# “I can do this, right”: Understanding the perceived self-efficacy of educators in teaching refugee and immigrant minors online.

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*Word count: 41,375*

'I, Mickel Kenneth Wallace Johnson, confirm that the work presented in this thesis is my own. Where information has been derived from other sources, I confirm that this has been indicated in the thesis.'

## Acknowledgements

*I want to dedicate this doctoral thesis to R.J. and A.J., whose love, support, tolerance, and encouragement kept me going all those early mornings and late nights. I want to thank my supervisors for helping me get started and eventually reach the finish line. I want to thank my friends near and far whose laughter and fun gave me a much-needed respite from the computer screen. And lastly, I'd like to thank my mother, H.J., whose warm embrace, home cooking, and light nagging gave me the strength and determination to fight through self-doubt and fear many times.*
*Te quiero mucho, Mamá. And to my late father. Your boy did it, and you can rest now!*

***All** lives won't matter until **Black** Lives Matter*

## Abstract

During the COVID-19 pandemic, educational institutions, including primary and secondary schools, hastily transitioned to online learning platforms to ensure educational continuity. Simultaneously, crises like the forced displacement and resettlement of vulnerable populations persisted, driven by contemporary and historical geopolitical tensions. Amidst this complex backdrop, teachers were implicitly tasked with swiftly exhibiting confidence and competence in delivering effective online education to students from refugee or immigrant backgrounds while adhering to physical distancing measures.

This research seeks to comprehend the multifaceted factors that both contribute to and challenge the perceived self-efficacy of primary and secondary educators in effectively teaching minors with refugee and immigrant backgrounds in an online setting. Additionally, the study aims to delve into teachers' perspectives on how this self-efficacy can be nurtured through the involvement of educational psychologists (EPs) while identifying the obstacles and facilitators within successful online instruction. Fifteen educators from primary and secondary levels participated in semi-structured interviews, utilising a modified online adaptation of the "talking stones" technique (Wearmouth, 2004). Thematic analysis was employed to scrutinise participants' responses. The implications of these findings extend to school staffing and educational psychology practice, offering practical and theoretical insights into the development of effective online pedagogy and the development of self-efficacy within this dimension.

## Impact statement

The present study, along with the knowledge derived from a comprehensive review of pertinent literature, was undertaken to raise awareness and consideration of the intricate challenges of addressing the convergence of equality, inclusion, diversity, and online teaching. In conventional classrooms, the complexities of integrating refugee and immigrant students often lead teachers to resort to established methods, such as employing teaching/classroom assistants or relying on English as an Additional Language (EAL) resources. However, the shift to online education accentuates the disadvantage for students with refugee and immigrant backgrounds and the self-efficacy of the supporting teachers, as these resources are not readily transferable or available. This study seeks to offer support and validation to empower teachers in effectively assisting this demographic through online platforms. By amplifying the teacher's perspective, the intention is to encourage other stakeholders, including school boards and senior management, to introspectively review their practices and resources, thereby facilitating preparedness and change, given the potential occurrence of future pandemics.

A central objective of this research is to expand the existing knowledge in the field. Conducting this research as part of the educational psychology doctorate fulfils academic requirements and contributes to the broader professional knowledge base. Consequently, one research question and its subsequent analysis and discourse aim to cultivate a comprehensive understanding of how educational psychologists (EPs) can enhance their efficacy within their practice. The study strives to propose practical steps for current EP practitioners and recommend adjustments to their service-wide approach, benefitting entire school systems, individual teachers, and students with refugee/immigrant backgrounds.

Finally, the study's findings and inquiries are pertinent to teachers, educational psychologists, and other professionals within a school ecosystem, such as special needs coordinators and head teachers. Given the shared involvement in the transition, settlement, and integration of refugee and immigrant children within school settings, the current study's findings can prove valuable.

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# Chapter 1

## 1.1. Introduction

Online or remote teaching is characterised as the utilisation of the internet and essential technologies to create and distribute educational materials, deliver instruction, and manage programs either synchronously or asynchronously (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). The outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic led to a swift transition of educators and educational institutions to remote teaching to mitigate disruptions to student learning. Nonetheless, as highlighted by the National Foundation for Educational Research, teachers and students felt inadequately prepared for such a large-scale shift to remote teaching, as witnessed during the recent pandemic (Lucas et al., 2020). This lack of readiness can be attributed to factors such as below-average computer availability in schools compared to international standards and deficiencies in teacher professional development and competence (Galvis & McLean, 2019). Furthermore, government-gathered evidence has indicated significant learning setbacks during sustained remote learning between the spring terms of 2020 and 2021, particularly among children from disadvantaged

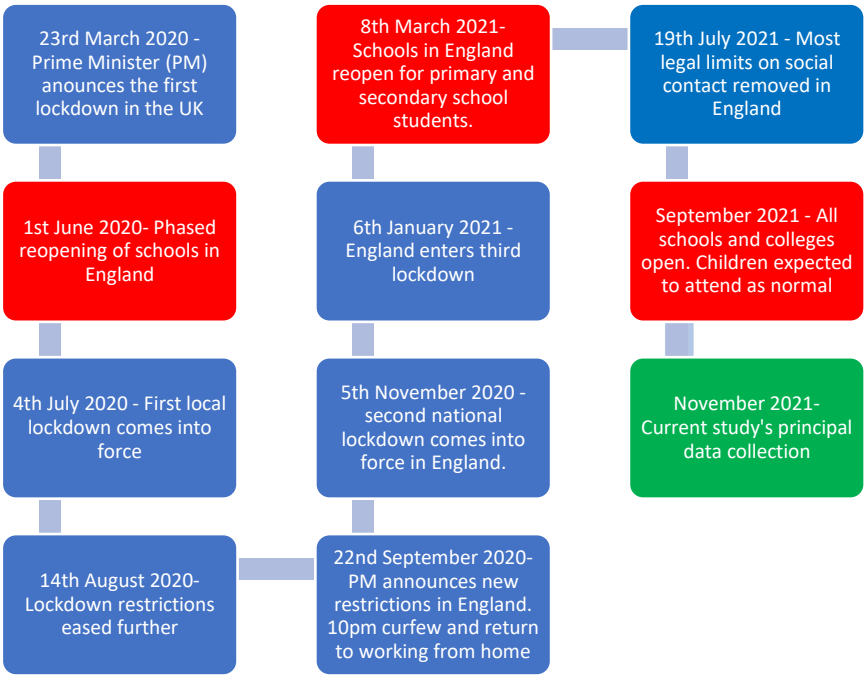
or deprived backgrounds. This disparity in educational progress is believed to stem from limited access to computer technology, reliable internet connectivity, and private learning spaces (Howard et al., 2021).

A refugee is defined as an individual who is "unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion" (UNHCR, 1951, p. 14). The term "refugee" contrasts with "immigrant," which is defined in the Migration Glossary as a person who relocates to a country other than their nation of origin or customary residence, effectively making the destination country their new habitual abode (International Organisation for Migration, 2019). Beyond the lexical distinctions between these groups, commonalities in the challenges encountered while adapting to life in a foreign land have been extensively investigated across various research domains. Children with refugee and immigrant backgrounds grapple with issues such as acculturation to societal norms (Sam & Berry, 2010), the formation of identity and sense of belonging in a new culture (Phinney, 2003), and the hurdles in achieving academic success or financial independence for adults (Migration Advisory Committee, 2018; Naidoo, 2015), among other trials. The resources and approaches accessible to refugees and immigrant background individuals often hinge on the attitudes, values, and experiences propagated by the dominant society (Cohen, 2011). Thus, the assistance provided by and interactions with members of the dominant culture, especially those frequently encountered, such as educators, need to be culturally attuned to the challenges these individuals face as they navigate the diverse pre- and post-migration needs.

At the convergence of wide-ranging socio-economic and psychosocial disparities faced by children from refugee and immigrant backgrounds and the pre-existing vulnerabilities in the infrastructure to provide effective and consistent remote teaching experiences—heightened by the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic—the current study finds its context. This study will investigate the factors influencing teachers' perceptions regarding their preparedness to instruct refugee and immigrant populations online effectively and their perspectives on potential barriers and facilitators in this endeavour. As the literature review reveals, there is a dearth of research pertaining to this domain, a gap this study endeavours to address. By employing a social constructionist stance, the study introduces an innovative adaptation of an established interview technique to explore conceivable barriers and facilitators of perceived self-efficacy among primary and secondary educators. Additionally, the study aims to unearth common themes within this sample concerning the perception of how educational psychologists can bolster this sense of self-efficacy.

## 1.2. Current study's position within the COVID-19 timeline

**Figure 1.**
Timeline of relevant covid-19 events in the UK




### Initial iteration research idea

The present study originated from a previous research objective of directly engaging adolescents from asylum-seeking backgrounds. In its initial form, the study aimed to conduct interviews with willing participants to examine their acculturation experiences and protective factors against acculturative challenges during the lockdown phases of the pandemic. Specifically, the study would have centred on the construction of ethnic identity (Phinney, 2003) in England during the Covid-19 pandemic. This concept emerged as a research topic in December 2020 after the country had undergone two national lockdowns and a period of localised lockdowns. The study intended to coincide with the phased reopening of schools for critical workers' children and vulnerable children, as well as the Prime Minister's stepwise relaxation of social and commercial restrictions and establishments. This timeline would have allowed an investigation into how these events influenced the adolescents' experiences of challenges. The rapidly changing landscape of Covid-related restrictions and permissions

highlighted a gap in comprehending the factors contributing to adolescent asylum-seekers' psychological and cultural adjustment. It was anticipated that this research could contribute to addressing this gap. Regrettably, despite efforts to engage with services nationwide, recruitment for participants, which began in April 2021, yielded only one successful participant by September 2021. Given the mounting time constraints and challenges, it became imperative to shift the study's focus to a more accessible participant group. In consultation with research supervisors, the decision was made to pivot towards exploring the barriers and facilitators affecting teachers' self-efficacy in instructing refugee and immigrant background children online. Ethical approval for this revised research proposal was obtained on October 28, 2021.

**Current iteration**

Recruitment for the present study commenced immediately upon obtaining ethical approval in October 2021. By the conclusion of November 2021, all 15 interviews had been successfully conducted. Consequently, the study's timeframe coincided with when schools had largely resumed regular attendance, albeit under specific protocols pertaining to social interactions and mitigating "bubbles." It is noteworthy that teachers had engaged in some form of remote instruction or online learning to accommodate students who were either unable to attend or not authorised to attend in person, starting from the initial lockdown on March 23, 2020. It is important to clarify that participants were not mandated to possess prior experience in remote teaching with children from refugee and immigrant backgrounds during the data collection phase. Despite the absence of formal legislative mandates, publicly accessible guidance on best practices and research undertaken by governmental and academic institutions underscore the pronounced significance attributed to remote teaching (Ofsted, 2021).

## 1.3. The rationale for exploring the impact of transferring education practices online

When considering the numerous benefits of maintaining a traditional brick-and-mortar classroom with face-to-face interactions, online teaching is considered the closest substitute to pre-pandemic teaching due mainly to the synchronous presence and interaction of a teacher and the accompanying facilitation of effective pedagogy (Andrew et al., 2020). However, due to the rapid transfer of teaching practice from face-to-face to online, several implications were experienced, particularly during the height of the pandemic's disruptions in the spring and summer of 2020. Among these implications was the lost learning opportunities as schools initially contended with offline learning resources (i.e., printouts and workbooks) before adopting more online-oriented resources. According to literature reviewed by Howard et al. (2021), parents reported using remote learning time for online lessons between April and June 2020, suggesting that primary and secondary children spent an average of between 1- and 2-hours online learning daily. This may be due, in some part, to education establishments and faculty members being wholly unprepared and undertrained for the migration of teaching to an online platform at this level of urgency. Within the same Howard et al. study, literature on interviews with 46 teachers and senior leaders is discussed where it was revealed that on reflection of teaching in the spring and summer terms of 2020, 92% of teachers said they had used Remote Emergency Teaching practices that consisted of externally provided materials and pre-recorded materials. The interviews also revealed dissatisfaction regarding the move to remote teaching. Only three respondent schools (one state school and two independent schools) reported that the transition was seamless, with the majority of opinions stating less than adequate efficiency, interactivity and engagement between students and teachers. Lack of confidence in using digital resources was also a source of anxiety communicated by teachers, which is also a concern considering online was used so extensively for either delivering remote lessons live, assessing students' work, providing feedback or organising collaboration spaces for students (Howard et al., 2021).

While the above pertains to data collected from the United Kingdom, there is evidence that similar findings can be seen internationally. For example, a study conducted by Radwan et al. (2022) of teachers (n= 559) in the Gaza Strip's perspective of virtual classrooms and distance teaching found low satisfaction and valuation of effectiveness for the medium. When interviewed, teachers commented on the low satisfaction rating resulting from their inadequate readiness to distance teaching in addition to confusing technology, limited social engagement with students and increased difficulty communicating with other teachers and principals. While the difference in IT infrastructure (i.e. internet stability and speed) and availability of technology within students' homes is not directly comparable with the UK, what is highlighted is the mutual experience of teachers having their motivation and sense of efficacy threatened due to the rapidity of transferring teaching practices online due to the pandemic.

Therefore, as identified within the following literature review, it will be essential to gather findings that explore educators' sense of efficacy in teaching online, with particular regard to how they manage limitations within their technological and digital competence, their internalised attitudes towards teaching online, and the adaptation of teaching and assessment pedagogies to the online environment.

## 1.4. The rationale for exploring the implications of teaching Refugee and Immigrant children via remote learning

Access to public education is a protected right of refugees under article 22 of the 1951 convention relating to the status of refugees (UNHCR, 2010). Contracting states, which describe Great Britain, agree to afford the same treatment and opportunity of education to refugees as they would to nationals concerning elementary and non-elementary education. Article 28 of The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) makes explicit the right every child has to free, fair, and accessible education within the signing states (United Nations,

1989). While remote education/online learning has meant that education continues to be provided in some form, for numerous reasons, the pandemic has highlighted that for students of refugee, immigrant and deprived backgrounds, the education experience has been increasingly made more difficult, resulting in an identified attainment gap. This may be due to difficulties in accessing the sociocultural expectations demanded of transferring a classroom online, possible language barriers and difficulties in acquiring and maintaining a fundamental level of proactive learning resources such as functioning devices, stable internet connection and a conducive learning environment.

The following section will review relevant literature on the identified disadvantages and the increased challenges for their teachers during the covid-19 pandemic.

**Lack of governmental guidance**

The significance of enhancing children's educational outcomes despite school closures or disrupted attendance due to COVID-19 infections prompted the UK government's Department for Education to issue a temporary provision directive for remote education (Department for Education, 2021). This directive underscored the legal obligation of schools to ensure that children were afforded sufficient remote learning provisions. Accompanying this directive was the government's non-statutory guidance aimed at assisting schools in sustaining the delivery of high-quality remote instruction (Department for Education, 2022). While the provision directive lapsed on March 24, 2022, the guidance remains accessible and can be accessed by schools through the government website archive. Embedded within this guidance is pragmatic support for schools, encompassing recommended scenarios necessitating remote education, strategies for safe remote education delivery, and resources for

technical support, advice, and training. The guidance's succinct nature and focus on the practical aspects of remote education, without specific reference to particular student groups, is one essential critique directable to the document.

However, the guidance acknowledges students with special educational needs or disabilities, outlining a broad approach to best support this cohort of vulnerable children through remote education. While the focus on one specific group exposes the omission of others, a review of this and other officially endorsed guidance reveals a dearth of advice pertaining to supporting students of refugee, immigrant, migrant, or asylum-seeking backgrounds and those with English as an additional language. This scarcity of readily available support leaves teachers working with these student populations across all levels and phases without essential guidance on best practices, obliging schools to identify and address training needs independently. It is the aspiration of the current study, along with further research endeavours, to heighten awareness within both the public and governmental domains about the significance of providing practical and psychological support to teachers to educate this group of students remotely.

**Socioeconomic disparity implications**

The reviewed literature explores the adverse impact of disparity and disadvantage on the growing educational achievement gap exacerbated by lockdowns and the transition to remote education. Howard et al. (2021) underscore how numerous research studies have highlighted the potential escalation of the attainment gap among disadvantaged children and their peers within the primary education phase by the close of September 2020. Although specific mention of children from refugee or immigrant backgrounds is absent in the definition of disadvantaged groups or the

discourse on key affected cohorts within Howard et al., specific student groups are identified. Pupils from economically disadvantaged families with parents possessing lower levels of education, as well as those eligible for free school meals or pupil premium, likely overlap with the demographics of refugee or immigrant background children and thus exhibit comparatively similar disparities (Howard et al., 2021). The suggested rationale behind such achievement discrepancies includes students lacking essential resources for effective remote learning, such as adequate devices and reliable internet. This, in turn, intensifies the burden on educators to offer differentiated resources accessible online and offline while diminishing opportunities for students to interact with instructors and peers through the submission of assignments, feedback receipt, and interpersonal interactions (Green, 2020).

Similarly, literature synthesised by Howard et al. (2021) suggests that ethnicity played a role in the observed learning loss during the pandemic. Mixed-ethnicity students faced diminished support regarding computer access, home resources, and teacher feedback (Green, 2020; Howard et al., 2021). Moreover, students from Black, Asian, and Minority Ethnic (BAME) backgrounds were more prone to attend schools with inferior remote learning provisions, depriving them of higher quality instruction and learning opportunities and contributing to the widening achievement gap (Green, 2020).

Limited existing literature concerning the remote learning experiences of refugees underscores the consequences of deprivation and poverty on achievement and integration with the dominant societal culture and its members. Fujii et al. (2020) examined the educational hurdles faced by refugees in Germany during the pandemic from the perspectives of both students and teachers. Among the findings was the struggle of young refugees to establish connections with educators and

peers due to varying fluency levels, hardware availability, and software familiarity (e.g., stable computers, printers, scanners, and Microsoft Office suites). This disconnect led to a cycle of frustration for both students and educators. For instance, a teacher participant described their school's reliance on digital media for participation as "an exacerbating force for inequality...because they [young refugees] are considerably less accustomed to working with digital media and the like" (Fujii et al., 2020, pp. 41–42). Furthermore, a student in Fujii's study expressed feeling "disheartened" due to the perceived uncooperativeness of the laptop and their unfamiliarity with tasks like crafting a curriculum vitae, as they "have never done it before" (pp. 42).

**Additional culture shock, acculturation and adaptation needs**

Children from diverse cultural backgrounds experience additional learning pressures and requirements related to acculturation and cultural learning. Long-term visitors and newly settled migrants engage in a psychological adaptation process that fosters a renewed understanding and sense of belonging within their new environment. The trajectory of this development is influenced by the net gains and losses of resources during the transition, with factors like the formation and dissolution of social networks and cultural disparities posing challenges in negotiating one's identity and sense of belongingness (Mude & Mwanri, 2020). Furthermore, the attitudes and experiences received from members of the host or dominant society, particularly those with whom the individual interacts regularly or substantially, play an integral role in shaping the acculturation strategies employed by migrant individuals (Lev Ari & Cohen, 2018).

