their employment status, work in isolation or "silos", or with a sense of competition. This also suggests that there is room for improvement when it comes to informal collegial support and creating a culture of support for new faculty. Monk and McKay (2017), Roxå & Mårtensson (2009), and Cook-Sather and Felton (2017) have all stated the importance of informal mentoring, meaningful conversations about teaching and learning, and communities of

practice in connecting faculty with each other and building a connection to the institution, all of which can have an influence on students. In this study, two-thirds of full-time faculty reported having a mentor, whereas only one third of IPT and one quarter of VPT faculty reported having a mentor. In addition, full-time participants had a blend of formal mentors, informal mentors or both, but for both part-time groups the mentoring was nearly all informal. This suggests that further research is needed to more deeply examine the differences between, and factors contributing to, the sense of belonging for full- and part-time faculty. Understanding the intricacies of belonging will help those designing onboarding programs to develop belonging in new faculty in the best ways possible.

It was predicted that teacher identity would positively affect teacher engagement. A professional teacher identity results in teachers who are more committed, reflective, and innovative in their teaching (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; van Lankveld et al., 2017), and these teaching practices positively influence student learning (Abu-Alruz & Khasawneh, 2013; Nevgi & Löffström, 2015). Overall, work engagement influences job performance (Bakker & Bal, 2010), which, specifically in teaching, means that more engaged teachers will have more engaged students, which in turn influences student achievement and success (Nakamura & Csikszentmihalyi, 2005). The results of this study reveal that teacher identity had a positive effect on teacher engagement for both full-time and part-time faculty. In addition, when comparing the influence of the three psychosocial factors on teacher engagement, teacher identity had the largest effect. This finding builds on the work of Thirolf (2017) who stated that faculty identity was a crucial component to faculty engagement in part-time faculty. Given that identity has the greatest influence on teacher engagement it must have a place in onboarding of new faculty. Those responsible for faculty development programs and onboarding can incorporate ways for new faculty to explore and

develop their teacher identity in the early stages of teaching. Suggestions from the literature include teaching new faculty about pedagogical theories along with using reflection about one's teaching (Nevgi & Löffström, 2015), while recognizing that teacher identity takes time to develop (Murray et al., 2014).

Finally, the results of the model analysis illustrate the importance of early career faculty developing their teaching self-efficacy as it directly and significantly affected both teacher engagement and a student-focused approach to teaching for both full-time and part-time faculty. These findings expand on those of Klassen et al. (2013) and Perera et al. (2018b) who found a positive relationship between teaching self-efficacy and teacher engagement in elementary and secondary school teachers. The results also align with the work of Garganté et al. (2014) and Postareff et al. (2008) who found a positive correlation between teaching self-efficacy and a student-focused approach to teaching in university professors. Moreover, it is not surprising that teaching self-efficacy predicted a student-focused approach to teaching. Being a student-focused teacher requires the confidence to take risks and increase one's range of pedagogical practices (Behar-Horenstein, Hudson-Vassell, Roberts, & Zafar, 2013; Sadler, 2013). Garganté et al. (2014) found that university professors' student-focused approaches to teaching were correlated with their emotions related to their evaluation of themselves as teachers and to their emotions related to their performance as teachers. The model presented in this research goes beyond these previous studies and confirms that self-efficacy influences both teacher engagement and approaches to teaching. The implication therefore is to recognize the value in developing self-efficacy in the early years of teaching through faculty development initiatives, including learning about student-focused teaching. More specifically, research has shown that if institutions want faculty to use more student-centred approaches to teaching, they must provide them with opportunities to learn about student-

focused methods and develop their skillset and self-efficacy in using them (Fishback, Leslie, Peck, & Dietz, 2015).

### **Overlaps in the Psychosocial Variables**

As expected, there were significant relationships between the three psychosocial factors in the model for all three employment groups. The strongest relationship was that of identity with belonging. This finding is not surprising given the overlap between these constructs in the literature. For example, van Lankveld et al. (2017) determined that the teacher identity of university professors developed along with elements of belongingness and teaching self-efficacy. Identity was strengthened by a collegial and supportive work environment and a sense of connectedness to others in the workplace; as well, a sense of competence validated teacher identity. Furthermore, since all three factors are correlated, it can be assumed that by increasing one factor it is likely that the other factors will also be increased. Identity may be the more important factor as it most strongly predicted teacher engagement, and therefore, worth spending time on so that belonging and self-efficacy may also improve.

### **Domains of Engagement**

As discussed earlier, there were several salient points within the domains of engagement that warrant consideration. First of all, the cognitive, emotional, and social engagement of full-time faculty and IPT faculty were not significantly different. However, the cognitive engagement and emotional engagement of the VPT group was significantly lower than the both the IPT and the full-time group. These two types of engagement are related to the effort and enjoyment of teaching. To interpret these findings, consider the studies that look at the challenges of part-time work. Part-time teachers usually enjoy teaching but are stressed because of working in many places, some want a

full-time position, and they feel undervalued and under paid (Jolley, Cross & Bryant, 2014; Maynard & Joseph, 2008).

The social engagement with students showed only one significant difference—the IPT group was significantly higher than the VPT group. There were no significant differences between the full-timers and either group of part-timers. Although there is no clear reason for the IPT group to be higher, I postulate that they are most interested in their students because they are striving to attain a full-time position. The VPT group is more likely to be satisfied with their teaching job the way it is (Maynard & Joseph, 2008), and thus, less likely to spend extra time and energy engaging with students or colleagues.