Among migrant youth, acculturation has been identified by multiple researchers as a pivotal factor influencing academic achievement. It has been proposed that the

integration style of acculturation, encompassing the degree of acceptance a migrant individual exhibits toward their culture of origin and the dominant culture, exhibits the strongest correlation with positive academic outcomes (Berry et al., 2006; Rumbaut & Portes, 2001). Consequently, meaningful, frequent, and welcoming interactions with teachers play a crucial role in the psychosocial development of refugee and immigrant children. However, these interactions become strained and artificial when hindered by online connectivity issues, inadequate access to functional devices, and a general lack of efficacy and training in adapting learning materials for online environments.

Similarly, errors can arise as children with refugee backgrounds engage in cultural learning amid an unprecedented period of cultural and behavioural shifts. These errors may lead inadequately trained teachers to incorrectly attribute their students' behaviours to prejudice and discrimination (McBrien, 2005). Instances such as not maintaining eye contact during webcam sessions or refraining from active participation during live sessions can result in misinterpretations of student engagement. These students navigate multiple cultural expectations, including their culture of origin, host culture, and online etiquette and communication norms, which can lead to an appearance of disengagement when, in actuality, they may be experiencing a sense of overwhelmedness or preoccupation.

Existing research demonstrates that academic engagement and achievement can be protective factors for the psychosocial development of refugee and asylum-seeking children, particularly those originating from cultures that emphasise educational attainment (Kohli & Mather, 2003). The significance of school satisfaction has also been underscored in the context of migrant youth development. Fang's (2020) well-being model posits that the internal state of school satisfaction shapes goal-directed

actions, with academic achievement being an outcome. Given that culturally integrated migrant children often report higher levels of school satisfaction (Fang, 2020), cultivating a positive sense of belonging, safety, and progression becomes pivotal to encouraging engagement and learning among children from migrant backgrounds. However, these aspects of school satisfaction face challenges within the remote learning setting, as establishing rapport and familiarity is threatened by the artificiality and unpredictability of the online environment. Consequently, the teacher's heightened awareness and competence in supporting psychosocial development are essential for the growth and success of children within this population during remote learning periods.

Upon analysing all the gathered information, a clear need emerges to ensure that children from refugee and immigrant backgrounds receive enhanced consideration in remote learning provisions.

## 1.5. Research aims

The limited existing literature concerning teachers' perceived self-efficacy in delivering online education to children of refugee and immigrant background, coupled with the potential for future instances of predominantly remote education due to pandemic resurgences or emerging variants of COVID-19 (Roberts, 2022), underscores the primary motivation for initiating the present exploratory study. Moreover, its relevance and significance in the current geopolitical landscape underscore the decision to focus on supporting children from refugee and immigrant backgrounds. Noteworthy events such as the humanitarian crisis in Afghanistan (Karia, 2022) and the Russian military's intervention in Ukraine (Thomas, 2022)1, resulting in the displacement of over five million people attempting to flee the conflict

(Walsh & Sumption, 2022), continue to hold prominence, impacting populations and discussions within educational settings. Thus, the current study endeavours to achieve the following objectives:

- Investigate and enhance the comprehension of factors that impact primary and secondary level educators' perceived self-efficacy in delivering remote education to children hailing from refugee and immigrant backgrounds.
- Foster subsequent research initiatives and contribute to an improved understanding of how to effectively support teachers in delivering remote education.
- Prompt contemplation, discourse, proactive measures, and subsequent research concerning the optimal utilisation of educational psychology services to aid teachers in the domains above.

## 1.6. Research questions

In order to fulfil the above aims, the research addresses the following questions:

**RQ1:** What contributes to primary and secondary phase teachers' perception of their self-efficacy in educating Refugee and Immigrant background minors (RIMs) through online learning methods?

**RQ2:** What are the perceived barriers and facilitators to successfully teaching Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods by teachers with experience in teaching RIMs online?

**RQ3:** What are the perceived ways educational psychologists can be best utilised to support teachers' self-efficacy in successfully supporting Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods?

# Chapter 2

The primary objective of the current study is to investigate the factors contributing to perceived self-efficacy in teaching refugee and immigrant minors online. Additionally, the study seeks to explore how educational psychologists can be perceived as potential sources of support for teachers in enhancing their self-efficacy within this context. A comprehensive examination of the existing literature is imperative to integrate insights from previous research to achieve these objectives. As outlined in Chapter 1, the available literature pertaining to this subject matter is limited, underscoring the necessity of conducting this study. Consequently, the subsequent chapter will undertake an expansive literature review, encompassing what, in my assessment, represents the most pertinent knowledge available across domains relevant to the study and its theoretical framework. This chapter will be structured into subsequent sections: Section 2.1 will delineate the methodological approach employed for the literature review. Sections 2.2 to 2.5 will present the literature review, concentrating on the identified areas of significance. The concluding section, 2.6, will summarise and encapsulate the literature review findings.

## 2.1. Methodological process of the literature review

The review was exclusively conducted using e-journals, primarily for convenience and accessibility. Three online databases were selected for the literature review: ERIC/EBSCOhost, Taylor and Francis Online, and ProQuest. These databases were selected by the specific subject area and the anticipation of yielding results pertinent

to the topic under investigation. They were also selected to minimise the potential for duplicate and overlapping entries. The search terms employed are presented in Table 1 below. The aforementioned searches were executed within the timeframe spanning from 9th July 2022 to 16th June 2023.

**Table 1.**
literature search string

| Literature review focus area | Search terms included |
|---|---|
| What is known about the experience of refugee and immigrant background students and their teachers in the completion of online/distance education?<br>(Area 1) | Teach*<br>AND Refug* OR Immigrant<br>AND Online<br>AND Virtual OR Distance OR Remote |
| What is known about teachers' self-efficacy in teaching online / RIM background children online?<br>(Area 2) | Self-effi*<br>AND Teach*<br>AND Refug* OR immigr*<br>AND Online OR Virtual OR Distance |
| What is the evidence base on talking stones used to facilitate personal views in research?<br>(Area 3) | "Talking stones"<br>AND Narrative st* |
| What are key areas of consideration for Educational psychologists supporting schools with RIMS?<br>(Area 4) | Educational psy*<br>AND Sch*<br>AND Refuge*<br>AND Immi* |

Search results and search filters used are provided in table 2 below.

**Table 2a**
literary search criteria and results- Area 1.

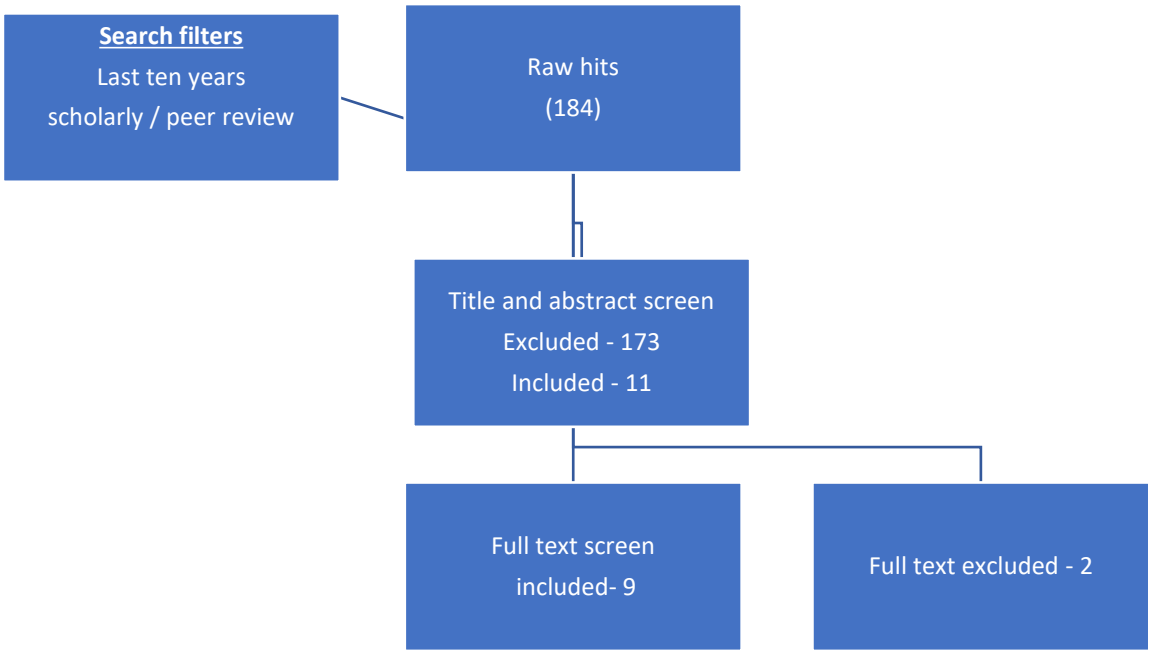



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**Table 2b**
literary search criteria and results- Area 2.

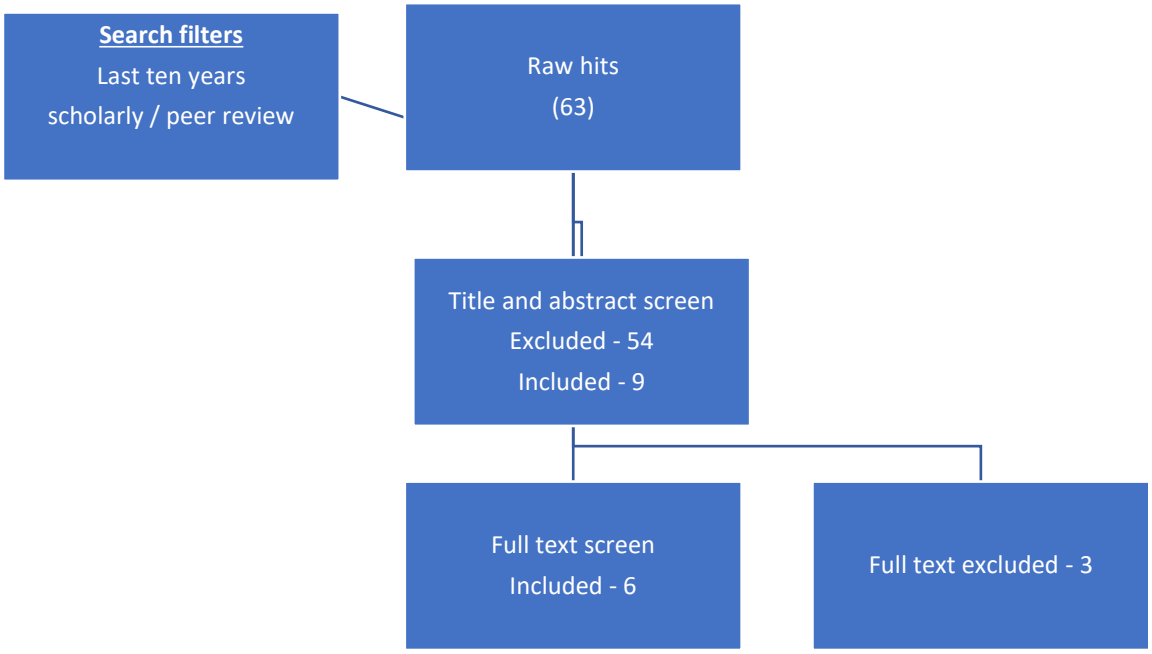



**Table 2c**
literary search criteria and results- Area 3.

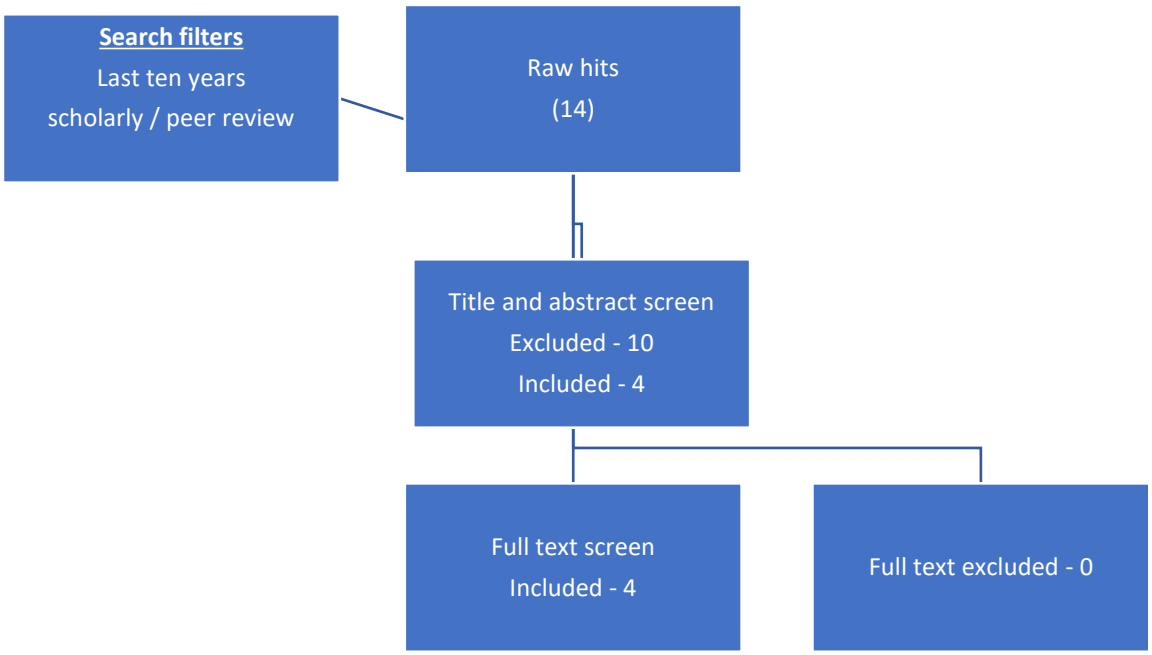
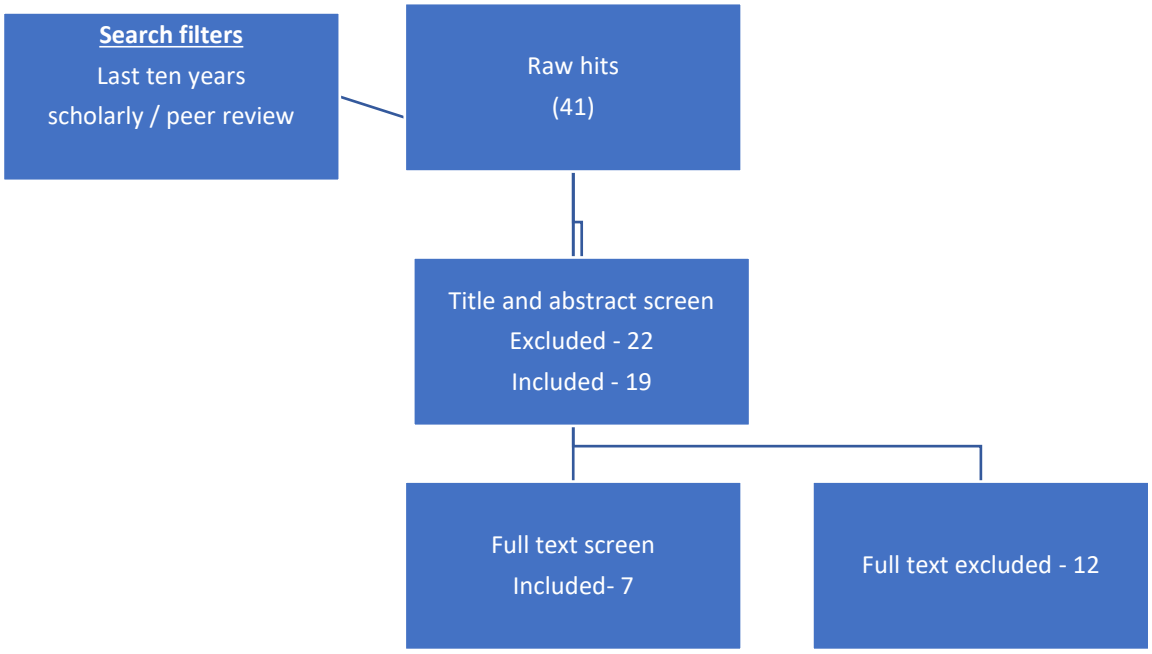


**Table 2d**
literary search criteria and results- Area 4.




A decision was reached to search for literature within the last decade. This time frame was deemed appropriate to encapsulate technological advancements and evolving attitudes related to their integration into education, such as developments in distance education, computer hardware, and internet speed and stability improvements. Furthermore, this period allowed for the consideration of progressed insights into cultural adaptability and cultural responsiveness in both research and practice. Additionally, it was decided to include only peer-reviewed articles to uphold the academic rigour of the literature review. While the final number of articles included in the review results from the systematic literature search, it is worth noting that particular articles were also identified through bibliography exploration or recommendations provided by the databases' algorithms. These identified articles have been incorporated into the review and other relevant thesis sections.

Returned search hits underwent three screening levels before being included in the literature review: initial title, abstract, and full-text screening. When devising the inclusion criteria, inspiration was taken from the SPIDER (Sample, Phenomenon of Interest, Design, Evaluation, Research type) analysis framework by Cooke, Smith & Booth (2012). Originally devised as a search strategy to enable more effective identification of quantitative and qualitative studies during systematic searching, the SPIDER framework was deemed to be an effective way of creating a set of inclusion criteria due to its consideration of multiple factors in a research report (sample, phenomenon, design etc.) and also due to the framework's ability to identify qualitative research. Table 3 below displays the chosen parameters for the literature review areas in light of the framework. Literature that did not satisfy each criterion was excluded from the review.

**Table 3A**
SPIDER inclusion criteria for Area 1

1) What is known about the experience of refugee and immigrant background students and their teachers in the completion of online/distance education?

| | |
|---|---|
| **S**ample | Teachers of refugee and migrant backgrounds (primary, secondary and adult phases); refugee or migrant background population with experience learning remotely/online. |
| **P**henomenon of **I**nterest | experiences within online education. |
| **D**esign | surveys, case studies, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, interventions |
| **E**valuation | Identify factors that facilitate or obfuscate successful remote education outcomes for children of refugee or immigrant |

| | |
|---|---|
| | backgrounds through the teacher or school intervention and attitudes. |
| **R**esearch type | Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods |

**Table 3B**
SPIDER inclusion criteria for Area 2

| 2) What is known about teachers' self-efficacy in teaching online / RIM background children online? | |
|---|---|
| **S**ample | Teachers from primary, secondary or adult phases of education |
| **P**henomenon of **I**nterest | Perceived sense of self-efficacy in teaching online/remote teaching |
| **D**esign | surveys, case studies, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, interventions |
| **E**valuation | Identification of factors that are affected by, contribute to, develop or threaten successful remote education/online teaching self-efficacy in teachers. |
| **R**esearch type | Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods |

**Table 3C**
SPIDER inclusion criteria for Area 3

| 3) What is the evidence base on talking stones used to facilitate personal views in research? | |
|---|---|
| **S**ample | Adults or children, school staff, pupils and students |
| **P**henomenon of **I**nterest | Facilitation of views from participants using the interview technique "talking stones." |
| **D**esign | surveys, case studies, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, interventions |
| **E**valuation | Identification of evidence base that contributes to understanding how talking stones are utilised as an interview technique and its successful/unsuccessful implementation. |
| **R**esearch type | Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods |

**Table 3D**
SPIDER inclusion criteria for Area 4

| 4) What are key areas of consideration for educational psychologists supporting schools with RIMS? | |
|---|---|
| **S**ample | Parents, local authorities and school staff within the education sector that benefit from, work with or as educational /school psychologists. |
| **P**henomenon of **I**nterest | Practical, systemic and psychosociological considerations made when factoring in support from educational/school psychologists in the educational development of refugee and immigrant background students. |

| | |
|---|---|
| **D**esign | surveys, case studies, questionnaires, interviews, focus groups, interventions |
| **E**valuation | Identification of evidence base that contributes to understanding how the knowledge and skillsets of educational/child/school psychologists are utilised when supporting the education of refugee and immigrant backgrounds. |
| **R**esearch type | Qualitative, quantitative, or mixed methods |

In the subsequent section, essential themes extracted from the identified literature will be examined, accompanied by a critical assessment of their relevance and how they contribute to the overarching goal of the literature search domain and the present study.

## 2.2. What is known about RIM students and their teachers' experience in the completion of online/distance education

The following review is based on the nine full texts deemed relevant to the area and which met the inclusion criteria. The identified literature within this area frequently commented on the impact accessibility had on the perceived outcomes of online education for students of refugee and immigrant backgrounds. In addition, the teachers' approach to online pedagogy was also seen to be a common factor identified.

Technical knowledge and familiarity with computer resources such as software and hardware were identified as significant factors in successfully implementing distance teaching and learning. Lacking an understanding of how to utilise presentation/chat

functions or asynchronous communication features of software such as drop boxes, virtual drives, and timers by both teachers and students impacted the communication quality and quantity experienced (Desjardins, 2021). Computer terminology, password management and utilising browser tabs were some of the difficulties said to be experienced by some adolescent RIM background learners (Meyer et al., 2023). Salazar-Márquez (2017) described the skill gap metaphorically as “digital immigrants and digital natives” to describe those with and without technological competence and expertise. Salazar-Máquez believed that these roles could easily be reversed between RIM background students and teachers with daily usage of technology, such as social media use, not implying a change in preference for online learning styles (Salazar-Márquez, 2017, p. 238). Technological familiarity, therefore, can be considered to play a significant role in the successful implementation of distance learning, given its facilitation of both basic and advanced interaction patterns online. Salazar-Márquez’s research explores how teacher’s communicate in virtual environments and the challenges faced by students who are described as digital immigrants, however the study does not combine the areas to make comment on teachers who themselves are digital immigrants and their methods of communicating, or to explore the various methods of communication that students who are classed as digital natives may employ. The current proposed study does not categorise participants based on digital experience/expertise and thus may include the perspectives of teachers who are either digital natives or immigrants, addressing the limitation in applicability of the findings to a wider audience that Salazar-Márquez’s study encounters.

In the context of teachers and their discomfort or lack of competence in remote teaching, there arises an unfortunate consequence of heightened pressures on their

workload, manifesting as prolonged lesson preparation time, the need to address digital inequalities among students, and the challenge of managing inconsistencies in participation and attendance (Kaiper-Marquez Anna et al., 2020). These supplementary challenges underscore that while technology is a component of remote education, it alone cannot suffice. Instead, educators require an additional skill set to effectively navigate these challenges and others in the virtual environment. As succinctly encapsulated by the following quote: "Like the very best surgical equipment, it is not going to solve a problem if you don’t have a skilled surgeon in the room..." (Tobin & Hieker, 2021, p. 8), multiple literature articles emphasise that teacher training and support in online education, whether for children from RIM backgrounds or native children, constitutes a crucial element in ensuring proficient and effective remote teaching pedagogy (Desjardins, 2021; Gkougkoura et al., 2022; Kaiper-Marquez Anna et al., 2020; Salazar-Márquez, 2017).

The literature also delved into the commonly identified obstacles and facilitators that influence the effectiveness of online education for students with refugee and immigrant backgrounds. Numerous texts highlight the role of within-child factors, such as motivation, in shaping engagement with online teaching and interactions (Gkougkoura et al., 2022; Salazar-Márquez, 2017; Tobin & Hieker, 2021). The motivation level of students stands out as a significant variable in the realm of online education, primarily due to the presence of competing factors vying for their attention. These factors encompass aspects like living conditions and constraints, immigration status, cultural clashes, tangible real-world concerns, and the general degree of interest they hold in the subjects being taught (Lwin et al., 2022; Seynhaeve et al., 2022).

Barriers to access, such as digital competence, can also significantly impact engagement (Salazar-Márquez, 2017), placing additional responsibility on teachers to ensure their functional IT skills are adequate and that students are equipped with the necessary competencies. Another noteworthy factor influencing students' motivation to engage in online learning is the perceived linguistic barriers. Given the reduced availability of non-verbal communication cues, additional contextual hints, and potential support from fellow speakers of their native language, students with refugee and immigrant backgrounds encounter heightened challenges in participating effectively in communicative online learning environments, particularly when their mother tongue differs from the dominant language. In their study, Gkougkoura et al. (2022) revealed that linguistic barriers accounted for 75.4% of reported difficulties among the interviewed six 11-year-old students with bilingual backgrounds. Specifically, 63.2% of respondents highlighted the challenge of comprehending instructions related to software platforms. These concerns align with the aforementioned limitations in technical knowledge and the subsequent impact on online communication as students grapple with one or both of these obstacles. In the context of the current proposed study, Gkougkoura's study does have a limitation of being based on the responses of bilingual children and not specifically migrant children, who carry additional psychosocial pressures as mentioned above. Also, the study carries bias as the study was carried out in Greece, with the dominant language being Greek. Therefore, it is possible that the words associated with software platforms will be loan words or false friends from English and its Latin roots, presenting even further challenges to the children studied.

Regardless of the above limitations, the study suggests that teachers should implement several strategies to support learners from refugee and immigrant

backgrounds in this aspect. One such strategy involves establishing a meaningful connection between the learning content and the student's lives, ensuring the practical relevance of the acquired knowledge (Tobin & Hieker, 2021).

Additional strategies include increasing diverse interaction patterns beyond learner and content so that they can continue to benefit from the communication and language development opportunities that arise. Increasing the variety of interaction patterns, such as teacher-learner and learner-learner interaction opportunities, enhances learners' motivation to engage with online pedagogy. Additionally, comprehension of task instructions can be modified and may lead to more attempts by the learners to become involved in speaking within the online environment (Desjardins, 2021; Seynhaeve et al., 2022; Tobin & Hieker, 2021).

While governmental or societal guidelines stemming from the COVID era may restrict opportunities for in-person interactions in schools, such as maintaining physical distancing measures through staggered recess times, literature spanning the period within the search criteria indicates that students with refugee and immigrant backgrounds can derive advantages from distance learning that incorporates a blend of online elements and in-person instruction. Blended learning has been proposed to enhance accessibility by employing smaller modular learning units to mitigate the risk of fatigue and technical challenges. An asynchronous approach is also advocated to facilitate task completion, enabling learners to revisit and accomplish assignments over a broader time span and beyond the timetabled lesson period. Additionally, the use of materials and software compatible with a diverse range of devices and operating systems, including mobile phones, Chromebooks, and tablets, as opposed to solely relying on traditional desktop PCs, mice, and keyboards, is considered a valuable and equitable strategy (Gkougkoura

et al., 2022; Tobin & Hieker, 2021). Although these strategies cannot eliminate factors that might lead to reduced motivation to participate and engage in online lessons, nor can they fully offset within-student elements such as external educational commitments or linguistic capabilities, they offer supplementary considerations that can enhance the learning experience. These considerations can assist with engagement, for example, by allowing favoured translation applications on other devices or allowing for a more varied approach to pedagogy. Instructors, however, will have to contend with a potential perceived reduction in the sense of control as they exercise more flexibility in the approach and materials used for learning. For example, by having studies be accessed from a mobile device or one without the features of a standard desktop setup, such as a webcam or microphone, the instructor must rely on good faith that students remain on task and ignorant of distractions (Seynhaeve et al., 2022).

Another implication highlighted by several studies within the reviewed literature concerns the consideration of access to essential hardware and software required by students with RIM backgrounds for effective participation in distance or online education. Various authors delve into the correlation between subpar or significantly hindered online teaching and learning experiences and students with limited socioeconomic means, who grapple with the absence of suitable devices or consistent internet connectivity. Specifically, RIM background learners situated in remote locations where internet stability is compromised due to geographical constraints are also susceptible to being disadvantaged by online education (Gkougkoura et al., 2022; Gornik et al., 2020; Kaiper-Marquez Anna et al., 2020; Loganathan et al., 2021; Lwin et al., 2022; Tobin & Hieker, 2021).

Addressing these challenges exceeds the purview of educators. However, some of the aforementioned strategies can be employed to mitigate some of the disruptions caused. For instance, implementing blended learning, modular lesson content, and an asynchronous approach may help alleviate the strain on students' resources. Nonetheless, in the context of lockdowns and social distancing measures, existing disparities in living conditions and device availability, which contribute to adverse online educational experiences and outcomes, may regrettably persist as an unavoidable consequence that societies must grapple with. The current study is based in the UK, where High-speed broadband is available in specific locations, and connection quality can vary. Therefore, in light of the above findings, the impact of technological constraints outside the participant's control will be considered when necessary or relevant.

The psychosocial considerations that refugee and immigrant students experience online are frequently discussed in the obtained literature. Authors included in the literature review have mentioned the importance of teachers and stakeholders being aware of online education's impact on RIM background learners' mental health and perceived social isolation. The lack of physical closeness/copresence was a mentioned difficulty that students and teachers had to contend with (Primdahl et al., 2021). By not being in physical proximity, individuals missed out on communicating and responding to non-verbal social cues and demonstrating availability and willingness to be involved.

The heightened social isolation presents barriers to the successful attainment of social, emotional, and mental health learning objectives, as well as academic goals. Nonetheless, the existing literature delineates various strategies to tackle this challenge. Educators implemented tactics like integrating social media platforms

such as Snapchat, Instagram, and Facebook to alleviate the sense of isolation reported by learners. Additionally, teachers were observed to regularly make phone calls to students to monitor their well-being during the lockdown phases of the pandemic (Primdahl et al., 2021). While this approach is commendable in preventing students from feeling neglected, it raises significant safeguarding-related concerns. Moreover, it could lead to questions about the appropriateness of establishing contact with students beyond the classroom environment. Furthermore, engaging with students outside the designated virtual classroom might inadvertently exacerbate the situation, as those not partaking in such supplementary communication channels could perceive it as further social exclusion.

There is also the alternative position on mental health impact that has been raised within the literature, and that is, perhaps some students value the break from the physical classroom. A teacher respondent in the study conducted by Meyers et al. (2020) found that some of their RIM background students had academically thrived without the pressures of physically being a foreign adolescent in school. Navigating school commutes and experiencing prejudice are just some possible pressures that are reduced in the transition to online learning, leading to a more positive learning experience. However, it was also interpreted in the same study that students with refugee backgrounds communicated that their socioeconomic status was closely linked to the negative impacts of the pandemic. Some students did not possess the same social, cultural, and economic resources as their peers before the pandemic and observed their well-being as affected. Consequently, while certain RIM students may find psychosocial benefits in the transition to online/distance learning, others may experience an exacerbation of their stressors. Therefore, teachers should be mindful of this divide, especially when responding to any unusual behaviour or

academic performance exhibited by students from refugee and immigrant backgrounds during online learning.

## 2.3. What is known about teachers' self-efficacy in teaching RIM-background children online?

Perceived self-efficacy, as described by Bandura, "*is concerned with people's beliefs in their capabilities to produce given attainments…a judgement of capability to execute given types of performance"* (Bandura, 2006, pp. 307–309). Bandura suggests that the four critical components of self-efficacy are mastery experiences and the interpreted results of a person's successful experience in a task. Vicarious experiences: the observation of other people completing a relevant task. Social persuasion: the receipt of positive verbal feedback while undertaking a complex task, and lastly, the emotional and physiological states of the person (Bandura, 1977). A fifth stage has been suggested by author James Maddux, which relates to the power of visualisation of the successful outcome or behaviour (Maddux, 2013). The novel implications of COVID-19 meant that educators were in a unique position that had not been encountered recently, requiring fluid and in-the-moment decision-making regarding education delivery.

Concerning the aforementioned self-efficacy components, numerous educators lacked prior experience to draw upon (mastery) or were simultaneously learning about the instructional platforms while using them. The reduced availability of verbal feedback and pedagogical support from colleagues or senior staff members, along with challenges in recognising the advantages of online instruction in addressing student needs (Cardullo et al., 2021), further influenced teachers' sense of mastery. This confluence of circumstances introduces a novel challenge to the education

system, as the abrupt transition to distance and technologically-mediated learning environments underscores the pivotal role of teachers' perceived self-efficacy in delivering high-quality instruction and effectively employing digital skills during the COVID-19 pandemic and post-pandemic landscape (König et al., 2020).

The gathered literature investigates the factors that influence or contribute to teachers' self-efficacy concerning online teaching and using ICT resources for instructional purposes. Among these factors are the anxieties associated with using computer resources, their proficiency in creating high-quality digital lessons that match the quality of their in-person lessons, and the reception of digitally produced lessons by students. Within the studies encompassed in the review, computer anxiety was found to have a negative correlation with the self-efficacy of pre-service teachers who were yet to commence their real-world teaching experience (Awofala et al., 2019), teachers of younger children in the primary phase (Bai et al., 2021), and even teachers of older students at the university level (Blonder et al., 2022). These diverse findings indicate that computer self-efficacy can be influenced at various educational stages, underscoring a consistent area for potential development across career progression.

Computer self-efficacy has been observed to exhibit a positive correlation with affective components, the perceived efficacy in enhancing student engagement and participation, and the intention to incorporate the resource over an extended duration (Awofala et al., 2019; Bai et al., 2021; Blonder et al., 2022). A more comprehensive scrutiny of the literature suggests that self-efficacy can also be influenced by attitudes such as teachers' perception of digital competence, performance, expectations of outcomes, and social outcome expectations (Crossan, 2020). Conversely, low perceived self-efficacy was discovered to impact teachers' work

engagement (Gobbi et al., 2021), compassion fatigue (Yang, 2021), and the subjective evaluation of the teacher's effectiveness in remote teaching (Knopik & Domagała-Zyśk, 2022).

In the collected literature, the discussion encompassed crossover effects of age, gender, and ICT skills with self-efficacy within the classroom setting. The literature presents inconclusive findings concerning the interaction effect of age and gender on ICT self-efficacy, as some studies suggest a significant correlation in their sample, while others do not. For instance, Šabić et al. (2021) discovered in their study that among older participants, a gender difference in perceived self-efficacy in using ICT for teaching was observed. The authors report that male participants in their study reported higher scores on the self-efficacy measuring instrument used. However, this effect did not manifest among younger teachers, possibly arising from the assumption that younger teachers would have received more comprehensive instruction on ICT use during their educational history (Šabić et al., 2021). Similar outcomes were derived from Awofala et al.'s (2019) study, where a notable impact of gender on pre-service teachers' computer self-efficacy was detected. However, significant limitations of these studies are present in the choice of methodology, as participants were asked to self-report their perception of self-efficacy through a translated questionnaire. The inclusion of numerous result-affecting biases could have impacted the participant's responses, leading to the observed results. The current study attempts to mitigate this limitation by not having the participants report on their self-efficacy through questionnaires or surveys but comment on possible interpretations of them through a personal construct psychology approach (please see Chapter 3 for more details on the methodology of the current study).

Lastly, attitudes that stem from insufficient IT resources, such as power outages in remote areas and slow connections towards computer technology, are also hypothesised to affect self-efficacy. At the same time, the availability of resources such as solid signal quality, device availability and service affordability has been seen to positively correlate with self-efficacy (Afolabi et al., 2022; Mustafa et al., 2022). Therefore, the impact of attitudes towards computers and the availability and quality of the technological infrastructure is an essential consideration for teachers regarding developing or sustaining self-efficacy.

The literature reviewed has demonstrated that the perception of self-efficacy impacts professionals across various phases and can be influenced by individual characteristics like age and gender. Self-efficacy beliefs among individual teachers play a crucial role in fulfilling their primary teaching responsibilities and influencing the psychological well-being of their students. To ensure the development rather than hindrance of self-efficacy, stakeholders, including line managers and school board members, should prioritise equipping teachers with appropriate tools and training for utilising technology (Dolighan & Owen, 2021). Nonetheless, certain technological aspects, such as internet stability and speed, are beyond the control of school personnel. Therefore, studies such as the present one become essential in comprehending how these constraints affect teachers' perceived self-efficacy.

## 2.4. What is the evidence base on talking stones being used to facilitate personal views in research?

The current study employs a pedagogical technique called *talking stones* to explore the central research question. Talking stones is a method that facilitates the articulation of individual perceptions by utilising stones or similar objects. In this process, participants are presented with a question or stimulus and requested to

select a stone symbolising their viewpoints regarding the subject (Wearmouth, 2004). For a detailed understanding of this technique from a methodological standpoint, please refer to Chapter 3.10.

Pertinent literature was scarce concerning this tool, indicating that it is a relatively less-explored interview technique. Nonetheless, instances of its application across a diverse spectrum of participants can be gleaned from the uncovered literature. The subsequent segment of the literature review will evaluate its effectiveness in exploring additional objectives and eliciting responses from diverse sources, including educators.

The earliest mention of its use is by Wearmouth (2004), who used it to acquire the views of students she describes as disaffected. Her study outlines her interactions with a student who had difficulty maintaining a consistent attendance pattern and describes the responses he offered during the facilitation of the pedagogical tool through direct quotations. Wearmouth suggests that the technique benefits from its ability to evoke self-advocacy within the student. In support of the technique's effectiveness, Wearmouth reports that the disaffected student, whom his teachers described as “taciturn to the point of never acknowledging his name when the class register was called”, is able to give thick and rich descriptions of his inner voice, self-perceptions and how he believed others perceived him. Wearmouth purports that the usefulness of the stones technique also lies in its ability to facilitate the articulation of processes such as remembering, imagining, interpreting, judging, contemplating, and feeling.

Wearmouth's work offers an introduction to the method, elucidating its theoretical foundations through the portrayal of an actual case study. It also illustrates the

technique's application involving school-age respondents who share a common language and culture with the interviewer. Additional research investigated within this review exemplifies the technique's deployment across a more culturally diverse populace and in pursuit of broader research objectives, thereby expanding the substantiation supporting this approach.

Wearmouth's utilisation of the talking stones technique underscored its suitability in eliciting responses from emotionally disengaged youth within an educational context. However, the technique's applicability extends beyond educational contexts to encompass more diverse social research areas, including its implementation with youth and families from refugee backgrounds. A case in point is the study by Ballentyne et al. (2020), who employed the technique to investigate the experiences of refugee adults residing in Brazil, aiming to elucidate the complex identities shaped by their pre-settlement journeys. In this study, participants were prompted to use the stones as projective tools, symbolising significant markers in their personal histories. This innovative approach offered an alternative to traditional spoken interviews, enabling participants to "impart coherence and definition to events that might otherwise be too challenging, distressing, or linguistically demanding to convey" (Ballentyne et al., 2021, p. 505). Applying the talking stones technique within refugee and immigrant communities sidesteps potential obstacles like language barriers and re-traumatisation, enhancing the researcher's ability to explore intricate life histories outside their cultural base.