Social engagement with colleagues is intriguing because as expected the full-time group was more engaged with their colleagues than both part-time groups, and the IPT group was more engaged with colleagues than the VPT group. The VPT group is most likely to have other commitments that they integrate with their college teaching (Maynard & Joseph, 2008) and therefore have less time to spend with colleagues. However, since relationships with colleagues enhance informal mentoring through significant conversations about teaching and learning it would serve colleges well to find ways to connect part-time faculty with their colleagues.

### **Implications**

This study presents new information about the constructs of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging, and their effects on teacher engagement and approaches to teaching in early career teaching. Furthermore, this research is the first to present these psychosocial factors in a model comparing the employment status groups of full-time, IPT, and VPT. The results of the model demonstrate the importance of these psychosocial factors to the teaching practices of new faculty and have implications for faculty onboarding and professional development. In particular, if



faculty developers are aiming to encourage new faculty to take a more student-focused approach to teaching they will want to look at ways to increase faculty teaching self-efficacy. Since teaching self-efficacy was correlated to both teacher identity and sense of belonging, it is probable that increasing any one factor will enhance the others. Likewise, the three psychosocial factors affected teacher engagement for full-time faculty and therefore, are important contributors to the transition to teaching. For both groups of part-time faculty, the model showed that belonging did not predict teacher engagement. It may be worth considering however, ways to improve belonging for part-timers, especially since belonging has such a strong relationship with identity, which does influence teacher engagement. Two suggestions from the literature that may enhance belonging include mentoring and building communities of practice (Banasik & Dean, 2016; Fleming, Simmons, Xu, Gesell, Brown, Cutrer, & Cooper, 2015; Remmik et al., 2011; Schönwetter & Nazarko, 2009).

Further, it is important for college administration, faculty developers, and those supporting new faculty to consider ways to offer opportunities for the development of a teacher identity for new faculty. This could involve activities such as developing a teaching portfolio and participating in communities of practice. The only difference in the model between employment groups was that for part-time faculty a sense of belonging was not a significant predictor of their work engagement, and so it appears to be more important to focus on part-time teachers' self-efficacy and teacher identity while continuing to recognize the interconnections between these three factors. For example, Tyndall (2017) found teaching self-efficacy was lower in adjunct university faculty with less than five years of experience and determined that new faculty desired opportunities to participate in professional teaching development and to connect with full-time colleagues as ways to increase their teaching self-efficacy.

Most importantly, the high explained variance of this model for all employment status groups demonstrates that the three psychosocial factors play a large role in contributing to teacher engagement and student-focused teaching. This brings the value of these psychosocial factors to light and fills a gap in the literature about the affective development of early career educators.

### **Limitations and Strengths of the Study**

Limitations of this study include self-selection bias, as all participants volunteered for the study and could have been interested in this study because they were inherently more engaged in their work or student-focused in their teaching. Furthermore, the scales were self-rated and thus may lead to over-estimation of one's level on any of the variables. This study took place at one point in time and did not include any consideration of changes over time.

A strength of this study is that it took place at 20 of the 22 English speaking colleges and institutes across Ontario. This resulted in a broad sample from colleges of all sizes and geographic regions, making the results more generalizable. Another strength of the study was the high level of explained variance from the model, which illustrates the strength of this model.

### **Future Research**

In this research I showed the importance of the psychosocial factors in the early years of teaching; however, I did not consider different discipline groups. The findings of this research should be expanded on by further testing of the model to determine differences based on discipline. Future research could more fully examine the differences between full-time and part-time faculty with regards to their belonging to better understand why belonging predicts teacher engagement for full-time faculty, but not for part-time faculty. Another consideration is to examine this model more fully using a large sample from each group and testing the model fit rather than only the coefficients in the model. It would also be helpful to know more about the belonging of part-time

faculty, why it does not contribute to the model, and what may increase their belonging. Working with both IPT and VPT faculty to assess their belongingness before and after interventions such as mentoring programs or communities of practice would contribute further to this line of research.

### **Conclusion**

This study provided a glance at the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging, and their effect on teacher engagement and student-focused approaches to teaching. Brought together in a conceptual model differences were detected between full-time and part-time faculty. Although part-time faculty were divided between IPT and VPT, the model was not significantly different between these two groups. In addition, only teaching self-efficacy predicted a student centred approach to teaching for all three employment status groups. A closer look at the outcome variables showed that employment status had an effect on teacher engagement but not approaches to teaching. Taken together, these findings suggest that there are strong implications for deliberately including activities to develop teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging in new faculty as a means to facilitate their transition to their new teaching role.

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## Chapter 4: Conclusion

In this concluding section, I integrate the findings from the two papers presented in this dissertation, limitations of the research, possible future directions, and a personal reflection about this research. My goal with this project was to learn more about the experiences of new college faculty so that their transition to teaching could be understood in ways that would lead to providing the supports they need to feel successful in their new role, best develop their teaching practices, and thereby positively influence student learning. This group of post-secondary educators generally begin their teaching career with several years of work experience in their discipline, but little teaching experience. Nonetheless, they take on the task of teaching the next generation of professionals in their discipline in a post-secondary system that relies heavily on the value of effective teaching.