Further evidence of its successful application as a narrative elicitation tool, particularly with children of refugee and immigrant backgrounds, can be found in the works of Hulusi and Oland, and Doggett. In these studies, the authors utilised the talking stones interview technique as a scaffold to assist newly arrived children

(Hulusi & Oland, 2010) and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children (Doggett, 2012) in constructing and articulating coherent narratives of their experiences. The author's rationale for choosing this interview technique underscores the advantages of the talking stones method in helping participants engage with initially painful and challenging experiences that are essential to narrate to convey a story that captures their journey and transformation.

Similar to Wearmouth's original intention of using talking stones to elicit the current views of native children in mainstream schools of their educational experience, within the current literature review, there is evidence of the talking stones technique being used to elicit similar views from children with asylum-seeking backgrounds. Morgan (2018), within her thesis, conducted interviews with school-age unaccompanied asylum-seeking children to explore their views on the experience of arriving, living, and attending an educational provision in England. Morgan's rationale for using the stones as interview techniques was similar to Wearmouths' and other highlighted researchers in this review in that the stones allowed her participants to project their views onto the stones, thus facilitating a genuine and unbiased view of the explored topic.

Lastly, and particularly relevant to the present study, is the evidence of the technique's application with English-speaking adults within the teaching profession. Henderson (2010) employed the talking stones interview technique with early childhood teachers as part of a cyclical action research process to gather their perspectives. Henderson observed that the technique facilitated reflection and profound contemplation among early years teachers (p.109). She also noted that using the stones disrupted familiar conversational patterns that might hinder

teachers' ability to explore novel ways of expressing their thoughts (Henderson, 2010).

When a facilitation technique is employed with adult native speakers who do not encounter the cognitive demands associated with translating and reformulating across multiple languages, it could be hypothesised that the additional cognitive resources may lead to more intricate expressions regarding elocution and content. However, the precise reasons behind this alteration in thought processes remain unexplored within the current scope of the literature review, thus highlighting a potential gap in the existing knowledge base.

The literature reviewed supports the consensus that the talking stones technique is efficacious in eliciting profound and potentially challenging cognitive processes from adult and child participants. Henderson's inclusion in the literature is particularly relevant to the present study as it establishes a foundation of evidence for the interview technique's application with adult English-speaking educators.

A common limitation among the studies uncovered in the literature review on the talking stones technique is the absence of comprehensive elucidation regarding the possible interference of biases such as the Hawthorne effect, social desirability or demand characteristics, which may undermine the perceived effectiveness of the technique in interview settings. This limitation becomes especially noticeable when examining the technique's impact on professional adult populations who do not have the additional complexity of second language processing and share the same culture as the interviewer.

Another unexplored limitation in the identified literature, briefly mentioned in Doggett's study, concerns the influence of cultural disparities on the operational

dynamics of the stones in the intended context. Diverse cultures may hold varying attitudes towards projecting onto inanimate objects, potentially impeding the acceptance and engagement with the interview technique. Given that the current study does not impose cultural criteria on its participants, there is a possibility that some individuals might disengage from the stones due to similar implications of cultural bias.

Lastly, any mention of adapting the technique to an online or distance delivery format is absent in the encompassed literature. Considering the lack of tangible responses and the affective nuances inherent in physical proximity to participants, it would be advantageous to aggregate insights derived from other researchers' experiences adapting the technique. As such, the present study offers a distinctive contribution to the evidential body by virtue of its execution of the technique in a remote mode. The imperative for further research lies in exploring such adaptations and replications of the talking stones interview technique, contributing to the augmentation and refinement of the nascent evidence base.

## 2.5. What are key areas of consideration for educational psychologists supporting schools with RIMS?

The following section delves into the examination of the seven selected articles derived from the conducted search. The discerned literature review furnishes instances and suggested methodologies for educational psychologists (EPs) to aid educators in optimising their pedagogical potential and enhancing the achievements of children with minoritised backgrounds. The discussed approaches with the included literature encompass avenues for training and professional development, extending consultative support, and cultivating schools' adeptness in fostering

inclusive environments. The current study aspires to delve deeper into these recommended practices as participants contribute their insights on the most effective means of supporting the enhancement of online education outcomes for children from RIM backgrounds.

Similar to Bronfenbrenner's ecosystemic model (Bronfenbrenner, 1996) adopted by most EPs in which a series of interconnected environments or systems interact to affect development, considerations were made of how support from EPs can be offered in light of an eco-systemic approach where work with parents and communities occurs. Below are some identified commonalities between the knowledge generated in the literature. As the literature review includes research from international texts, including those from North America, the term school psychologist/psychology will be used interchangeably throughout this section.

The most prominent area of support mentioned within the literature is the topic of education and training of teachers. Many of the authors included within the search posit that teachers and school staff will benefit from receiving training by EPs and other specialists on the cultural specificities of the student population they work with, the second language trajectories, and how to develop sustained relationships with parents (Akbar & Woods, 2019; Gilsenan & Lee, 2021; Parker et al., 2020). Cultural awareness is a significant area due to many factors requiring consideration. From the understood perspective of the current literature review, cultural awareness is described as the consideration of the socio-economic and socio-cultural challenges associated with members of particular cultures (Marku et al., 2022). Challenges may include practical barriers such as language differences and psychological barriers such as stigma and fear of isolation experienced by parents and some staff due to interacting with professionals (Marku et al., 2022). The EP is in an advantageous

position to arm themselves with knowledge specific to developing cultural competence within professionals by utilising theories and frameworks not considered common knowledge amongst the population. For instance, Gilsenan & Lee (2021) propose that educational psychologists can leverage their familiarity with frameworks like the Cummins Framework (Cummins, 2001) to aid parents and schools in comprehending the progression of second language acquisition. By doing such, EPs would contribute to setting realistic expectations and fostering the cultivation of effective strategies for fundamental social language development that schools may not be privy to prior (Gilsenan & Lee, 2021).

EPs are also fortunate to have the knowledge and resources necessary to facilitate training and raise awareness of the psychological implications of migration and its impact on children, their families and the community (Gilsenan & Lee, 2021). This awareness can significantly impact teachers' approaches to pedagogy and communication and system-wide implications such as diversifying staff recruitment (Akbar & Woods, 2019). A comparable perspective is echoed in the stance of Parker et al. (2020), who posit that school psychologists' efficacy hinges on their substantial knowledge, training, and adeptness in collaborating with various stakeholders. Nevertheless, an argument could be made that altering cultural attitudes falls outside the scope of the educational psychologist's role. Gaining a comprehensive grasp of a culture necessitates extended exposure, first-hand experience, and deep insights, all of which might prove challenging given the EP's existing responsibilities and individual situation. Moreover, cultivating cultural competence is a protracted and individual expedition, demanding continual adaptations to novel scenarios and interactions with diverse cultures (Akbar & Woods, 2019). Therefore, a question arises as to whether it is feasible for an EP to impart genuine cultural competence

through training alone. In addition, positions such as the one described by Parker et al. and Akbar and Woods suffer from the limitation of not operationalising and placing a boundary on collaboration with stakeholders so that the EP does not go beyond their remit and cause more damage than good. This is an essential consideration, given that perceptions of workload were reported as a potential reason by local authorities experiencing difficulties recruiting and retaining EPs (Lyonette et al., 2019).

Another identified area of difficulty for teachers of minoritised groups such as RIM background children is the implementation of a truly inclusive learning environment. Whilst the importance of cultural understanding as held by the teachers has been previously stated, some pieces of literature explore the benefits of when schools' policy, ethos and practice meet the needs for a culturally competent and inclusive classroom (Isik-Ercan et al., 2017). For example, encouraging and preparing for cross-cultural interactions such as modelling and anticipating questionings, using visual stimuli consistent with cultural bridge building, developing ongoing professional development opportunities regarding cultural competencies, ensuring understanding is shared regarding religious diversities, and seeking feedback/input from colleagues, members of the community and other potential guest speakers in the progression of their inclusivity, has been noted within the literature to be effective ways of developing cross-cultural acceptance and inclusivity (Abu Khalaf et al., 2023; Parker et al., 2020).

The authors also consider the complexities of developing a diverse and inclusive environment. As discussed in the included literature, action alone in diversifying an environment is insufficient to promote social inclusion. Instead, teachers and school administrators must monitor both the ‘who’ (i.e. student body ethnic make-up)

alongside the ‘how (i.e. organisational and instructional practices) in order to contribute to the development of inclusion genuinely (Juvonen et al., 2019). Educators can do this by developing awareness of the real-world relationships between cultures to understand better possible culture-based peer victimisation, rejection and isolation, which may be covered with the umbrella term “bullying”. EP services are positioned to recommend or directly support the integration of strategies such as those above due to their expertise in eco-systemic and ecological systems thinking. In addition, their positioning from outside a school's ecosystem allows them to adopt an alternative perspective on ways of thinking that may have become entrenched.

Lastly, explored within the literature is EPs' added advantage in providing valuable psychoeducation. While the value of teacher training and development has been mentioned earlier in this section, this recommendation differs in that it explores the potential of school psychologists working with teachers, families and students to develop psychological areas such as self-efficacy, confidence, resilience and self-esteem (Ingraham, 2000 within Parker et al., 2020). EPs can also provide support in helping educators develop their student's sense of belonging and security within the classroom environment (Juvonen et al., 2019) and address parents’ sense of fear, exclusion and judgement (Marku et al., 2022). The unique contribution of elucidating educational stakeholders' understanding of the psychological implications of regular school-based events is another area of support EPs can provide. For example, EPs are equipped to prepare educators for possible factors that may arise around transition time for RIM-background children (Gilsenan & Lee, 2021). This preparation package may include language or culture-based anxieties associated with transitions between classes, phases or the school.

Considering the vast array of challenges children from refugee and immigrant backgrounds encounter across environmental, cognitive, and behavioural realms, educational psychologists are positioned to assist educators in identifying and addressing areas requiring attention (Hart, 2009). In line with the previously discussed benefits in this segment, the meta-role of EPs, as professional entities detached from the involved systems, confers an advantage for impartial and pragmatic assessment of the strengths and challenges each stakeholder faces in various contexts.

## 2.6. Literature review findings summary

By exploring the collated knowledge on teachers' self-efficacy and online education, the implications of remote learning for refugee and immigrant children, and the utilisation of the talking stones interview technique, it is now possible to explore the following recommendations and discussions.

The reviewed literature highlighted the importance of schools establishing an adequate infrastructure to help students of refugee and immigrant backgrounds and their teachers with practical, psychological and systemic issues that can arise before or during the transition to mandatory online education and face-to-face learning. This infrastructure should include operating ethically regarding the digital literacy and competency of teachers and migrant learners and being aware of the demands placed on learners away from the classroom. An ethos of adaptation on the part of the educators and the institutions they represent should also be fostered to allow for more training and professional development. Especially given the vast potential knowledge professionals, such as educational psychologists, can transfer to school staff around cultural competence and psychoeducation.

When considering teachers' self-efficacy, the literature suggests that training and experience accrued by the teachers and the mindsets applied when internalising experiences will positively affect their perception. Another identified factor revealed in the literature is the impact caused by the availability of student learning resources, such as devices and signal quality, on teachers' perceived self-efficacy.

The research identified above presents contributions to the talking stones research evidence base on the 'freeing' nature of using stones to facilitate interview answers by youth and adult participants. The literature on using stones as an interview technique reveals a positive effect when used with RIM background participants whose first language is not English and with native English professionals such as reflective educators.

Also gathered from the reviewed literature is an increased understanding of EPs' role in developing effective online pedagogy. EPs are positioned as effective sources of information, training and guidance in areas beyond the academic considerations of RIMS, such as developing acceptance and inclusivity within the school and classroom environment and raising the expertise of staff on relevant psychological frameworks and theories related to the RIM experience.

Through the amalgamation of the studies included within the review, several unique contributions can be observed in the current study amidst the backdrop of existing research. The reviewed literature reveals many aspects to be considered in providing online education for children from refugee and immigrant backgrounds. However, the literature examined addresses these aspects individually, lacking a cohesive exploration of their combined impact on teachers' perceptions of their capabilities. It is anticipated that participants' responses in the current study may

mirror some of the considerations spotlighted in the literature review above, whether directly or indirectly. Given the diverse range of samples, factors, and contexts identified in the literature, there is a likelihood that the participants in this study might identify resonance between their experiences and thought processes and those documented in the literature. Thus, the present study aims to offer a valuable contribution to the body of knowledge by amalgamating these considerations within a single investigation.

Furthermore, situated within the United Kingdom, this study brings a distinct contribution to the landscape of online education, given the current understanding of the prevailing priorities, technical infrastructure, and school preparedness for a potential return to online teaching.

Exploration of the literature has also revealed several methodological limitations that the current study aimed to avoid. Primarily, as a result of the ontological positioning of the study, no declaration of assumptions will be made on participants' sense of self-efficacy. As questionnaires and measures are more coherent with the quantitative/empirical approach and the relatively small sample size, no conclusions will be formed and communicated that identify a direct link between the participant's experiences and their self-efficacy.

The current study also will not be defining participants with descriptive labels such as that of their digital competence or socio-economic status, as the focus of the study remains on the perceived effects on self-efficacy within the realm of online teaching. Therefore, dividing participants based on extra criteria would counter the study's original aims and present further bias in the interpretation of the data. For further

discussion on the methodological procedures followed, please see the subsequent chapter 3.

Several identified literature articles suggest changes professionals such as EP's can make without providing contextually and culturally relevant suggestions on how to carry out these changes. The current study intends to provide commentary on practical methods of implementing and responding to some of the knowledge generated from the analysis. Discussion on the implementation for both school staff and educational psychologists can be seen in chapters 6.1 and 6.2.

The literature obtained within this review has provided a secure contextual base for the current study in terms of methodological and theoretical considerations. The following chapter will proceed to discuss the decisions implemented in the above dimensions as well as the philosophical underpinnings of the study.

## Chapter 3

Chapter 3 will present the philosophical arguments and positioning of the current research. This will be done by discussing the ontological, epistemological and analytical assumptions. This chapter will also discuss methodological information regarding the current study, including research design, participants and sampling considerations, ethical considerations, and data analysis procedures. To begin, the research questions for the study are reiterated below.

**RQ1:** What contributes to primary and secondary phase teachers' perception of their self-efficacy in educating Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods?

**RQ2:** What are the perceived barriers and facilitators to successfully teaching Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods by teachers with experience in teaching RIMs online?

**RQ3:** What are the perceived ways educational psychologists can be best utilised to support teachers' self-efficacy in successfully supporting Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods?

## 3.1. Philosophical paradigm

For research to attain significance, robustness, and coherence, it is imperative to identify the philosophical assumptions underpinning the various stages of the research (Smith, 2015). The character of the study, the chosen methodology for data collection and interpretation, and one's convictions about the linkage between knowledge and the empirical realm collectively constitute a philosophical paradigm (Kuhn, 1996) that necessitates unity and congruence (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020).

In this chapter, the chosen philosophical paradigm of the current research will be examined, commencing with delineating the identified ontology and subsequently delving into the epistemology of the study. Smith (2012), as cited in Hurtado & Nudler (2012), broadly defines ontology as the "science of what is, of the kinds and structures of objects, properties, events, processes and relations in every area of reality" (Hurtado & Nudler, 2012, p. 47). Consequently, adopting an ontological stance signifies embracing the generation of knowledge related to reality. Epistemology, the investigation of knowledge, scrutinises how this understanding of reality is engendered and how assertions of knowledge can be formulated (Thomas, 2017). Epistemology can thus be perceived as elucidating 'how' the researcher apprehends reality (Carson et al., 2001).

The following sections will present the philosophical assumptions informing the decision to adopt the relevant interpretivist paradigm used in this research project. This will be done by exploring the ontological position of relativism and the epistemological position of constructionism.

## 3.2. Ontological assumption

The present study is based on the relativist belief ontological assumption in which concepts of truth, knowledge and rationality are relative to the society, culture and epoch in which they are generated (Bernstein, 1983). Relativism challenges the position argued by realism or empiricism in which absolute, unbiased and objective truths exist, separate from those influenced by the individual and culture. Within relativism, reality is therefore seen as dependent on human interpretation and knowledge and can exist in multiple constructed forms rather than a singular knowable one (Braun & Clarke, 2013). Reality or truth is believed to be situated within the confinement of the time and context it pertains to, thus allowing more flexibility in its acceptance than the concept of universal truth purported by the realism approach. Relativism also places equal theoretical value on these constructed realities, as there is no foundation to claim that one reality is more authentic than others (Braun & Clarke, 2016). The relativist approach allows for a personalised view of the world; however, its limitations lie in the fact that it can only demonstrate a partial view of the world and only be interpreted as such. This presents a difficulty when applying collected knowledge to enact practical or wide-reaching implications such as affecting change within real-world institutions (Farrell, 2011).

## 3.3. Epistemological positioning

As mentioned above, epistemology refers to exploring the definition of knowledge, its legitimacy and where it is situated (Russ, 2014). Viewed as a separate set of considerations to research methodology, epistemology is more concerned with the assumptions and approaches utilised in discovering or generating knowledge, depending on the paradigmatic position. The epistemological position of the current study is known as constructionism, an approach considered coherent with the ontological position of relativism. Constructionism views knowledge not as an objective reflection of reality waiting to be discovered but as a continually socially constructed exchange of discourse (Burr, 2003). It rejects the rigid assumptions of essentialism and realism and emphasises the contextual specificity of knowledge (Engler, 2004). Due to the changeable nature of context, knowledge is continuously being constructed and reconstructed, meaning constructionism rejects the notion of one universal truth and accepts that “all knowledge is derived from looking at the world from some perspective or other, and is in the service of some interests rather than others” (Burr, 2003, p. 17).

The constructionist epistemology greatly emphasises the importance of language and its power to convey and construct realities for individuals. There is also an emphasis on the importance of interaction through language to co-construct understanding, often referred to within the perspective of social constructionism.

Therefore, the current study also bears influence from social constructionism as the research aims and methodology seeks to utilise social processes and interaction in interpreting realities by carrying out semi-structured interviews. However, depending on the theorist followed (Hacking, 1998; Latour et al., 1986), the word “social” could be considered redundant given constructionism's existing focus on interaction. Further reference to the epistemology assumed in the current study will be called constructionism to reflect this belief.

It is important to bear in mind that the constructionist epistemology, similar to other epistemologies that invoke subjectivism as a philosophy and except for those on the extreme end of the continuum, neither rejects the existence of an external reality nor questions the validity of knowledge produced by it. However, philosophers posited within constructionism believe in the impossibility of separating an understanding of an external reality from the influence of an individual’s reflections and interpretations. In other words, as written by Levers (2013), “Observations are influenced by the observer and the observer is influenced by the observed” (Pg 3).

## 3.4. Interpretivism as a paradigm

Interpretivism is viewed as a methodological and philosophical approach to social scientific studies and focuses on how humans make sense of and communicate this sense of their world (Schwartz-Shea & Yanow, 2020). Interpretation within the social science sense traditionally overlaps with traditional philosophical frameworks such as phenomenology, hermeneutics, critical theory, pragmatism, symbolic interaction and ethnomethodology.

Within the educational research field, Interpretivism has been used to understand and examine cultural influences within a group, such as students, teachers and other

stakeholders, due to its requirement of positioning contextualisation within a specific timeframe or setting (Thanh & Thanh, 2015). This situational specificity also allows for the investigation of individual narratives and perspectives in response to several systemic factors, such as policies and practices, resulting in the generation of action research and other influential uses of the produced knowledge (Mack, 2010; Morgan, 2018).

As a paradigm, interpretivism provides a framework for understanding social phenomena by emphasising the importance of subjective meaning and individual interpretation in shaping social reality. It is often referred to as the polar opposite of positivism as it rejects the view that the social world can be examined and understood by the same scientific lens and methodologies applied to the natural world (Nelson et al., 2014). Interpretivism posits that truth and knowledge are subjective to cultural and historical contexts and are based on the interpretation of those who experience them (Ryan, 2018). Methodologies that adopt the interpretivist paradigm should align with the belief that external reality cannot be discovered through research as the participant's and researcher's interpretation will affect the proper understanding of the experience. Therefore, the words and discourse used by participants and the interpretive methodologies used by researchers present an actual and subjective reality for each person involved (Clarke, Braun & Hayfield within Smith, 2015).

### The use of interpretivism in the current study and the position of main researcher

Based on the discussion in the previous section, the present study is situated within the interpretivism paradigm. The chosen ontological and epistemological

assumptions align with relativist and constructionist perspectives. This selection is driven by the recognition that the contexts of online teaching, the assessment of self-efficacy, the definition of "success," and the factors influencing these aspects are profoundly personal and subjective, varying among participants. The research is also keen to capture the subjective knowledge that each participant holds regarding the role and contributions of the educational psychology profession. Although quantifiable information could be obtained through scales and measures concerning aspects like self-efficacy, asserting the universality of such knowledge would be impractical due to its historical and culturally specific context. Consequently, semi-structured interviews offer a platform for sharing individualised, current perceptions, which I interpret. Interviews also facilitate the use of language to convey individual realities, aligning with the epistemological standpoint.

Moreover, their interactions with educational psychologists, other school staff, and societal observations may influence participants' perspectives. Thus, their statements during interviews reflect an understanding of socially co-constructed constructs. The study's objective is to capture an idea of influencers on participants' perceptions of their self-efficacy without assuming that any participant's reality is more actual than another's or that their experiences are uniform. This understanding also extends to the impact of my knowledge throughout the research process, potentially introducing biases in interpreting the constructed knowledge. Please see Chapter 6.7 for further exploration of potential researcher biases that may have affected the study. Henwood and Pidgeon (1994) highlight the importance of recognising the different forms of subjectivity inherent in knowledge generation through research. These forms of subjectivity encompass "participants' implicit understandings; researchers' perspectives and interpretations; cultural meaning

systems linking participants' and researchers' understandings, intertwined with power relations; and acts that validate particular interpretations within social or institutional networks" (p. 237).

My affiliation with educational institutions in a professional and personal manner in addition to the broader knowledge on the impact of distance teaching during the pandemic possessed, introduced additional subjectivity that could have influenced interpretations (Michael, 1991). Further examination of how these individual subjectivities might have affected the methodology and resulting knowledge is presented in Chapter 6.6.

## 3.5. Analytical assumptions

The current study will approach the data analysis with a methodology consistent with the interpretivist paradigm in which the subjectivity of the participants and the researcher is considered. Kidder and Fine (1987) describe a purely qualitative approach as a 'Big Q' approach in which the search for a universal meaning is abandoned in favour of accepting the influence of context and subjectivity on produced knowledge (Kidder & Fine, 1987; Braun and Clarke within Smith, 2015). The current study aims to adopt an approach influenced by the 'Big Q' and will continuously embrace the importance of researcher subjectivity while ensuring that themes and codes are generated organically from the data, as suggested by Braun and Clarke (as cited in Smith, 2015). However, the current study does not fully posit within the Big Q approach, given my awareness of the value quantitative information could add to the collected knowledge.

As alluded to by the brief mention of themes and coding above, the approach to analysing the resulting data will be thematic analysis as described by Braun and Clarke (2006). Braun and Clarke suggested in their 2006 article that six steps be followed to complete thematic analysis. These steps are as follows: familiarisation with the data, coding, searching for themes, reviewing themes, defining and naming themes and writing up the analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006). There are several considerations made concerning the generation of themes and coding. Within the current study, it is intended to utilise an Inductive approach to thematic analysis as opposed to a deductive approach. Inductive approaches view the themes as strongly linked and born from the data, bearing little relationship to the theoretical interests of the researcher. Whereas deductive is primarily driven by the researcher's theoretical interest (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Lastly, the current study uses a latent approach to identifying themes. This approach focuses on more than the explicit nature of what the participants say at a surface level as it goes 'beneath' the words to identify the underlying ideas, assumptions and conceptualisations (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

The rationale for these choices stems from the current study being designed within the established theoretical underpinnings of perceived self-efficacy (Bandura,1993). The interview questions have been designed to provide insight into the lived experience of participants' perceived self-efficacy. Therefore, an inductive approach is more conducive to the study's aims. The latent approach to theme identification is also believed to be more conducive to the philosophical assumptions of the current study due to the strong association with constructionism. By accepting that the participants' meaning is layered underneath what was articulated, a richer understanding of some of the realities experienced by the participants is garnered.

The rest of this chapter will outline the design and methodology used for the research. In addition, further detailed information will be provided on the participants participating in the current study, the materials used, and the procedures undertaken. Also discussed are the approaches taken to data analysis procedures and the steps to ensure trustworthiness and ethical considerations.

## 3.6. Research design

The research design adopted is the qualitative exploratory design. Exploratory refers to the study of phenomena or populations that have not been previously studied, where the researcher is looking for "*new knowledge, new insights, new understanding, and new meaning*" (Brink & Wood, 1998, p. 312). Exploratory designs and studies can rely on open-ended interviews, focused interviews, case studies, surveys and many other methodologies that allow the researcher to gain an in-depth and novel understanding (Swedberg, 2020). Therefore, through the chosen methodology of semi-structured interviews, a novel adaptation of an elicitation interview technique, and the lack of existing research into the area of self-efficacy in teachimg RIM background students online, there is a methodological rationale that the exploratory design is the most appropriate for the current study. A further rationale behind adopting this design can also be observed in the cohesion with the study's ontological position of social constructionism. As the discovery of knowledge is being conducted jointly with the participants and the data provided in the interviews, in addition to the interpretation done through coding, the exploratory design is the more appropriate methodology for the research questions.

Exploratory designs do have limitations, however. There is an inability to generalise findings from the results given the in-depth and possibly open-ended responses

acquired from participants. Knowledge stimulated by exploratory designs can be made generalisable by conducting further quantifiable research (Swedberg, 2020). Therefore, to remain consistent with this methodology, the current study does not aim to generate hypotheses about the target topic but instead, stimulate and encourage further "inroad into an area that is currently little known" (Swedberg, 2020, p. 38).

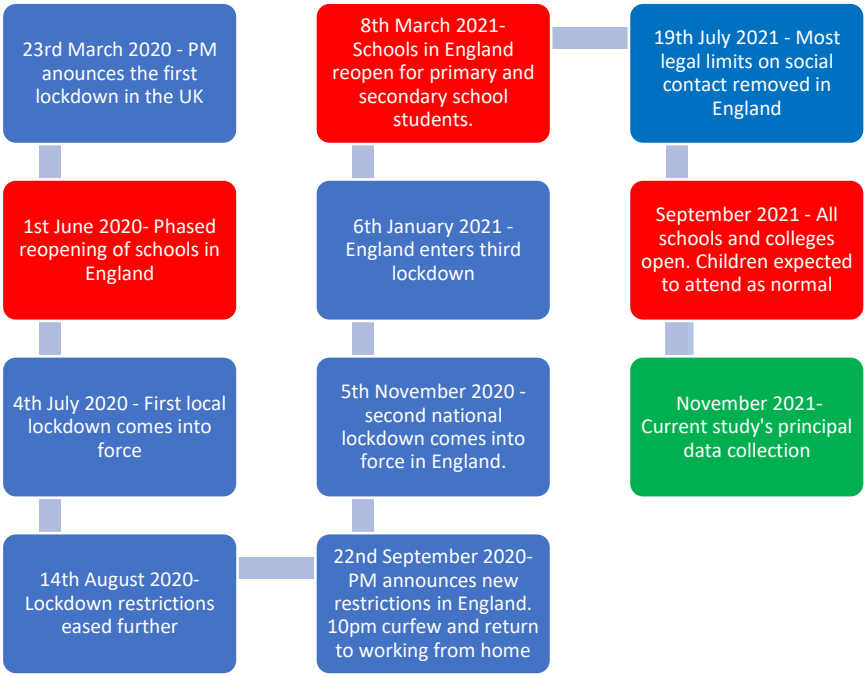
Another limitation in exploratory studies/design is the assurance of validity (or credibility). Further exploration of trustworthiness is dealt with later in this chapter (3.13). McCall and Simmons (as cited in Stebbins, 2001) suggest several factors that can impact the credibility of exploratory research. They suggest that the reactive effects of the observer's presence or activities on the phenomenon being observed, the distorting effects of perception and interpretation on the observer's part, and the limitations of the observer's ability to witness all relevant aspects of the phenomena in question, all exist as threats (Stebbins, 2001, p. 45). In order to address these limitations, Stebbins suggests that researchers should focus on the benefits future replications and extensions of the study bring so that concatenation of results can be made and validity can be subsequently increased. In light of this, such considerations and recommendations are explored extensively in Chapter 6.6.

The approach adopted within the analysis of the collected data is that of the inductive approach. This design takes a bottom-up approach where the researcher begins with a sample and generates meaning relevant to the area of interest from the data observed/obtained.

Below is a reminder of the position of the current study within the relevant COVID-19 pandemic timeline and the impact of the timing on recruitment.

## Position of the current study in the COVID-19 timeline

**Figure 2.**
Relevant covid-19 events in the UK




Recruitment for the current study began immediately after ethical approval had been acquired in October 2021, and by the end of November 2021, all 15 interviews had been completed. This meant that the study was situated after schools had generally returned to regular attendance, albeit with individual stipulations on social mixing and cross contaminations of "bubbles". Teachers, therefore, have been providing remote instruction/online learning in some form to children who could not attend or were authorised to attend since the first lockdown on the 23rd of March 2020. However, they were not required to have had this experience with refugee and immigrant background children at the time of data collection. It was impossible to collect information on the number of refugee and immigrant background children on the roll during the data collection. Further detail on sampling is provided later in the chapter (3.11).

## 3.7. Semi-structured interviews

The data collection method chosen is the semi-structured interview. This method was chosen following the adopted philosophical positions of social constructionism and interpretivism (explained further in 3.1) and the need for a data collection method that allows participants the freedom to express their interpretation of reality. Lune and Berg (2017) describe semi-structured interviews as being more or less structured and flexible in the wording of the questions and language, giving the interviewer more freedom. This freedom is afforded by allowing the interviewer to answer questions, request clarification and add or delete probes for more information (Lune & Berg, 2017, p. 68).

Semi-structured interviews were chosen over other qualitative methods, such as questionnaires and observations, because of the benefit of directly interacting with the participants in generating knowledge. Through interviews, it is more manageable for the researcher to "set aside the natural attitude of our ingrained assumptions and categories" (Yardley, 2000, p. 217) because the phenomena are being explored through simultaneous interpretation and discussion with the agent. As the research is designed to explore how participants interpret their self-efficacy and what barriers or facilitators they identify, it was imperative to employ a data collection methodology that reduces the opportunity for bias. It was also essential to allow the participants to convey their truths as they had constructed them.

## 3.8. Relevance to research questions

The study's research questions seek to contribute towards understanding how perceived self-efficacy has been affected regarding teaching refugee and immigrant minors online. As demonstrated in Chapter 2, there needs to be more existing literature in this area. As such, the current study posits itself as an exploration of what key findings could be focused on in further studies. A methodology that allows for the flexible elicitation of topics by participants, such as semi-structured interviews, would be best placed. While other forms of qualitative methodologies, such as focus groups, could have also been utilised, the practical constraints of reduced resources, funding and social distancing impeded the possibility of carrying this out face-to-face during the data collection period. Additionally, computing limitations such as low bandwidth and overlapping speech affecting the interaction and spontaneity of topics within an online focus group would bring more challenges and inconvenience (Stewart & Shamdasani, 2017).

The research questions also require a methodology that allows the individual participants to engage with their reasoning, experience and cognitions. Therefore, a semi-structured interview was deemed the most appropriate methodology to allow for this, given that participants have the freedom and flexibility to engage with the discussion without too much enforcement or control by the interviewer, as a more formal structured interview or survey would require.

## 3.9. Designing the interview schedule

When designing the schedule, it was essential to maintain several considerations before and during the formulation process. The suggested process by McIntosh and Morse (2015) was adhered to when formulating the interview schedule. Their process states that the researcher should follow four steps to produce a coherent and well-evidenced interview schedule. The first step is to identify the topic's domain and principal components. Mcintosh and Morse describe this stage as the researcher becoming familiar with the topic and its components but maintaining a platform of unknowingness so that they cannot anticipate all possible answers (McIntosh & Morse, 2015, p. 5). The interviewer should know what topics they want to explore in the interviews based on knowledge acquired from existing literature or prior fieldwork. The second step is to identify categories to bind the questions within. An understanding of the topic should influence the categories. Next, the interviewer should identify the question items themselves from the categories established. McIntosh and Morse define an item as "an individual article or unit that is part of a collection or set" (p.5). The formulation of items then helps to influence the direction and formulation of the question stems (step 4). The question that stems from the schedule was formulated concerning both Mcintosh and Lune's key texts. Accessibility was a vital consideration of the schedule. As such, it was necessary to ensure that the design of the question stems took into consideration the lowest level of comprehensibility the interviewer is likely to encounter. Therefore, a need to ensure that the questions are formulated in a non-complex or convoluted manner was made apparent (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Lune and Berg (2017) ask researchers to consider the sequencing of questions by starting with easier, non-threatening questions before moving on to more complex questions. Lune and Berg

also suggested the notion of essential questions. These refer to questions that focus exclusively on the topic being investigated, geared at eliciting specific desired information, the use of 'throwaway questions'- questions designed to develop rapport between interviewer and subjects, and 'probing questions' – questions that allow for the drawing out of complete output from participants (Lune & Berg, 2017). Please see below for a table summarising the abovementioned guidance and contextual examples from the schedule demonstrating its implementation.

**Table 4.**

*McIntosh and Morse (2015) guidance in the formulation of an interview schedule*

| **Step** | **Identification of domain** | **Identification of categories** | **Identification of Items** | **Creation of question stems** | **Final included question** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Contextual example** | "Perceived self-efficacy" | "Mastery of experiences" | Perception of performance outcomes in teaching online | "which stone best represents the experience of (A)." | *…could you choose a stone that you think best represents the experience of teaching non-refugee/immigrant children online/through video lessons, VLE etc.* |

**Table 5.**

*Lune and Berg (2017) guidance in the creation of interview items*

| Question types | Easy, non-threatening questions | Essential questions | Throwaway questions | Probing questions |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| **Contextual example** | *What comes to mind when you think of a "successful lesson"?* | *In your opinion what do you think contributes to this thought on your ability to teach refugee/immigrant background children successfully online?* | *What did you think about the "stones" activities during this interview?* | *Is it (talking stones) something you would use in your own teaching or online practices?* |

## 3.10. Talking stones (Wearmouth, 2004)

The interview schedule utilises an adaptation of the interview technique referred to as talking stones. This technique is a pedagogical tool by Janice Wearmouth, a prominent advocator, and stems from personal construct psychology. The interviewee is invited to invoke self-advocacy by projecting their thoughts and beliefs onto a set of objects. The interviewee is presented with various stones in size, shape, colour and texture. Through open-ended questions, they are invited to explore and select a stone that they feel best represents or conveys the construct

they are trying to express. It is thought that through the investment of meaning in inanimate objects, the interviewer has the opportunity to glimpse the world as experienced by the interviewee, positioning the talking stones tool within the social constructivist epistemology (Wearmouth, 2004). Wearmouth demonstrates the use of talking stones with disaffected youth. However, existing research demonstrates its use with asylum-seeking youth, refugees and native-English-speaking early years practitioners. A review of existing literature and the implication of these uses to the knowledge base is explored in depth in Chapter 2.4. Similar to existing research, the rationale for using the stones methodology was to facilitate the sharing of constructs and biases which are generally too difficult to express or too personal to share. The stones depersonalise the responses and act as a proxy to represent accurate answers held by the participants.

As mentioned above, the current study adapts the technique in several methodical ways. Stones were presented to the participants through high-quality images embedded in a Microsoft PowerPoint presentation that was then shared with the interviewee (please see appendix (i) for a screenshot example). Different animated sequences of images (GIFs) were created for each stone, displaying a close-up animation of the stones being rotated by hand. This animation was done to give the participants as much 3-D representation of the stones as possible. The images were taken in natural outdoor lighting to avoid shadow and use a high-megapixel digital camera to capture each stone's texture and surface detail. Naturally, it was not feasible to include specific characteristics such as the tactile response of feeling the stones and the individual weight, which may have impacted participants' formulations.

### 3.10.1.The rationale for using Talking stones

It was decided early in the conception of the initial iteration of the research that talking stones would be used with the interviewed asylum-seeking adolescents. It was hoped that the facilitative nature of the stones would help elicit thoughts and opinions where language or lived experience was lacking or insecure for the participants, similar to the purpose of self-advocacy exemplified in Wearmouth's key paper with disaffected youths. When the study transitioned to its current iteration with native English-speaking adults, the decision to use the stones within the interviews was influenced by the stone's potential to assist with a deeper interaction with the topic through the reflexivity it promotes. As Wearmouth (2004) suggested, talking stones allow the receiver to glimpse more into the speaker's experience from their perspective. The stones, therefore, allow for introspective imagining, remembering, interpreting, judging, caring, feeling and contemplating of experiences via projections onto concrete, meaningless items (Henderson, 2010). The current study asks participants to engage with their perceived self-efficacy in an area they may have lived or experienced to differing extents. Therefore, the utilisation of personal constructs (aka PCP) was thought to hold more relevance to understanding the construction of one's perceived self-efficacy than imagination alone, which may be affected by current dispositions such as anxieties or distractions. Personal constructs allow us to continually build and rebuild internal ideas of reality unique to a person and influence how we anticipate and interpret future experiences (G. Kelly, 1991). By using the stones with the adult participants, it is possible to get insight into how each participant's self-efficacy has been constructed through the language they choose to use. Other personal construct activities, such as kinetic drawing, could provide

similar insight. However, such techniques would prove too difficult or time-consuming to conduct remotely. In addition, asking them to draw pictures may threaten the adult participants' maturity and dignity.

In conclusion, the use of the talking stones with the adult participants of the current study was considered to be an effective means of eliciting personal and intrinsic attitudes and values while avoiding "common sense or party-line responses" that could be given with just semi-structured interviews questions alone (Burr et al., 2014, p. 352). The technique and its PCP theoretical underpinnings are synonymous with the research's epistemology, and the practical implications of adapting it to an online, purely visual medium can be considered a positive addition owing to the increased accessibility and applicability it affords.

Please see Appendix (iv) for the complete interview schedule.