The primary questions that initiated my research were: What shapes the teaching of early career college faculty? How can we learn more about the transition to teaching and how to support new college educators? and What factors contribute to the teaching effectiveness of early career college educators? After considering these ideas and reviewing the existing literature, I refined these questions to specifically investigate the influence of three psychosocial factors in early career teaching, namely; teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging and how these factors influenced teacher engagement and approaches to teaching, and whether they differed between full-time and part-time faculty. The findings were presented in two papers. First, I recap the findings from each paper and then I discuss the integrated findings and implications more holistically.



## Summary of Paper One

In the first paper, I presented findings from my mixed methods investigation of the effect of employment status on the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging in Ontario college faculty in their first three years of teaching. The results showed that the constructs of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging are interwoven and yet distinct. There were significant correlations between all of the variables. Most notable was the high correlation between teacher identity and belonging for all three employment status groups. Generally, all three groups had moderate to high levels of teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy, and moderate sense of belonging on the quantitative measures. It was somewhat surprising that identity and teaching self-efficacy were high, as participants were all in the early stages of their college teaching careers. However, considering that many of the full-time faculty had spent several years as part-timers before securing a full-time position, and the part-timers had an average of over one year of college teaching experience at the time the data was gathered, they may have been well on their way to acquiring teacher identity and self-efficacy. There were clear differences between the employment status groups for teacher identity and sense of belonging, with the full-time group having the highest levels followed by the IPT group, and then the VPT group. Teaching self-efficacy was less clear with the only significant difference being the full-time group was significantly higher than the VPT group.

Furthermore, the focus group data contributed the voices of early career faculty and thus provided some possible explanations for the quantitative results. For example, many participants in the full-time group described their identity shifting toward a teacher identity; whereas, the IPT stated they were slowly integrating a teacher identity, and the VPT group expressed an ongoing connection to their non-teaching professional identities. The participants in all groups described

gaining confidence and increasing their teaching self-efficacy as they acquired more teaching experience, a finding that is consistent with the literature (Hemmings, 2015). Having a sense of belonging was more evident in the full-time group who had higher scores on the quantitative measure and described their interactions with mentors, administrators, and colleagues as positive influences on their teaching practices. For the IPT group, who had aspirations of becoming full-time, many stated that they tried to engage as much as possible with college activities that were extraneous to teaching, such as meetings and social events. On the other hand, the VPT group, who did not intend to attain a full-time position, stated they found their belonging primarily came from spending time in the classroom with their students, not from their colleagues nor the institution. It seems reasonable, therefore, that full-time faculty will adopt a teaching identity, have increased teaching self-efficacy, and increased sense of belonging based solely on the number of hours per week spent in the classroom and at the college. Whether they are IPT or VPT, part-time faculty have other commitments that limit their time at their college and any time there is often spent with students, and not with colleagues.

One key and unexpected finding was the ubiquitous positive expression of the joy of teaching. While this topic was not inquired about directly, participants in all focus groups described their enjoyment and enthusiasm for sharing their love of their discipline with their students. This was clearly a large part of their sense of belonging and as Thirolf (2013) described, the love of teaching is part of teacher identity. Further, when you enjoy something it is more likely that you have developed competence in it and, thus, self-efficacy. This is especially important in the Ontario college setting where teaching is the primary responsibility of faculty.

Another theme that emerged from the focus groups was that of support—both good support and how it was lacking. Faculty in all groups discussed the challenges of part-time work and the

frustrations involved. The direct implication is that faculty orientation and ongoing support could be improved especially for the part-time groups.

This study was an initial examination of the psychosocial factors involved in the transition to teaching for early career college educators. Although these psychosocial factors have been studied previously in some higher education settings, this study adds to the literature by providing insights into the relationships between these factors and the differences that exist between full-time and part-time groups in college settings.

### **Summary of Paper Two**

In the second paper, I presented a conceptual model that predicted the influence of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging on the teaching practices of early career faculty. Teaching practices were measured using two outcome variables known to positively influence student learning—teacher engagement and a student-focused approach to teaching. The model analysis showed differences between the full-time and part-time faculty on the predictors of teacher engagement but not student-focused approaches to teaching. The model did not differ between the two part-time groups (IPT and VPT). For the full-time group, all three psychosocial factors predicted teaching engagement; whereas the part-time groups' teaching engagement was predicted by teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy, but not by belonging. Another key finding in the model analysis was that for all three employment status groups, the only predictor of a student-focused approach to teaching was teaching self-efficacy. This aligns with Behar-Horenstein, Hudson-Vassell, Roberts, and Safar (2013) and Sadler (2013) who suggested that teachers with greater teaching self-efficacy are more likely to take chances in their teaching and risk moving away from simply providing content delivery.

Looking further at the variable of teacher engagement the differences between the employment status groups was intriguing. First, overall teacher engagement was significantly lower for the VPT group, as were all the domains of teacher engagement. In addition, the IPT group was not significantly different from the full-time group on overall engagement, or the cognitive, emotional, or social engagement with students domains. This can be interpreted as the IPT group being more like full-timers in terms of their teacher engagement than like fellow part-timers who do not want a full-time position (VPT). In other words, the IPT group may engage more strongly as teachers since they are aiming for a full-time position. It is possible that this finding is related to their higher levels of teacher identity and self-efficacy, both of which predicted teacher engagement in the model. Thirolf (2013) concluded that identity was an essential consideration in her model of faculty engagement for part-time faculty. Finally, for the domain labeled social engagement with colleagues, it was not surprising that the full-time group scored the highest, followed by the IPT group, and then the VPT group. In much of the literature, studies have described how part-time faculty are negatively affected by isolating circumstances and non-supportive work conditions (van Lankenveld, Schoonenboom, Volman, Croiset & Beishuizen, 2017).

Analysis of the approaches to teaching showed there were no differences between the employment status groups on either the student-focused approaches to teaching or the teacher-focused approach to teaching. The levels were moderately high for both approaches.

Implications of this study include finding ways to increase belonging for part-time faculty, as well as implementing strategies for faculty development that develop any of the three factors. It also proves beneficial to establish teaching self-efficacy in the early years of teaching since it directly predicted student-focused approaches to teaching.

## Overall Findings

The psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and a sense of belonging proved to be interconnected and they significantly predicted teacher engagement in full-time faculty. For part-time faculty, teacher identity and teaching self-efficacy predicted teacher engagement, but belonging did not. Additionally, teaching self-efficacy significantly predicted a student-focused approach to teaching for all three employment status groups. Although similar findings have been described in the literature based on research in university settings (Chang, Lin, & Song, 2011; Nevgi & L fstr m, 2015) these factors had not been collectively studied in a model nor in the context of college faculty. Furthermore, my research adds to this body of literature by explaining these relationships based on employment status.

Full-time faculty had higher levels of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, belonging, and overall engagement, followed by the IPT group then the VPT group. Interestingly, the IPT group did not differ significantly from the full-time group on any of these measures. This may mean that they mimic full-timers in their work habits and commitments. The only domain of engagement on which the IPT group differed from the full-time group was the social engagement with colleagues; they did not differ on the other domains (cognitive, emotional or social engagement with students). Again, the VPT group was lower than both the IPT group and the full-timers. The focus group discussions shed light on this finding. Both part-time focus groups, but especially the VPT group described lower levels of interactions with their college peers. The IPT group described more interactions with colleagues since they expressed interest in, attempted to attend, and sometimes attended social functions and meetings within their departments or the college in general.

Furthermore, the strong relationship between identity and belonging provides important insights into the necessity of developing and enhancing both teacher identity and a sense of

belonging for all new faculty, regardless of employment status. Focus group participants described ways that their sense of belonging was enhanced such as having a dedicated space to work in like a desk or office, as well as having name tags or ID cards. These strategies are likely to enhance both belonging and teacher identity. On a related note, both full- and part-time faculty focus groups commented in the focus groups that using the title “professor” somehow seemed odd at first, and perhaps even undeserving. However, over time this title developed into a sense of pride and belonging. This supports the findings of Korhonen & Törmä (2016) who described the experiences of university faculty developing their teacher identity over the course of their career.

The results of my research add to the growing body of literature on part-time faculty and their working conditions. Speaking to the challenges of part-time faculty, my research confirmed that they experience barriers to belonging and they especially seem disconnected from their colleagues, departments, and institutions. This was especially evident in the qualitative findings wherein part-time faculty clearly stated that they acquired their sense of belonging in the classroom and from their students, but not necessarily from their colleagues, departments, or institutions. That being said, many part-timers stated they would like to be invited to meetings and be included in professional development opportunities and social events as these would increase their sense of belonging. Yet, my findings indicated that there will likely always be part-time faculty who “show up, teach, and leave” as stated by one part-time participant. The tenuous work conditions of part-timers are such that they have other commitments, other employment, and may not have time for extra, and usually unpaid, activities. These findings support those reported by Levin and Hernandez (2014) and Thirolf (2013) who found that the teacher identity of part-time faculty was negatively affected by a lack of interactions with colleagues.

Finally, when considering the experiences of the new faculty in my study, I can draw on transformative learning theory for insight. As described by Blake in the opening of this dissertation, the goal of new faculty is to gain competence in their new role. It is clear that for many faculty in my study, the early years of teaching had aspects of a disorienting dilemma. For example, this comment from Lydia during the focus group “I was just thrown in the deep end, first semester of teaching you have a teaching load that seems impossible to manage”. According to Mezirow (2012) and Brookfield (2002), reflection, especially with others in a similar situation, is a valuable means to reconciling initial dilemmas and increasing confidence and competence in ones’ new role. This means new faculty need opportunities to collaborate with colleagues, participate in onboarding sessions that allow reflection, and be supported by experienced faculty through mentoring activities. Working through these phases of transformational learning will theoretically lead to not only new competence but also a deep shift in perspective, which in my study means an enhanced sense of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging in the new role of college educator. With these psychosocial factors enhanced, the teaching practices of teacher engagement and student-focused approach to teaching are positively affected. Not only do faculty benefit from feelings of competence and self-efficacy in their role, but students also benefit from these teaching practices which influence student learning.

### **Overall Implications**

Overall, the implications of my research are directly related to acknowledging the importance of the affective aspects of teaching in the early careers of college educators. As shown by the data, while the constructs of teacher identity, enhanced belonging, and increased teaching self-efficacy are interrelated, each plays an important, but separate, role in the teaching practices of new faculty. This suggests that each of these psychosocial factors warrants particular attention

during the onboarding and orientation of new faculty. Some ways to enhance teacher identity include developing a teaching philosophy and teaching portfolio. Enhancing belonging comes from interacting with other new and experienced faculty, sensing their support, and having private spaces to meet with students outside the classroom. Self-efficacy develops through time in the classroom, but also through participation in teacher professional learning activities such as workshops on pedagogical practices, which also enhance belonging and identity. The connections between these three factors imply that when one factor is enhanced, it is anticipated that the others will be enhanced as well. It is also likely that faculty development initiatives influence more than one factor. For example, attending professional development opportunities alongside full-time colleagues potentially influences sense of belonging, as well as teaching self-efficacy, and teacher identity. One main suggestion is for those who organize onboarding activities and professional development is to recognize the importance of each of the three psychosocial factors and consider how each of these factors are addressed in the professional learning they offer.