## 3.11. Participants and sampling

### Sampling information

### Table.6

*Demographic information for all participants*

| Baseline characteristic | N |
|---|---|
| N | 15 |
| **Gender** | |
| Male | 3 |
| Female | 12 |
| **Age Bracket** | |
| 18-25 | 1 |
| 26-34 | 10 |
| 35-46 | 1 |
| 47-55 | 3 |
| **Teaching experience** | |
| 1-3 | 1 |
| 4-9 | 9 |
| 10+ | 5 |
| **Phase taught** | |
| Primary | 9 |

| | |
|---|---|
| Secondary | 4 |
| Foundation stage | 2 |

**Table.7**

*Analysis sample information*

| Characteristics | N |
|---|---|
| **Experienced in teaching RIM face-to-face only** | 6 |
| **Experienced in teaching RIM online and face-to-face** | 6 |
| **No experience in teaching RIMS** | 3 |

Fifteen participants were recruited through a combined purposive and snowball sampling strategy, allowing for an opportunistic and convenient recruitment approach (Robson, 2011). The research required specific typicality among participants, necessitating their current employment as educators within the primary and secondary teaching phases. A slight deviation was made by including foundation stage educators (two reception teachers) in the data collection. However, participants from further education settings, such as college and university teachers, were excluded from the recruitment.

The decision to include reception teachers was based on the observation that the primary phase in England encompasses three age ranges: children under 5 (nursery), children aged 5 to 7 or 8 (infant, key stage 1), and children up to age 11 or 12 (juniors, key stage 2), while key stage 3 and key stage 4 fall within the secondary phase (UK Government, 2012). Additionally, the reception stage is where teaching and assessment instruments, including testing pupils' starting points in language, literacy, maths, and others, become more utilised (UK Government, n.d.). Thus, the expanded range of skills and competence required of reception teachers and their experience delivering online instruction to children justified their inclusion in the data.

Participants were required to be over 18 years old and not in their first year of teaching (i.e., newly qualified/probation year). This criterion was established due to the belief that newly qualified teachers, lacking experience due to COVID-19 disruptions and lockdowns, would require more time to gain post-training mastery to draw unbiased conclusions about their self-efficacy.

The study's awareness was disseminated among Special Educational Needs Coordinators (SENCOs) within my network of schools. However, the primary publicity was achieved through sharing the study across social media platforms and groups. As the interviews were conducted online, geographical constraints were irrelevant, and participants across the UK who met the criteria were welcomed to participate. Many participants were identified or recommended by those who had already taken part in the study, resulting in at least five of the included participants being recruited through snowballing. Upon identifying participants, they were furnished with written information and consent letters, which required reading, signing, and returning before the interview could proceed. Copies of these letters are provided in the appendices section (v & vi).

**Table.8**

*Participant groupings*

| **Participant code** | **Experienced in face-to-face teaching of RIMs** | **Experienced in online teaching of RIMs** | **Group** |
|---|---|---|---|
| P002 | Yes | No | **A** |
| P003 | Yes | No | **A** |
| P004 | Yes | No | **A** |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| P008 | Yes | No | **A** |
| P013 | Yes | No | **A** |
| P015 | Yes | No | **A** |
| P001 | Yes | Yes | **B** |
| P006 | Yes | Yes | **B** |
| P009 | Yes | Yes | **B** |
| P011 | Yes | Yes | **B** |
| P012 | Yes | Yes | **B** |
| P014 | Yes | Yes | **B** |

Within the final included sample for analysis, six participants communicated that they solely had experience teaching a refugee or immigrant background child in a face-to-face context. In comparison, another six interviewed participants indicated they had experience teaching a child of refugee or immigrant background online and face-to-face. In order to enrich the analysis with interpretations of the different experiences from varying perspectives, a decision was made to separate the participants into two groups, “A” and “B”, as described in Table 8 above. Participants with sole experience in face-to-face teaching were designated as part of group A, and those with experience of both face-to-face and online teaching of RIMs were in group B. When analysing the data in response to research questions 1 and 2, the research questions that sought to explore the perceived impactors on self-efficacy and the perceived barriers and facilitators to teaching RIMS online, only participants with experience teaching RIM background children both online and face-to-face (AKA Group B) were examined. This decision was made to avoid participants basing their

responses on possibly held stereotypes instead of other factors related to perceived self-efficacy. Additionally, given that one of the theoretical bases of self-efficacy is “mastery of experiences” (Bandura, 1977), it was decided to include participants with lived experience teaching RIM-background children online. With reference to the philosophical assumptions mentioned in Chapter 3, the study aims to explore the shared reality constructed between those with some exposure to children with RIM backgrounds online rather than those with none. Therefore, to enrich the interpretation of the data, participants with authentic experience teaching the target population (children of refugee or immigrant background) online were analysed separately from those without this experience.

In analysing responses in light of research question 3, participants from both groups were considered. This decision is due to the question being focused on their perception and interpretation of EP support based on their lived experience of working within the classroom, where they may have acquired an awareness of EPs. As mentioned, the data sets were analysed in closed groups, and comparisons and contrasts between and within the groups will be discussed in Chapter 5 below.

Lastly, three participants indicated they had no experience teaching children of refugee or immigrant backgrounds in either context (solely face-to-face or online). The data for these three participants were removed from the analysis entirely.

## 3.12. Procedural

Interviews were conducted online through the use of the Zoom client. Once the communication between myself and the participant yielded a mutual time to conduct the interview, having received the signed consent form, participants received a Zoom

meeting link via email or messenger to join the interview "room" where the interviewer was waiting. Participants were encouraged but not forced to have their webcams on. However, the interviewer had their camera on for the interview. The interviews lasted approximately 30 minutes to 1 hour, depending on the participant's contributions to the discussion. During the interview, the talking stone questions were facilitated using the Zoom client's function of "giving remote control", where shared usage of the mouse cursor could be shared. This process allowed the participants to select the most appropriate stone to their answer freely. However, when this was impossible due to technological limitations, the interviewer would control the mouse under their direction.

The procedure for the interview schedule will now be discussed.

**Interview schedule**

The presentation (the slides containing the stones) is not shared in the first instance, so the participants' first interaction is with me, the interviewer. It was ensured that interviews begin with a moment to build rapport through light conversation and an expression of gratitude for the participant's time. The participant is then offered an opportunity to go through the consent form in case there is anything they need clarification on included in the wording. The interview begins with a scripted introduction and a request for permission to begin recording. Please see appendix (iv) for more details on the introduction script and a copy of it. The participant is then guided through a warmup question using the stones, where they are asked to choose a stone that best represents a typical Monday morning for them. This question aims to help the participants orientate to responding to a stone question and test the control method of selecting a stone. Once they were ready to proceed,

the interview schedule began. An effort was made to ensure that the questions within the schedule employed a scaffolding approach akin to Bruner's version of the theory (Mcleod, 2008). Therefore, questions regarding refugees and immigrants followed similarly worded questions about home/native-born children. Definition questions were presented initially, with more abstract opinion questions occurring later in the interview. This was done to gradually build upon the participants' understanding and expectations of the questions. Full details on the guidelines followed in creating the interview schedule can be found in section 3.6. above

The first part of the interview aims to delve into the participants' understanding of the key topics of the study. Participants are requested to define in their own words the terms: "refugee", "immigrant", and "minor". The purpose of this question is not only to activate schemata and engage the participants in thinking about the relevant topics but also to give the interviewer an immediate insight into biases/models they may hold relevant to the terms. For example, most participants equated refugees with a person escaping persecution, turmoil or danger, while an immigrant was equated with choice, freedom and the sole action of movement. The follow-up question was whether they knowingly had a child that fits their description of a refugee or immigrant.

The following questions ask the participants to share their initial responses to the phrases "online learning" and "successful lesson". This was done to frame the participant's responses as their experiences with online methods may wildly vary in addition to what defines a lesson to be successful. By helping the participants identify their construct of "success", the responses to questions around their

perceived self-efficacy will be closer to representing their truths as they will be able to consider their internalised conditions for success.

The next set of questions asks participants to consider their experience teaching non-refugee and non-immigrant background children in both face-to-face and online environments. This was done to help the participants separate their perceived self-efficacy in general teaching from that of the target group. To this point, participants were also asked about face-to-face teaching in hopes of helping them identify their separate efficacy when teaching online. These questions were structured as stone selection questions. It was decided to use the stones to help the participants engage with their introspection and elicit their opinions with the assistance of the wide range of aesthetic cues that the stones provide. Participants were then encouraged to consider the same questions concerning their opinion on teaching refugee and immigrant children offline and online.

The next question asks participants to use their imagination to envision a hypothetical identified refugee or immigrant background child joining their next class, which happened to be an online lesson. The participants are asked for their opinion on how they believed the hypothetical lesson would have turned out in terms of achieving success. They are also asked as a follow-up question what they believe the hypothetical child would have thought and felt, having been in their taught online lesson. This section of the interview links with the study's acceptance of the participants' use of imagined attitudes based on a lived experience towards self-efficacy, as explored in the literature review above (see Chapter 2, section 2.3). It also helps to identify both facilitative and obstructive factors considered a priority when providing online education. The study recognises the distinction between

believed self-efficacy and reflective self-efficacy. However, participants are invited to contribute opinions based on either to allow maximum participation from the recruited participants. While participants may draw from stereotypes and misconceptions when forming their opinion on their perceived self-efficacy, the risk of this occurring is minimised by focusing on participants who have acquired experience teaching RIM-background children online.

The same questions were asked to all participants about their understanding of the educational psychologist's role and whether they had ever worked with one. They are also asked how they believe an educational psychologist can support them in feeling more confident in their ability to teach refugee and immigrant backgrounds children online successfully. The need to inquire about the participants' understanding of the role allows for further insight into the contextualisation of the understanding held amongst the interviewed teachers.

The last question asked is for the participants' feedback on using the stones technique in the interview. Participants are asked for their opinion, the likelihood of using it during online practices and how the technique could have been improved. Because the adaptation is novel within research, the feedback collected can be used to improve future studies' use of the technique and provide an understanding of the limitations faced by participants in the current study.

## 3.13. Pilot

As part of designing the interview schedule, four pilot interviews were held. The interviews were held over Zoom and included an evaluative section after the

schedule had been administered. This evaluation aimed to collect qualitative information on the schedule, its delivery and the handling of the technology (e.g. testing the screen-sharing function of Zoom and the PowerPoint presentation links). Four of the pilot interviewees were female. Two were primary school teachers in the UK, one was a secondary school equivalent teacher in Amsterdam, and one was a primary school teacher in Italy. One of the participants had English as an acquired language. This variety in language ability helped further to ensure the accessibility of the language in the schedule. Chadwick, Bahr & Altrecht (as cited in McIntosh and Morse, 2015) suggest that piloting an interview schedule allows the researcher to check that they have included all of the questions, whether the questions elicit the type of response that was anticipated and ensures that the language is meaningful and accessible to participants. It also assists in recognising whether the questions are in a logical order and whether the interviewees feel motivated to continue with the interview (McIntosh & Morse, 2015). Feedback received on the interview schedule based on the pilot was unanimously positive, leading to few amendments to the schedule itself. Pilot participants felt there was a good number of questions that did not make the interview feel tedious or time-demanding. Feedback on the delivery mentioned that the experience would be improved if the interview was slower or more relaxed. This is believed to be related to my lack of experience conducting interviews. The pilot participants found the stones questions the most motivating aspect of the interview due mainly to the novelty of the activity and the increased sense of face validity it provided in the participants' expectations of psychology research.

One main feedback gained from the pilot participants was that none of them had the experience of having a refugee pupil or were aware if the children in their class had

refugee backgrounds. Alternatively, they all referred to having a child in their class of immigrant background, albeit of different upbringing contexts (i.e. just arrived or arrived years ago), leading to the inclusion of the immigrant background aspect of the study's title and aims.

Throughout the development of the interview schedule, feedback was garnered from the project supervisors to maintain a higher quality of question items. Although the interview was not formally piloted with the research supervisors, their input throughout the development stage provided a cyclical feedback process that allowed reformulating or replacing questions. One such response was the added question that asked participants to imagine a hypothetical online lesson where they had a refugee join them with biographical information of the child being given approximately 24 hours beforehand. Participants were asked their thoughts and feelings regarding the lesson at the end. A follow-up question was then asked, requesting the participant to respond from the hypothetical child's perspective, again on the lesson's delivery by the teacher and not necessarily on the lesson's content. This question aimed to combine the lived experiences held by the participants and the imagined outcomes of a hypothetical scenario based on their understanding as framed by their lived experience perspective.

## 3.14. Ethical considerations

Ethical guidelines for this research were followed by the Institute of Education and outlined in the British Psychological Society Code of Ethics (British Psychological Society et al., 2018). Ethical approval was granted via email from the ethics committee at the Institute of Education on the 28th of October 2021. Ethical approval from the Institute of Education and examples of the informed consent and

information documents can be found in the appendices section. Below are some of the areas considered in the study's ethics formulation.

**Informed consent and assent**

Among the ethical considerations was ensuring that participants provided their consent and assent to participate in the study and the information it aimed to collect. Beginning the interview, the introduction script used with each participant introduced the interviewer, the course that the thesis fulfils, and a brief introduction on the context and rationale for the current study. The participants were notified within the introduction that recording would begin after giving one final verbal authorisation. Later in the interview, the participants were informed when the recording had stopped. Participants were also provided with a debrief at the end of the interview, which provided graded explanations of the psychology behind the talking stones, the concept of self-efficacy and what they could do should they feel affected by the discussions had in the interview. Please see appendix (iv) for the interview schedule, which includes the introduction and debrief script.

**Participant's experience with the procedures.**

Participants were reminded that they did not have to answer every question and that there were no right or wrong answers.

Care was also taken to ensure that participants fully understood the additional interview technique of the talking stones. At the beginning of the interview, a worked example using what was hoped to be an accessible example of how the stones could help elicit answers was given. Asking participants to choose the stone that

"best represents a typical Monday morning in your household" places little demand on culturally specific knowledge while improving rapport and relaxing the participant.

**Privacy and data protection**

Given the online nature of the methodology and the topic being explored, internet security and data privacy was a significant consideration and much effort was taken to ensure the integrity of the participants and their data were not compromised. Participants were reminded that the environment the interviewer was in only consisted of them and that there was no one within audible distance nor planned interruptions. No files were shared between computers to preserve the devices' integrity. Instead, screen-sharing and remote control, both native features of the end-to-end encrypted platform Zoom, were utilised. The interviews were recorded with a physical dictaphone near the PC speaker to capture high-fidelity recordings. Files were immediately transferred from the device to the research storage medium and then permanently deleted from the Dictaphone. The participant's data, including consent forms and recordings, were stored on an encrypted virtual drive on the University College London’s (UCL) network. I could only access this drive through a VPN to bolster the data's security. Pseudonyms (e.g., P001, P002, etc.) were used within the transcription data, with the consent forms stored in a separate folder to reduce the risk of linking participants with their data. Upon transcription of the audio recording, the original recording files were deleted, with the rest of the participant's data scheduled to be deleted after the conclusion of the period of 10 years as stated by the UCL data retention policy.

Within the consent and information sheets shared with participants were descriptions of the confidentiality agreements and limitations that would be considered, in addition

to highlighting their right to withdraw. Please see appendices (v and vi) for copies of the study communication letters to participants.

## 3.15. Data analysis procedures

Data analysis was conducted with reference to Braun and Clarke's six-stage thematic analysis procedure. Below is a description of the stages and how the current research adhered to them. Once the data had been appropriately grouped, the following procedures were followed according to their experience with RIM children.

**Step 1: familiarisation with the data**

Braun and Clarke (2006) suggest that before researchers begin to analyse the data, they should become familiar with it in its raw form. The authors suggest that researchers become 'immersed' in the data at either the point of collection or the transcription of verbal data. Because of the smaller scale of this research compared to other funded examples, I was the lead in data collection and transcription. Therefore, the same person who conducted the interviews could witness first-hand non-verbal features such as laughs, expressions and, to a certain extent, body language within the limits of internet video communication. I could also experience an immediate immersion in the participants' views of reality, making initial connections and impressions of codes as the data was collected. Therefore, immersion with the data set was possible during the transcription process, and the meaning was available for interpretation rather than just the "mechanical act of putting sound to paper" (Lapadat & Lyndsay, 1999 as cited in Braun and Clarke,

2005, p17). The transcriptions were made verbatim, that is, with the inclusion of non-fluency features such as laughs or pauses. By having experienced the interviews first-hand, there is a chance to understand the non-verbal features of these behaviours more accurately. For example, equipped with the memory of witnessing the facial features, it is possible to understand whether the laugh was a genuine reaction to humour, a sarcastic comment or a defensive manoeuvre to cover up embarrassment or shame when reading a transcribed laugh.

**Step 2: generating initial codes**

Braun and Clarke consider codes to be an initial feature of the data deemed attractive to the analyst (Braun & Clarke, 2006). They differ from "themes", which are considered broader analysis units across the data set. In linking with the methodological assumptions mentioned in Chapter 3, the analysis adopts an inductive approach to identifying codes rather than being theory-driven. I did the Coding manually by identifying codes and linking them with data extracts. Occasionally, data extracts were uncoded, coded multiple times or in contradictory patterns. A separate document was created with Microsoft Word to keep the codes organised using a table and formatting options such as bold and colour coding. Please see Appendix (ii) for a sample of the coding planning document and procedures generated and used.

**Step 3: Searching for themes**

Once the codes have been collected, the next step is generating sub-themes and themes. Braun and Clarke suggested collating the codes into groups to form a

theme. The relevant extracts from the data set evidence each code group. When analysing the data for themes, using the previously mentioned formatting options was beneficial to help the process become visually helpful. During this process, themes and sub-themes within the data set were identified.

**Step 4: reviewing themes**

This stage involves the refinement of the identified themes. This is achieved by assessing factors such as the robustness of the data supporting the themes and the potential merging of similar themes. Braun and Clarke (2006) propose the importance of ensuring that themes are logically connected while maintaining a "clear and discernible differentiation between themes" (p.20). This process involves revisiting the dataset, verifying whether the themes accurately encapsulate the meaning across the entire dataset, and constructing a thematic map. Additionally, feedback was sought from research supervisors to validate the identified themes along with their associated data excerpts. This step aimed to enhance the reliability of the analysis process by incorporating an external perspective on the data.

**Step 5: defining and naming themes**

The final step of the analysis process is to refine the themes uncovered and attempt to designate labels for them to facilitate the reporting of the themes in the write-up. Braun and Clarke suggest that each theme's 'essence' is made clear and communicated through an internally consistent and coherent narrative (2006). Caution was taken in labelling the final themes as the production of superficial titles that only pertained to the data evidencing that theme and bared no relevance to the

other identified themes or the narrative of the analysis as a whole needed to be avoided.

**Step 6: producing the report**

The final step of the analysis process is producing the report. This step involves more than reproducing the codes and themes but also presenting the "story" of the data in a "concise, coherent, non-repetitive and interesting account" (Braun & Clarke, 2006, p. 23). Care is taken to include evidence from the data that best represents the theme in the discussion. The resulting report of the current study attempts to go beyond solely describing the data and provides an argument on their positioning within the discussions surrounding the research questions (Braun & Clarke, 2006).

## 3.16. Trustworthiness

Qualitative researchers refer to concepts such as trustworthiness instead of quantitative measures of rigour (Swain, 2016). Guba (1981) suggested that trustworthiness should be thought of as satisfying four key criteria: truth value/credibility; establishing confidence in the "truth" of one's findings, applicability/transferability; determining the degree to which the findings of a particular enquiry has applicability in other contexts, consistency/dependability; determining whether the findings of one inquiry would be consistently repeated if the inquiry was replicated. Lastly, neutrality/confirmability establishes that the findings are solely the function of the respondents and condition of inquiry, not of the inquirer's biases, motivations, interests and perspectives (Guba, 1981, p. 79–80).

The current study considered strategies for ensuring trustworthiness constructs suggested by researchers such as Shenton (2004) and has attempted to enact them. Some suggestions were not adhered to due to the research design or the limited time and resources. The following section will analyse some of the steps taken to ensure the trustworthiness of the current study.

**Credibility**

It was decided that the research method applied would be situated within and coherent with the qualitative paradigm to enhance the credibility of the findings in this study. Semi-structured interviews allow the participants to give more nuanced and rich interpretations of their self-efficacy. It also allows for a fluid and detailed description of their interpretation of the phenomenon in this contextual time frame.

A random sampling of participants is suggested to negate research bias and distribute any unaccounted-for influences more evenly (Shenton, 2004). Unfortunately, given the study's design, a purposive sampling technique was used to ensure that only educators of a particular demographic were targeted. Therefore, it was not possible to utilise this suggestion.

Shenton also suggests the development of an early familiarity with the culture of participating organisations. Given my history as an English as a Foreign Language teacher, a first degree in primary education, and work with Unaccompanied Asylum-Seeking Children during employment at a Virtual School, they had naturally acquired a familiarity with some of the perceived challenges and facilitators of success within the teaching context. Because of the recruitment technique, it is impossible to become embedded within each participant's school culture.

Shenton suggests that researchers employ triangulation with other sources of information to help bolster the credibility of findings. These sources can include documentation or other research methods, including focus groups or observations. While this type of triangulation was impossible, Shenton suggests triangulating findings between participants of different organisations by increasing the sampling range. In the current study, only two of the fifteen participants were employed at the same institution, presenting a wide variance in sample contexts.

**Transferability and dependability**

Providing external validity, or how one set of findings can be applied to other situations and a wider population (Merriam, n.d, as cited in Shenton, 2004), is inconsistent with the qualitative paradigm and is more the aim of positivistic studies. However, Shenton suggests that qualitative researchers can provide a 'baseline understanding' of a phenomenon to assist future researchers in exploring it. The current study presents high transferability due to the collection of views and perceptions of currently practising educators. These views can help the understanding of professionals in other relevant situations by building on and extending their practice and knowledge in light of this research's topics.

Providing information such as restrictions in participation, data collection methods and the time period of data collection can aid complementary research on the same phenomenon in different settings (Shenton, 2004). Therefore, the writing of the current study has strived to present the phenomenon, the research methodology and the surrounding literature in a thick description to help develop subsequent work. Operational details of data gathering, such as how the resource of the virtual stones

was created and the process involved in creating the interview schedule, all contribute to the current research's replicability.

Whilst knowledge produced in the current study is not generalisable in the quantitative and statistical sense, the transparency provided gives a thorough description of the methodology, participant demographics and engagement with existing literature, allowing for a conceptual generalisation that other researchers can replicate to any extent within their field of interest.

**Confirmability**

As mentioned above, triangulation is viewed by some qualitative researchers as a recommended strategy for increasing the confirmability of qualitative inquiry. Miles, Huberman and Saldana (2020) describe confirmability as the judgement of whether findings accurately portray the phenomena being examined (Miles et al., 2020). It is said that with multiple information/evidence sources, researcher bias within interpretation is effectively lowered (Shenton, 2004). Researcher bias can also be reduced by sharing the conclusions drawn with the participants, allowing them to comment on the legitimacy of the conclusions (Miles et al., 2020; Shenton, 2004). Due to the timing of the research period, the structure of the recruitment method and the desire to maintain trust with the participants (Miles et al., 2020) by honouring the promise of no further contact beyond initial participation, it was not possible to share findings with participants. However, coding was done in conjunction with the study's supervisors to ensure that bias was reduced. It is also suggested by Miles et al. (2020) that the researcher must admit the belief systems that underpin their predispositions. Later in this report (Chapter 6.7), the section on researcher bias aims to inform the reader of the researcher's subjectivity that may have influenced

the knowledge and reality interpreted. Through this admission, the reader will be confident in the rigour and thought applied to the interpretations made.

# Chapter 4

The purpose of this chapter is to present the findings from the research data in relation to each of the research questions. The analysis procedure taken with the data is that of Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-stage thematic analysis procedure, as fully described in Chapter 3.12. Table 9a below presents a thematic map of the uncovered main themes from each group and research question, alongside their associated subthemes analysed from the responses.

**Table 9a.**

| *Research question 1 (Group B)* | |
|---|---|
| *Sub-themes* | *Main themes* |
| (1) Value of trauma-informed practice | **Cultural challenges** |
| (2) Children's grasp of the learning | |
| (3) Development of belongingness and inclusion | |
| (1) Language barriers | **Challenges in developing reciprocal connections** |
| (2) Impact on non-verbal communication | |
| (1) Awareness of uncontrollable distractions | **Alertness to control loss** |
| (2) Loss of environmental control | |

| *Research question 2 (Group B)* | |
|---|---|
| *Sub-themes* | *Main themes* |

| | |
|---|---|
| (1) Online teaching regarded as serving a specific purpose.<br>(2) Curriculum challenges when online | **Navigating purposeful online teaching and curriculum challenges** |
| (1) Language barriers increase the perceived difficulty for online teaching.<br>(2) Language barriers increase the perceived difficulty for RIMs accessing the learning. | **Language barriers and associated perceived difficulties in online education** |
| (1) RIM child's perception of their belonging.<br>(2) Impact of various psychosocial factors on RIM child's engagement online | **RIM child's perception of psychosocial experiences and the impact on online teaching** |
| (1) Concessions to teachers' sense of control<br>(2) Loss of established teaching behaviours | **Adaptations to online teaching practices in response to changes in pedagogic control and behaviours** |
| (1) Desire to not perceive RIM children as different.<br>(2) Transferability between efficacies | **Educational equity is considered a facilitator of positive online learning experiences.** |

| *Research question 3 (Group A)* | |
|---|---|
| *Sub-themes* | *Main themes* |
| (1) Individual work with RIM children<br>(2) Individual work with teachers<br>*(3)* Provider of training | **EP to provide consultative and developmental support within their remit.** |

| *Research question 3 (Group B)* | |
|---|---|
| *Sub-themes* | *Main themes* |
| (1) Provider of training<br>(2) Toolkit expansion and resource signposting | **EP to provide support with the pedagogical aspects of online education.** |

The following section will present each central theme framed through exploring the research question. Contextualisation of the main themes will be provided through

select quotes from participants' responses. An example of coding done at the transcript level is presented in Appendix iii, alongside the coding and theme-building document (appendix ii) used during the analysis.

Interpretation of the data's relevance to existing literature and current practice and comparisons and contrasts between and within groups will be explored further in Chapter 5. For ease of reference, table 10 below reiterates the samples' experience with RIM-background children. In order to help differentiate which population of children and which concept each response refers to, a colour-coding system will be used as follows. Responses related to RIM children will be in purple text, and responses related to non-RIM children will appear in orange text. Responses related to online teaching as a medium are presented in green text, and lastly, responses related to children in general or educational psychologists are in black text. Added clarification will be provided where necessary. Additionally, within the remainder of the chapter, participant identifiers will be accompanied by a superscript "a" to indicate whether the participant has experience with RIMs face-to-face only, i.e. those who have only taught RIM children offline (aka Group A), and a superscript "b" to indicate that they have experience teaching RIMs both online and face-to-face. E.g. "Participant 003[a] , Participant 001[b]".

*Table 10. Sample RIM experience*

| **Participant code** | **Experienced in face-to-face teaching of RIMs** | **Experienced in online teaching of RIMs** |
|---|---|---|
| P001[b] | Yes | Yes |
| P002[a] | Yes | No |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| P003[a] | Yes | No |
| P004[a] | Yes | No |
| P006[b] | Yes | Yes |
| P008[a] | Yes | No |
| P009[b] | Yes | Yes |
| P011[b] | Yes | Yes |
| P012[b] | Yes | Yes |
| P013[a] | Yes | No |
| P014[b] | Yes | Yes |
| P015[a] | Yes | No |

*Participants 5, 7, and 10 have been removed from the analysis due to having no experience teaching RIM children

The analysis will explore Group B's data concerning research questions 1 and 2. Then, for research question 3, themes from both groups will be presented and discussed separately.

## 4.1. Research question 1: What contributes to primary and secondary phase teachers' perception of their self-efficacy in educating Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods?

*Table 11. Themes for RQ1*

| Sub-themes | Main theme |
|---|---|
| (1) Value of trauma-informed practice<br>(2) Children's grasp of the learning<br>(3) Development of belongingness and inclusion | **Cultural challenges** |
| (1) Language barriers<br>(2) Impact on non-verbal communication | **Challenges in developing reciprocal connections** |

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| (1) | Awareness of uncontrollable distractions | **Alertness to control loss** |
| (2) | Loss of environmental control | |

The initial research question of this study sought to investigate the themes that emerged during the interviews, specifically focusing on teachers' viewpoints on the factors influencing their effectiveness in teaching refugee and immigrant background minors in online settings. In order to mitigate the influence of stereotypes or biased perceptions about RIM background children drawn from external sources, a decision was made to analyse data exclusively from participants who had firsthand experience in teaching RIM background children online and face-to-face. As a result, the aforementioned subthemes and themes were identified based solely on the data provided by participants 001[b], 006[b], 009[b], 011[b], 012[b], and 014[b].

**Theme one: Cultural challenges**

Participants in the interviews communicated an awareness of the challenges in meeting the cultural needs of the participants and the classroom environment they were to be integrated into. The identified subtheme, 'Value of trauma-informed practice', arose from the identification of multiple participants who clarified that being unable to meet the cultural needs of children due to possible trauma-related anxiety was a source of apprehension for them in the online environment.

*"… there's so many factors. You have kids that come to the uk with trauma…with some previous trauma and that also affects their ability to learn. Cause if they've been exposed to things like…in Afghanistan they've been exposed to people being killed and bombings and stuff like that, it does affect how they learn. So theres a lot of factors there…that's why I would have a rougher stone."* -Participant 006[b]

The excerpt above constitutes a participant's reaction to the instruction of selecting a stone that symbolises their aptitude for instructing a RIM background child online. Within their response, the participant underscores the potential influence of the child's history and experience on the efficacy of online education, irrespective of the participant's efforts.

One participant recounted how, in their experience, they had an encounter with a child who responded emphatically to a text that elicited painful experiences.

> "*…so I thought everything was smooth and fabulous. And then we sat and started reading this class book, and it was all about this child that was going through a difficult time. And he completely fell apart, and it knocked me as in-I should have seen it. But on reflection, I couldn't have known it because you don't know everything...but I felt like I done the wrong thing..*" -Participant 012[b]

The above quote highlights a possible emotive connection which contrasts the pedagogical concerns highlighted previously by Participant 006. Participant 012 alludes to how their internal concept of being a prepared professional who does not cause upset for her pupils was affected despite her reflection that it was not feasible at the time to be aware of the child's traumatic history. This disruption to their internal construct of themselves can have a negative effect on multiple areas of psychological functioning, including self-confidence and self-efficacy.

The perceptions of the online lesson by the RIM background child are mentioned in various forms by various participants, leading to the identification of the second subtheme: 'Childrens grasp of the learning'. This subtheme suggests that from the responses, concern for the child's understanding of the learning may also contribute to how teachers' online teaching abilities are perceived by themselves. The quotes below were in response to the hypothetical question of how the participant would feel after having a RIM background child join their next online class.

*"…I would be feeling hopeful that they felt like they got something out of the lesson…"* -Participant 001[b]

*"…I'd have to make sure I've checked in with them and see if they've got what I said before I could feel ok or satisfied with what I've done…"* -Participant 011[b]

Feedback can be considered a necessary part of pedagogy and professional development and, therefore, essential to maintaining self-efficacy. Similar to Participant 012, who shared the anecdote reproduced above, the feedback received either during or after the lesson can affect the teacher's confidence to deliver subsequent lessons and their well-being. Children's understanding of the lesson delivered, amongst other indicators, can affect teacher's perception of how successful their instruction is, leading to the development of internalised mastery. As described by Bandura, mastery of experiences is considered to be one factor that impacts the development and maintenance of self-efficacy (Bandura, 2006). Therefore, the data presents the notion that, for the interviewed participants, RIM children's feedback can be perceived as a possible contributor to the overall self-efficacy perception within this sample.

Participants in the current study communicated the importance of ensuring RIM-background children felt a sense of belonging and inclusion in the classroom environment, leading to the final subtheme of the first central theme: 'Development of belongingness and inclusion'. The concerns around belongingness included how the RIM background child would fit and interact with the existing class members.

*"…so they don't know the class, the other children would be quite happy to ask them questions. They [RIM child] might not be…"* -Participant 012[b]

*"…hopeful that they felt welcomed into the lesson and that they felt like they contributed and were part of the class…"* -Participant 001[b]

*"…. So it doesn't matter if you didn't get it, it doesn't matter where you are, it matters that together we'll work through this, and that's how I'd like to come across…"* - Participant 011[b]

The participant quotes highlighted the importance of providing for the whole child and their psychosocial needs so that they feel welcomed and comfortable enough to contribute to a community. The teacher's perception of their self-efficacy may be affected by the interrupted ability to provide an inclusive environment online, given the interruption to familiar communication patterns or longstanding and proven strategies of promoting inclusion. These will be explored in other themes later in the analysis.

By exploring the themes above and the example quotes from the interview data, it is possible to see that there is a concern about adapting the culture of the existing environment, including the culture of the teacher. The challenge can also arise through the desire to communicate a well-intentioned approach to promote inclusivity to new class members and ensure they are socially received successfully. Obstructions to this approach can potentially create instances of threat where teachers and pupils do not successfully adapt to this cultural change, and conflicts are bred, such as miscommunication and stereotypes (Abu Khalaf et al., 2023). Classroom environments are traditionally viewed as accepting of multicultural beliefs, and the participants in the interview data have communicated the importance of ensuring their online classroom is no different.

**Theme two: Challenges in developing reciprocal connections**

A common consideration raised amongst the participants is the inherent difficulty in communicating ideas through online education when barriers in cultural knowledge

and English language competency exist. The first identified and most frequently referred to subtheme is the idea of “Language barriers” existing.

*“…I'm looking at a [RIM] student… they've also got the language barrier, which can have a huge impact on their access to the learning…”* -Participant 014[b]

*“…My experience varies because it depends I think, on their level of being able to speak English…”* -Participant 001[b]

*“……no, I don’t think it will be any different [teaching a RIM child vs. a non-RIM child online]. I think the only difference will be…is that you’re hoping that they can understand what you’re asking of them…”* -Participant 012[b]

The participants communicated a possible bias towards English being the gatekeeper to accessing education despite EAL strategies being widely available. The combined contextual difficulties of online pedagogy and reduced English language communicability may pressure teachers' perceptions of their resources and strategies. The response provided by participant 011 below, who was in the process of explaining why they think their chosen rough and imperfect stone represents the challenge of teaching RIM background children online, lends credence to this proposition.

*“…it [the challenge of teaching RIMS online] will be whether or not I’m understood or whether I would need to adapt my teaching to fit that child’s needs, and I think that would become challenging if theres… issues with understanding a word I say in English if they don’t know English at all.”* -Participant 011[b]

Participants in the interviews also spoke about the difficulty and the impact online education had on non-verbal communication.

*“…But its [using online tools to check understanding] not the same as like seeing their work, its not the same as…I think seeing facial interaction that’s really important in teaching, and not having that is really hard when you’re online teaching…”* -Participant 009[b]

As alluded to by multiple participants, the value of having available and uninterrupted verbal and non-verbal communication channels can aid with pedagogic practices such as formative assessment, the development of rapport and a sense of trust

between teacher and student. Participant 009 goes on to share something that encapsulates a wide range of concerns that result from an online lesson with a newly arrived RIM background child who has not had the chance to have an in-person class beforehand.

*"…so yeah, a sense of maybe worry that they didn't understand everything because they've just come into an online lesson where I've never met them face to face. I haven't been able to introduce myself, and I haven't been able to differentiate as much as I would like, so yeah, it'd be a sense of worry that they haven't quite understood the lesson…."* -Participant 009[b]

Communication is fundamental to education, allowing for exchanging ideas, information and rapport building. Therefore, teachers are likely to emphasise scrutiny of this aspect when shifting to online education, given the various ways communication patterns are disrupted. With the additional impact of language differences when considering a child of RIM background, the concern for communication barriers and their impact on the teacher's ability to carry out their primary task becomes more prominent, as observed within the current study. Furthermore, as demonstrated through the selected interview excerpts, there is a tendency for participants in the current study to view communication as a significant barrier to successful learning due to the impact it has on their traditional view of interactions in the classroom.

Participants present the view that a lack of mutual intelligibility, physical proximity or familiar interaction patterns are aspects of teaching that affect the development of rapport, resulting in an impact on differentiation. Therefore, the disrupted communication channels could be considered a contributor to teachers' perception of their ability to provide a social and communicative online learning environment. This thought pattern sidesteps the numerous software techniques available, such as chat

boxes, dropboxes and other asynchronous communication methods that can facilitate these interactions better than just talking through the regular class video conferencing feature.

**Theme three: Alertness to control loss**

Participants in the interviews analysed for research question 1 made numerous allusions to the perceived loss of control in a behaviour management sense and the learning environment. This theme emerged from the numerous mentions of outside influences that can vie for children's attention in general and not just RIM background children, leading to the identification of the first subtheme: awareness of uncontrollable distractions.

*"……when I'm teaching face to face, I'm at my best in terms of what I'm used to and what are the factors I can control, but then teaching online, there are some factors I can't control. For example, if the child is distracted by something. It's hard for me to reduce that distraction. I can't control the distraction that's online for a child that's sitting in their bedroom or anywhere else. It reduces all the things I could control…"* - Participant 006[b]

*"……but I think there are a lot more factors outside of my control when teaching online, in that I don't know what room they're in, I don't know if there are five other children in that room with them. I don't know if they're using the mobile phone as opposed to a laptop and struggling to see the resources…"* -Participant 014[b]

Also demonstrated within the above quotes is another prominent area of loss described: 'the loss of control of the environment', the second subtheme identified. Although the above theme emerged from the participants discussing online teaching in general and when teaching non-RIM children, it can therefore be inferred that placing boundaries on distractors in the setting is a frequently considered aspect within online teaching by the participants, one that may affect their perception of how successful they can be in teaching RIM-background children online. This concern possibly stems from the idea that the environment can be considered a resource,

with displays, seating patterns and reduced distractor risks all playing a part in ensuring effective education is transmitted. Teachers may experience a sense of disadvantage or limitation in having this resource removed and thus foster a possible sense of vulnerability that results in lower self-confidence. There is also the practical concern of accessibility, which can be controlled in a face-to-face teaching context but not online. Participant 014 notes that the device used to access the learning and its inherent limitations are beyond the teacher's control, removing power from the teacher despite the time and effort spent preparing the learning materials. If the child cannot access the intended work or access it correctly, another potential source of anxiety within online education can arise.

Lastly, participants frequently mentioned the loss of formative assessment opportunities that arose from engaging with the physical classroom within the interviews, highlighting the internalised impact that not being physically present has on their perception of their ability to assess RIMs virtually.