In addition to studying these three psychosocial factors, my research also investigated how they predicted teacher engagement and student focused approaches to teaching. Teacher engagement is important to student learning because it is likely that the more engaged teachers are, the more engaged their students will be (Lancaster & Lundberg, 2019; Rhoades, 2012) In addition, teachers with higher levels of work engagement have greater job satisfaction and commitment to their organizations (Li, Wang, Gao, & You, 2017) . Therefore, to increase their engagement, new faculty need well designed onboarding and professional development opportunities that incorporate ways to enhance teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and belonging.

Moreover, it is well documented that a student-focused approach to teaching is directly related to deeper student learning and is considered a more desirable teaching approach (Nerland &



Prøitz, 2018; Trigwell, 2012). My research found that a student-focused approach to teaching was predicted by teaching self-efficacy. It follows, then, that learning opportunities which enhance teaching self-efficacy will likely enhance the development of a more student-focused approach to teaching. I reiterate the suggestion made by Fishback, Leslie, Peck, and Dietz (2015) who stated that if colleges want new faculty to embrace a student-focused approach to teaching, they need to educate them early about the benefits and the strategies of this approach.

My research also found that the transition to teaching for new college educators takes time. Although they had moderately high self-rated identity and self-efficacy, numerous comments from focus group participants indicated they felt their identity and self-efficacy were developing as they spent more time in the classroom. It is possible that participants overrated their levels of these variables on the self-rated instruments and that the focus group discussions more realistically portrayed the experiences of new faculty. Accordingly, developing teacher identity appeared to slowly take place as new college educators gradually shifted away from their previous professional identity and took on their new teacher identity. This transition appeared to take more time for part-time faculty, and understandably so given that they do not spend as much time as full-timers teaching courses. Likewise, Postareff & Lindblom-Ylance (2011) found that teaching identity shifted slowly for part-time faculty, along with Hemmings (2015) who found that the acquisition of teaching identity from professional identity was difficult for new part-time faculty.

Finally, during the focus groups, there was much discussion about the lack of support for new faculty, particularly part-timers. As is typical in the Ontario college system, many of the full-time participants had taught part-time before securing their current positions. Even though they now had full-time teaching positions, many discussed the struggles they faced during part-time teaching. Bakley and Brodersen (2018) found that part-time faculty face considerable barriers to belonging.

Along with dedicated workspace and opportunities for professional development, one support strategy mentioned frequently in the literature, as well as by participants in my study is the role of mentoring (Cooley & De Gagne, 2016; Hemmings, 2015). Both formal and informal mentoring have proven to be valuable support for new faculty. I found that full-time faculty were more likely to have had a mentor and part-time faculty desired more mentoring. Since part-timers have lower sense of belonging and mentoring is especially effective for enhancing belonging for faculty, it makes sense for colleges to find ways to increase mentoring for part-time faculty.

### **Limitations to this research**

This research was conducted in 20 colleges and institutes across Ontario and, as such, provides a wide cross-sectional perspective; however, there are some limitations to this study. All the participants were volunteers and may be different from new faculty who did not volunteer. They may have been inherently more interested in expressing their ideas about their transition to becoming a college educator or, because many did not have a strong sense of belonging, they may simply have wanted to be heard.

The sample size in my study was quite large and focused on the views of Ontario college faculty. The findings are generalizable to this population but generalizing to other post-secondary populations or locations is limited. In addition, although demographic data was collected about participants discipline, educational backgrounds, and mentoring experiences, analysis was not conducted using these factors as variables or covariates as this was not the focus of my research and would require greater sample size in some of the disciplines and backgrounds in order to complete appropriate analyses. Furthermore, the inclusion criteria for my study was three or fewer years of teaching in one's current role. Perhaps one reason for the relatively high levels of self-efficacy and

teacher identity were due to the teaching experience already accumulated by the participants which my study did not take into consideration.

One strength of this study is the mixed method design which provides the benefit of integrating qualitative data with quantitative data. The analyses of the focus group data provided a description of the ways in which faculty felt supported during their transitions to becoming college educators, and places where support was lacking. This insight provides a deeper understanding of the challenges faced by early career college educators and the strategies that could potentially be successful in meeting these challenges.

### **Future Directions**

This research is a first to explore the psychosocial aspects of the transition to teaching in early career college educators and has raised important questions for future research. An investigation of the differences across disciplines or educational backgrounds was not the focus of my research but is worthy of future consideration. For example, one could explore differences between faculty with skilled trade backgrounds, those from other professions, and those with limited professional/industrial experience as these different new faculty may have different experiences in their identity, self-efficacy, belonging, teacher engagement, or approach to teaching.

My research considered early career educators to be in their first three years of teaching. There may be more to unearth about the early careers of college educators by breaking this time frame down to analyze the experiences of new faculty in their first year of teaching compared to those in second or third years. Breaking down this early career stage may provide more insight into the development of these psychosocial factors and their influences on teaching practices.

In addition, researchers could extend the time frame and conduct a longitudinal exploration of the transition to college teaching, investigating how the constructs of teacher identity, teaching

self-efficacy, and sense of belonging evolve and change over several years, possibly into mid-career. Furthermore, the model of the transition to teaching developed in this research could possibly be refined by testing it with other populations such as university professors or by comparing university educators with college educators.

### **Final conclusion**

I completed this dissertation in the integrated article format with the intention of publishing the findings in journals of higher education focusing on faculty development. This research contributes to the literature by establishing the importance of the psychosocial factors of teacher identity, teaching self-efficacy, and sense of belonging to the teaching practices of faculty in their early careers. In addition, it highlights differences between full-time and part-time faculty, who are comprised of both voluntary part-time and involuntary part-time. The findings of this research suggest that onboarding and orientation programs for new college faculty should deliberately include opportunities for development of these psychosocial factors. Finally, the needs of new faculty, both full-time and part-time can be better met through considering the value of these factors to their early career experiences.

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<https://doi.org/10.1080/07294360.2016.1208154>

## Early Career Faculty Research Project

### Focus Group Interview Guide

Describe what we do to keep information confidential, and ask group to also keep what is said confidential.

Split by level of education, by discipline and by part vs full time

Eg no training as teacher, trades, full time, no training as teacher, trades, part time, b ed/ m ed or higher, trades, full time, b ed/ m ed or higher, trades, part time.

No training as teacher, STEM, full time, no training as teacher, STEM, part time, b ed/ m ed or higher, STEM, part time, b ed/ m ed or higher, STEM full time.

No training as teacher, arts/humanities, full time, no training as teacher, arts/humanities, part time, b ed/ m ed or higher, arts/humanities, part time, b ed/ m ed or higher, arts/humanities full time.

Prior to the focus group, each participant will receive the letter of information by email, along with 6 demographic questions (see Focus group letter of information and Focus group recruitment email).

Focus groups will take place on an online platform using Blackboard Collaborate. At the beginning of the focus group, the moderator will read the letter of information to each participant and the statements of consent will be verified.

#### Moderator Script and Possible Interview Questions

Welcome everyone to this focus group. I am Kathryn Hansen; (Moderator will facilitate participant introductions). Thank you for volunteering to spend your time helping with this research on early career faculty and the transition to teaching in community college. The purpose of this focus group is to discuss your experiences in your early years as a college educator. I will be asking some general questions, and I invite you to discuss the questions freely, amongst the group. Before we start, do you have any questions for me?

1. Please describe your experience in the first few years of teaching at the college level.  
What things did you find most exciting or challenging?
2. Has your professional identity changed over the course of your teaching career so far? If so, how has it changed?
3. Has your self-efficacy/ confidence in teaching changed over the course of your teaching career? What would you say influences your confidence in teaching?
4. In what ways do you feel that you belong or don't belong as a member of the faculty at your college?  
What would you say influences your sense of belonging to the college faculty?
5. Do you think that your sense of belonging, confidence in teaching, or identity as a teacher impact your teaching? If so, how?
6. Do you have anything you would like to add to the discussion before we sign off?

Thank you very much for participating in this focus group! Your opinions and suggestions are going to be very helpful. Again, everything you said today will be held confidential by the research team. We will not use any names when we discuss what you have told us. I will send you a gift certificate for \$20 from Chapters-Indigo as an expression of our gratitude. Thanks again for your help today!





## Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board

## NMREB Delegated Initial Approval Notice

**Principal Investigator:** Dr. Ken Meadows

**Department & Institution:** Student Services\Teaching Support Centre, Western University

**NMREB File Number:** I08750

**Study Title:** Early career college faculty: A model of work engagement and approaches to teaching

**NMREB Initial Approval Date:** January 23, 2017

**NMREB Expiry Date:** January 23, 2018

**Documents Approved and/or Received for Information:**

Document Name	Comments	Version Date
Instruments	Focus Group Interview Guide	2017/01/23
Recruitment Items	Focus Group Recruitment Email	2017/01/23
Letter of Information & Consent		2017/01/23
Instruments	Early Career Faculty Questionnaire (including LOI)	2016/12/21
Western University Protocol	Received January 22, 2017	
Recruitment Items	Recruitment Email - Questionnaire	2016/11/17
Instruments	Incentive and Focus Group Survey	2016/11/17

The Western University Non-Medical Research Ethics Board (NMREB) has reviewed and approved the above named study, as of the NMREB Initial Approval Date noted above.

NMREB approval for this study remains valid until the NMREB Expiry Date noted above, conditional to timely submission and acceptance of NMREB Continuing Ethics Review.

The Western University NMREB operates in compliance with the Tri-Council Policy Statement Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans (TCPS2), the Ontario Personal Health Information Protection Act (PHIPA, 2004), and the applicable laws and regulations of Ontario.

Members of the NMREB who are named as Investigators in research studies do not participate in

discussions related to, nor vote on such studies when they are presented to the REB.

The NMREB is registered with the U.S. Department of Health & Human Services under the IRB registration number IRB 00000941.

Ethics \_\_\_\_\_, on behalf of Dr. R1 \_\_\_\_\_, NMREB Chair or delegated board member

Ethics Officer: Erika Basile \_ Nicole Kaniki \_ Grace Kelly \_ Katelyn Harris\_ Nicola Geoghegan-Morphel \_ Karen Gopaul \_

**Western University, Research**, Support Services Bldg., Rm. 5150  
London, ON, Canada N6G1G9 t. 519.661.3036 f. 519.850.2466 [www.uwo.ca/research/ethics](http://www.uwo.ca/research/ethics)

## Curriculum Vitae

### Education

#### **PhD Candidate, Educational Psychology**

University of Western Ontario; Sept 2013- present

Dissertation title: Early career college faculty: A model of work engagement and approaches to teaching

#### **Master of Education, Educational Studies- Educational Psychology/Special Education**

University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario; June 2013

Thesis title: College instructors' preparedness to teach students with learning disabilities

#### **Honours Bachelor of Science, Kinesiology**

University of Waterloo, Waterloo, Ontario; 1986

Honours research project: The electromyography of muscles during the transition from walking to running.

### Professional Development/ Certifications

**Certificate:** Tri-Council Policy Statement Course on Research Ethics: Ethical Conduct for Research Involving Humans

#### **Certificate in University Teaching and Learning**

University of Western Ontario, London, Ontario, 2015

#### **Instructional Skills Workshop**

St. Clair College of Applied Arts and Technology, Windsor, Ontario, 2008

**College Educator Development Program**, Ontario Western Region Colleges, June 2014

### Teaching Experience

#### **St. Clair College, 2006-present**

Taught in the following program areas/courses:

Developmental Service Worker- Health and Health Lab, Developmental Disabilities, Field Placement

Educational Support- Child Development, Students with Exceptionalities, Personal Care and

Pharmacology, Field Placement

Bachelor of Science Nursing- Anatomy Labs

Pre-Health Science- Anatomy and Physiology Labs, Statistics

Practical Nursing- Biology, Biology Labs

Esthetician – Human Anatomy

Occupational Therapy Assistant/Physiotherapy Assistant – Gerontology

#### **Western University, Faculty of Education**

Bachelor of Education program, Sept 2015

Course taught: Special Education and Inclusion

#### **Guest lecturer, Western University, Faculty of Music. July, 2015**

Lecturer for the Music Education Graduate class, Music education in inclusive contexts, on the topic of universal designs for learning.

Scholarly Activities: Publications and Conference Presentations

**Hansen, K. D.**, Dawson, D. L., (submitted for publication) "I think we could do better": College faculty preparedness for teaching students with learning disabilities.

Dawson, D., Meadows, K., Kustra, E., & **Hansen, K.D.**, (submitted for publication) Perceptions of Institutional Teaching Culture by Tenured, Tenure-track, and Sessional Faculty.

**Hansen, K.D.** (2019) Into the Fire: Psychosocial factors and the transition to teaching for early career college educators. Presented at the American Educational Research Association (AERA) Toronto, April, 2019.

**Hansen, K.D.** & Copfer-Terreberry, S. (October, 2018) Preparing Students with LD for Post-Secondary Education: Strategies and Tips for Students, Teachers, and Parents. Presentation at the Council for Exceptional Children Ontario Conference, Toronto, ON

**Hansen, K.D.** & Copfer-Terreberry, S. (August, 2018) Preparing high school students for post-secondary education: How teachers can help close the gap. Conference workshop presentation at LD@School Conference, Mississauga, ON

**Hansen, K.D.** (April, 2018) Early Career College Faculty: A model of faculty engagement in early career teaching. Paper presentation at the Robert MacMillan Graduate Research in Education Symposium, Western University, London, ON

**Hansen, K.D.**, Dawson, D. L., & Specht, J. A. (2017) Faculty Preparedness to Teach Students with Learning Disabilities: Developing an Instrument to Assess Faculty Perceptions. *Exceptionality Education International*, 27, 99-115. <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/eei/vol27/iss1/6>

**Hansen, K.D.** (June, 2017) Culture, transition, and transformation: Becoming a college educator. Poster presentation at STLHE, Halifax, NS

**Hansen, K.** (June, 2016) Am I married to my job or just engaged? A model of faculty engagement in early career teaching, Paper presentation at STLHE, London, ON

Currie-Patterson, N., **Hansen, K.**, Dare, L., Melabiotis, I., Myers, P., & Nagle, J. (June, 2016) Reflecting on threshold concepts as a framework for building a community of learners in doctoral education. Poster presentation at STLHE, London, ON.

**Hansen, K.** (Feb, 2015) Identity, belonging, and self-efficacy in early career college educators: What is the relationship to faculty approaches to teaching and work engagement? Poster presentation at Educational Developers Caucus, Windsor, ON

**Hansen, K.** and Copfer-Terreberry, S. (May, 2015) *Are faculty prepared to teach students with LD? Developing instruments to measure faculty and student perception.* Paper presentation at the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education Conference, University of Ottawa, Ottawa, ON.

**Hansen, K.** (May, 2015) *Students as collaborators in learning-using peer assessment for lab skills.* Workshop presentation at Canadian Association of Continuing Care Educators Conference, Windsor, ON

**Hansen, K.** (May, 2014) *Community college instructors' preparedness to teach students with learning disabilities* Invited address at the Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education Conference, Brock University, St. Catharines, ON.

**Hansen, K.,** Dishke Honzel, C., McArthur, M. (August, 2013) *Creativity and the Environment* Invited presentation- Guest researchers, University of Turku, Turku, Finland.

Dishke Honzel, C., **Hansen, K.,** McArthur, M. and Gulliksen, M. (August, 2013) CREN: Creativity and the Environment research meeting, Hogskolen i Telemark, Nottoden, Norway.

**Hansen, K. D.,** "College instructors' preparedness to teach students with learning disabilities" (2013). *Electronic Thesis and Dissertation Repository.* 1244. <http://ir.lib.uwo.ca/etd/1244>

**Hansen, K.** (April, 2013) *Accessible College Education: The role of instructor preparation for teaching students with learning disabilities* Centre for Inclusive Education Research Hour Presentation, University of Western Ontario, London, ON

**Hansen, K.** (March, 2013) *I think we can do better: College instructors' preparedness to teach students with learning disabilities* Poster presented at Inter-Faculty Research Day, Western University, London, ON

Hansen, R., Dishke Honzel, C., Boccazar, B., Colgan, A., **Hansen, K.** and Schmalz, K. (March, 2013) *Human Ingenuity Research Group: Parental perceptions of children's creative behaviours,* Poster presented at Inter-Faculty Research Day, Western University, London, ON

**Hansen, K.** (November, 2012) *Community college instructors' perceptions: Are they prepared to teach students with learning disabilities?* Ontario Council for Exceptional Children 56<sup>th</sup> Annual Special Education Conference, Niagara Falls, ON

**Hansen, K.** (May, 2012) *Community college instructors' preparedness to teach students with learning disabilities.* Roundtable presented at the Canadian Society for Study in Education (CSSE) Conference, Waterloo, ON

**Hansen, K.** (March, 2012) *Are community college instructors' prepared to teach students with learning disabilities?* Abstract poster presented at Inter-Faculty Research Day, UWO, London, ON

Hansen, R., Dishke Honzel, C., Boccazar, B., Colgan, A., **Hansen, K.** and Schmalz, K. (April, 2012) *Human ingenuity comparative study: Canadian and Norwegian results of the Torrance test of creative thinking.* Poster presented at the Inter-Faculty Research Day, UWO, London, ON

**Hansen, K.** (1997) Hippotherapy as a Means of Improving Gross Motor Function in Children with Cerebral Palsy, in Engel, B.T. Ed. *Rehabilitation with the Aid of a Horse: A Collection of Studies*. Durango, CO: Barbara Engel Therapy Services; 1997:233-240.

#### Presentations at Professional Meetings/Workshops

Hansen, K. (2011-present) New Faculty Orientation, St. Clair College, Windsor, ON.

*Classroom Management: Sanity and Success*

*Creative Classroom Management*

*Light the flame for learning*

Hansen, K (March, 2016) Staff training seminar for Anishinabek Education Institute, Collingwood, ON.

*Mapping and Curriculum Development*

*Challenges in the Classroom*

Hansen, K. (Nov, 2015; Jan 2016) Staff/Faculty training seminar, Ace Acumen Academy, Toronto, ON

*Creative Classroom Management*

*Student Engagement in the 21<sup>st</sup> Century*

Hansen, K. (July, 2014) Western Certificate in University Teaching Learning Future Professor Series, London, ON

*Universal Design for Learning: Reaching a diverse group of learners*

#### Recognition

Ontario Graduate Scholarship, University of Western Ontario, PhD in Education; May 2015-April 2016; May 2014-April 2015. \$15,000 annually.

Canadian Society for the Study of Higher Education, National Award for Outstanding Master's Thesis; May 2014.

Northern Science Training Program Grant, University of Western Ontario; June- August 2013. \$2000

W.A. Townshend Gold Medal in Education, University of Western Ontario, Faculty of Education, Master's of Education; June 2013.

Centre for Inclusive Education Research Award, University of Western Ontario, Faculty of Education, January 2012. \$750

#### **Other professional roles in higher education**

##### **College Educator Development Program Facilitator**

St Clair College in collaboration with Ontario Western Region Colleges

Sept 2015-present

Present workshops and seminars to new faculty from six Western Region colleges and mentor new faculty.

Topics include writing a teaching philosophy, developing a teaching portfolio, universal design for learning, classroom management, student engagement, active learning, effective use of rubrics.

**Research Ethics Board, 2018-present, Vice-Chair 2018-present, St. Clair College**

**Coordinator for Native Studies Programs, St. Clair College/Anishinabek Education Institute**

Collaborate with AEI personnel for the effective delivery of St. Clair College programs at the AEI postsecondary education sites.

**Curriculum and Mapping Coordinator, St. Clair College**

Windsor, ON

January 2014- January 2015

Supported faculty to complete academic program reviews, course outline development, mapping course and program learning outcomes

**Conference committee work**

Annual St Clair College R and R Faculty Retreat Day, organizing committee member, 2016-present

Society for Teaching and Learning in Higher Education Conference, London, June 2016

Volunteer organizing committee member

Educational Developers Caucus Annual Conference, Windsor, Feb. 2015

Volunteer Organizing Committee Chair

Proposal reviewer

**Research Assistant, Western University,**

London, ON

Sept 2011- Aug 2013

Human Ingenuity Research Group: Creative thinking in children in Canada, Norway, and Finland

Jan- April 2015

Positive psychology attributes in university students,

Literature research and review

**Copy Editor, Teaching Innovation Projects (TIPS) Journal, Western University,**

London, ON, Sept- Dec 2014