*"……so it would be harder…because if they're there with you, you could go to them, you could work with them as individuals but if they're online, you don't know if they're getting it, If they understand…"* -Participant 012[b]

*"……I'd have to make sure I've checked in with them and see if they've got what I said before I could feel ok or satisfied with what I've done. Which is normally what we'd do in class when we walk around groups of children to see if they've comprehended what they need to do in order to complete their learning……"* - Participant 011[b]

Participants express how being physically present contributes to the tendency or ability to check in easily with children of RIM background for assessment purposes. This unsolicited change in their pedagogical habit can elicit uncertainty within their confidence and would be best addressed in order to minimise the impact on perceived self-efficacy when teaching RIMS online.

## 4.2. Research question 2: What are the perceived barriers and facilitators to successfully teaching Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods by teachers with experience in teaching RIMs online?

**Group B**

*Table 12. Group B's themes for RQ2*

| *Sub-themes* | *Main themes* |
|---|---|
| (1) Online teaching is regarded as serving a specific purpose.<br>(2) Curriculum challenges when online | **Navigating purposeful online teaching and curriculum challenges** |
| (1) Language barriers increase the perceived difficulty of online teaching.<br>(2) Language barriers increase the perceived difficulty of RIMs accessing the learning. | **Language barriers and associated perceived difficulties in online education** |
| (1) RIM child's perception of their belonging.<br>(2) Impact of various psychosocial factors on RIM child's engagement online | **RIM child's perception of psychosocial experiences and the impact on online teaching** |
| (1) Concessions to teachers' sense of control<br>(2) Loss of established teaching behaviours | **Adaptations to online teaching practices in response to changes in pedagogic control and behaviours** |
| (1) Desire to not perceive RIM children as different.<br>(2) Transferability of efficacies | **Educational equity is considered a facilitator of positive online learning experiences.** |

**Theme four: Navigating purposeful online teaching and curriculum challenges.**

The first theme of research question two emerged mainly from participants' responses to the online teaching medium. Several participants discussed varying attitudes towards the purpose of online teaching beyond the governmental mandate. Some referred to online teaching as applicable within limited contexts where the preservation of education offered no alternatives. Some participants likened the

experience to a test of survival and an example of a necessary adaptation in the face of zero or lesser alternatives.

*"… it's just something you've got to adapt to. I think it's more challenging than in-person.…"*-Participant 001[b]

*"…but online teaching served its purpose and helped hugely during the pandemic. Because without that, there would've been nothing at all, so it was better than nothing, but definitely not ideal in normal circumstances.…"*-Participant 014[b]

Participant's quotes, such as the excerpts presented above, suggest an interpretation of online teaching as a response to emergencies, not an alternative form of lesson delivery that can be drawn upon within typical teaching circumstances. Therefore, contextual factors such as the time frame and availability of other delivery methods could be interpreted as a potential barrier to successful online teaching for the current participants if its application does not draw enthusiasm.

The specific temporal nature of online teaching perceived by the participants may interact with another difficulty perceived in that the online environment affects the challenge of specific curriculum topics. Participants within the analysis referred to a perceived increase in difficulty in delivering certain subjects and skills when in the virtual environment.

*"……. But there are some skills we can't demonstrate easily on the computer…so the child wouldn't be able to demonstrate the knowledge or the understanding of what you're teaching…"*-Participant 006[b]

*"……. Macbeth is foreign to anyone in a way, in that it's Shakespeare, and it's quite a difficult language, but to someone coming from elsewhere, that would just always be like, gobbledygook, it would be completely lost on them…"*-Participant 014[b]

*"……. Children with EAL tend to understand or have a better understanding of maths than they do any other areas of the curriculum…"*-Participant 011[b]

It is possible to interpret that the participants may rely on personal stereotypes through previous experiences when arriving at the above beliefs. For example, those who perceive curriculum topics and skills online to be a challenge may be comparing the online experience with their previous face-to-face experience, in which utilised strategies with RIM children were more tactile or explorative. As a result, they now believe that online learning of the same content requires more resources than what is available—leading to another possible barrier to successful online teaching.

When observed as a whole, the subthemes identified within this first theme suggest that online teaching is not conducive outside of emergency response times, given the extra preparation required for topics and strategies deemed unsuitable for distance delivery. Considerations that the current participants may believe are necessary when teaching RIM children online.

**Theme five: Language barriers and associated perceived difficulties in online education**

A prevalent theme identified across the entire dataset is the theme of language barriers and associated perceived difficulties. Participants within the data discussed increased difficulties, not just for the participants and their teaching methods but also from the perspective of the RIM pupil and their ability to interact with others, engage with the teacher's input and access learning in general.

*"…issues with understanding a word I say in English if they don't know English at all… there'll be a lot of challenges. I think it'll be, you know, it'll be quite tough…."* - Participant 011[b]

*"…umm not a sense of hopelessness cause that's too far [ laugh] but maybe a sense of worry that maybe they didn't get everything you've spoken about …"* -Participant 009[b]

*"…. It could be someone who has no ability to speak English, which would be harder for me if they have no form of previous speaking English. So if I'm teaching a child that child knows no English whatsoever, it would be harder for me…. It would be dependent on that child. Now, if the child has some amount of English, right, then the barrier would be less…"* -Participant 006[b]

Participants allude to anxiety over the increased difficulty should a child not have a secure grasp of English. As identified within the above quotes, a significant area of difficulty perceived by the participant lies in the barriers to the teacher's input being perceived as comprehensible by the RIM child. However, another participant builds on the concern mentioned with the interpretation that the barriers will be increased due to the impact on support structures that online presents for people with language difficulties.

*"…so that's the comparison, for me, between a refugee and a native student, is just potentially that language barrier. Which I think would be magnified online because online they wouldn't have that support from, for example, the EAL assistant…"* - Participant 014[b]

One participant interprets the increase in difficulty for teachers as an increase in the range of considerations the teacher needs to be cognizant of. This is in addition to the typical responsibilities of the online teaching environment, such as behaviour management and lesson preparation.

*"…Many that have experienced refugees, their English is not their first language, so there's a lot of barriers to overcome when teaching refugee children. Language barriers, culture barriers all of that has to be overcome while teaching that child... When you teach a child online, that barrier increases…"* -Participant 006[b]

As mentioned, the participants also identified difficulties that would be experienced from the RIM child's perspective in accessing online education.

*"…so yeah a sense of maybe worry that they didn't understand everything because they've just come into an online lesson where I've never met them face to face…"* -Participant 009[b]

*"…I think it could go wrong in a lot of ways. So again, it could be massive language barriers. So they can't really understand, and you might not be able to communicate with them…"* -Participant 014[b]

The above quotes demonstrate a possible concern by participants of their pupils not understanding the taught input, thus impacting the effectiveness of the online content. It is identified that the implications made by participants are primarily focused on the RIM child's difficulty in accessing the teacher-child interaction rather than child-child interaction. However, the responses provide evidence further that the participants in the current study may view language acquisition and comprehensibility as a potential barrier to teaching online successfully, given its impact on comprehension of both general input and instructions.

**Theme six: RIM child's perception of psychosocial experiences and the impact on online teaching**

Communicated by the participants in the current study is the concern held for numerous psychosocial areas of functioning that the RIM child is developing. Among these is the concern for the sense of belonging that the child has within the online class, which is interpreted to be perceived by multiple participants as a critical feature of inclusivity and academic progress.

"…: *I would be feeling hopeful that they felt like they got something out of the lesson and hopeful that they felt welcomed into the lesson and that they felt like they contributed and were part of the class."* -Participant 001[b]

"…: *I would just wonder how they felt in that lesson…because I would be concerned that they might have felt out of touch because they've only just joined us in your little scenario, so they don't know the class."* -Participant 012[b]

As part of developing the sense of belonging, participants conveyed an area of priority to ensure that RIM students' welfare and well-being were provided for when online and that students were aware of the sense of community being fostered amongst the other class members.

"…: *I'm hoping they would recognise that I care enough to work with them. So it doesn't matter if you didn't get it, it doesn't matter where you are, it matters that together we'll work through this, and that's how I'd like to come across..."* - Participant 012[b]

"…: *well, part of my training as a teacher is to be able to provide learning for all students and let all students feel comfortable no matter what background or what needs they have. So all students must be comfortable if you're teaching online..."* - Participant 006[b]

The excerpt from Participant 006 above was chosen to highlight the consideration in ensuring the comfortability of all children online and how they have assimilated the thought pattern into their professional identity from their initial training stage. While there were not enough occurrences to suggest the implication of initial training as a theme, it remains a possibly shared construct that would be worth exploring in future research.

The concern for well-being and belonging could stem from the participants' understanding of the refugee experience/journey in which these constructs may have been severely impacted due to movement. Participants demonstrated an awareness that a wide range of psychological factors might impact engagement with online learning, some of which are possibly linked to the refugee experience, such as trauma and acculturation concerns.

"…: *I know that trauma can have a real impact on students' ability to learn and general processing of any information. So, students that are traumatised, if whatever they've had to escape is that severe, then they're going to find it really hard to even sit in a classroom and engage in any learning before we even start thinking about*

*them, making any progress it's like helping them get past that bit first....”* -Participant 001[b]

“…: *but then you add the factor of a child that has been brought into a new culture, a new environment and they have to get use to all of this....”* -Participant 009[b]

“…: *You have kids that come to the UK with trauma…with some previous trauma and that also affects their ability to learn. Cause if they’ve been exposed to things like…in Afghanistan they’ve been exposed to people being killed and bombings and stuff like that, it does affect how they learn....”* -Participant 006[b]

Trauma-informed teaching was another highly populated subtheme that arose from the data. Multiple teachers were keen to communicate the importance of understanding the impact of trauma on education, suggesting that it is an area of concern that may cause a potential barrier to successful online teaching if not addressed. There is also the possibility that this emphasis on being trauma aware stems from previous interactions with children of foreign origin who have had a history of trauma, as three participants across the data set mention anecdotes on their experience with a child who demonstrated post-traumatic stress-like responses to an external stimulus. Because two of the anecdotes were provided by members within the group A data set, a theme was not identified for the current B group. However, to illustrate this point, a relevant quote is provided below. This quote was chosen because it highlights the potential feeling of inadequacy resulting from a lapse in awareness of trauma history. The complex feelings that arose for this particular teacher were resolved through reflection, but other teachers, particularly those new to the profession, may not be so fortunate.

“…*So I’m thinking of the [RIM[ child I was teaching … he was an absolutely beautiful child, and he was really trying, he worked hard, he couldn’t speak any English when he came to us… And then we sat and started reading this class book, and it was all about this child that was going through a difficult time. And he completely fell apart, and it knocked me as in-I should have seen it. But on reflection, I couldn’t have*

*known it because you don't know everything...but I felt like I done the wrong thing..."*
-Participant 012[b]

While the themes identified so far can be considered evidence of the participant's understanding of the difficulties experienced due to migration experience, some participants referenced the difficulties RIM children may have adjusting to the routines of an online school experience. As mentioned by the participant below, there are concerns about whether RIM children will have the understanding, confidence and capacity to take on the changes to operational procedures when online. In addition, it demonstrates the opinion that teachers are responsible for addressing the root causes of children's needs to ensure they feel welcome and safe.

"…*they would be thinking, that was a lot, that was confusing, that was intense, am I going to fail? Who do I turn to? They probably will be thinking, should I tell the teacher? Oh, but will she think that I'm weak? Or even, how do I tell the teacher, how do I contact her? Is it through Teams, this new foreign system? Do I email her? What was her name again even..."* -Participant 014[b]

"…*but in terms of everything else, it's just making yourself more aware of what differences there might be in culture and making sure that they feel welcomed and that they feel safe and that they feel wanted in the room...."* -Participant 001[b]

The excerpt from Participant 001 above highlights the importance of providing RIM children online not just a sense of belonging but a sense of purpose and security within the class environment. These psychological constructs are reminiscent of the levels of safety and love needs within Maslow's hierarchy of needs (1954) and suggest a perceived increase in responsibility on the teacher to ensure that RIM children are supported with more than academic support and viewed as more than vehicles of traumatic experiences. Therefore, consideration of the psychological state of the RIM children when online can be considered a possible barrier to successful online learning amongst the participants selected in the current study.

**Theme seven: Adaptations to online teaching practices in response to changes in pedagogic control and behaviours**

Pervasive throughout the data set were negative or ambivalent attitudes towards the technological specificities of online teaching and learning. The majority of opinions held by participants constituted their valuation of the usefulness and appropriacy of technology, some of which opinions are reflected within theme five above. However, an emergent theme that arose from group B participants was the inherent frustration and exasperation at the loss of established pedagogies and an identified impact on classroom management. This theme was constructed using primarily responses that referred to online teaching as a medium and the teaching of non-RIM children.

Participants in the current study referenced the impact on communication and interaction patterns experienced online. Several interviewees noticed and commented on the perceived reduction in their ability to address children's misunderstandings spontaneously.

"…*for experienced teachers, we've been teaching face-to-face for years, we're used to it, looking for expressions…facial expressions, body umm movements, all of these things form part of what we do as teachers when we're teaching face-to-face... But online teaching is not popular with a lot of teachers, so they might feel as though they are out of their depth in terms of trying to see the little things that we always look for in face-to-face teaching."* -Participant 006[b]

"…*even the confidence to ask questions, whereas in the classroom I'm there, they can pop their hand, they'd say, miss, I don't get this, please explain, but online they've got to type it..."* -Participant 014[b]

"…*But it's not the same as like seeing their work, it's not the same as…I think seeing facial interaction, that's really important in teaching and not having that is really hard when you're online teaching..."* -Participant 009[b]

The above excerpts highlight the impact of non-communication interaction on developing participant's ability to assess and solve assessment issues in the

classroom. Participants in the current study refer to a disruption to the shared understanding between student and teacher, allowing for the two-way interaction of requesting and delivering help. This impact on the pedagogic tool of formative assessment links with the second subtheme in the current theme, which explores other pedagogic strategies and approaches impacted by, or otherwise lost, in the transition to online.

Participants mentioned several concessions they either have made or anticipated when providing online education to RIM students. Among them is the inability to control the environment and related distractors.

"…*it might be the accessibility for them, whether they've got access to a place where they can sit and concentrate, access to any materials that they might need and just making sure that they're able to understand access to learning..."* -Participant 001[b]

"…*For example, if the child is distracted by something. Its hard for me to reduce that distraction. I cant control the distraction that's online for a child that's sitting in their bedroom or anywhere else. It reduces all the things I could control. So it's a rougher procedure to teach..."* -Participant 006[b]

As mentioned above, assessment strategies are perceived to be affected by online teaching, including student's engagement with the proposed assessment strategies by communicating their level of understanding.

"…*I may have supported them in getting the work done, but actually, they might have struggled a lot more than a native student in getting that work done, but they don't literally share every single struggle...."* -Participant 014[b]

"…, *its just so hard to check for understanding and check that they really understand what you've taught in that...."* -Participant 009[b]

Similarly mentioned in previous themes but equally applicable in the current theme is the participant's understanding that the online learning environment is not conducive

to specific topics, representing further concessions to learning material and the increase of specific preparation to compensate.

"…*Also, its rougher because depending on what I'm teaching, I wouldn't be able to properly demonstrate it online…"* -Participant 006[b]

"…*how many questions and concerns will I have for the same work today (?), and how many times am I going to have to repeat myself…that's what comes to mind…sorry…"* -Participant 011[b]

"…*I do think that is based on how I then adjust and account for their needs, which is free things like differentiation, it's tools, sometimes glossary, a word bank based on the ton of technical knowledge you might be covering for that day…"* -Participant 014[b]

Illustrated by the numerous extracts from the interviews are the interpreted barriers of having pedagogical strategies and approaches reduced or impacted by transitioning online. As demonstrated by the crossover in coding, the theme of making concessions links with many other areas in the analysis, possibly due to the need to metaphorically compensate when concessions are met. For example, students with underdeveloped language ability would benefit significantly from the support of an EAL teaching assistant or a more knowledgeable peer in the shared language. This resource would have been widely available offline but is no longer available or comparatively harder to procure online, signifying a barrier in the form of a breakdown in facilitating communicability and an identified concession to available resources. Therefore, in light of RIM pupils' education online, the responses of the current study's participants suggest that identified concessions to the teaching experience compound the difficulty in preparing education experiences and, thus, a possible barrier.

**Theme eight: Educational equity is considered a facilitator of positive online learning experiences.**

Participants within this group referred to mental adaptations that assisted in facilitating successful online teaching. Among them is the heuristic that views RIM children as no different to native children. For example, participants mentioned the advantage of recognising transferable efficacies and experiences and its impact on their work with RIM children online.

*"…However, it actually turned out to be a lot easier than I thought it was going to be once I got into it because I work with children that are nonverbal. So, I use the same sort of principles and the same strategies by having pictures and words and helping them learn the basics...."* - Participant 001[b]

The above participant likens the communication difficulties and supportive strategies required of a child whose language and culture are non-native to a child with speech and language/social communication difficulties, which positively impacts their perception of their ability to help RIM children access learning online.

Participants also mentioned the relevancy of their expertise in supporting children with English as an Additional Language (EAL) when working with RIMs.

*"…I think I might have some skills with children with EAL that could help umm…you know, be transferable, I believe, to teach a child from another country...And I have…skills for teaching children with SEN which again are transferable into children with EAL..."* - Participant 011[b]

The above quote was selected to highlight the confidence instilled in the participants through the perception of their experience with SEN and EAL children being transferable. The quote suggests that, in this participant's case, there is a potential gap in understanding the difference in need between EAL and children of refugee and immigrant backgrounds. While EAL needs may also include support with cultural challenges, there is a broader spectrum of backgrounds encompassed in the need for acculturative and trauma-informed teaching considerations within children with RIM backgrounds compared to children with EAL backgrounds, requiring a more

eco-systemic level of support than solely increasing language proficiency. Children with SEN needs share several similarities to children with RIM backgrounds, such as the need for support that seeks to develop their adaptation to their environment despite their needs. However, when the heuristic technique of equating these groups of specific needs is employed, biases that may interfere with the successful implementation of teaching strategies may present a possible barrier to successful online teaching when RIM-background children are involved.

Participants mentioned how their uniform view of both RIM and non-RIM children affected their current practice positively in that it would reduce disruption to teaching. They also communicated that they hoped the children would perceive their attitude as evidence of the promoted inclusivity of the teacher and their class while offering an invitation to the RIM child to enter the new environment and culture equitably.

*"…So, I think in a way I would like to say that from my perspective, the experience [of teaching RIMs online] is the same, regardless of whether they are refugee or non-refugee"*- Participant 014[b]

"…*I don't think they would feel any way different from any other child in the end. My opinion…they wouldn't feel like they've been treated different or that I've treated them differently because they're immigrant or a refugee child." -* Participant 006[b]

Participants, such as those quoted above, expressed what was interpreted as a "colourblind" approach to teaching so as not to cause offence or otherwise stigmatise learners. The idea of teaching RIM populations from a colourblind perspective could be inspired by the pursuit of a wholly inclusive classroom environment and a more conducive online learning environment. This theme presents cohesion with the earlier discussed theme of the psychosocial perceptions of the RIM child, where inclusion was considered an area of priority. Whereas in exploring that theme, the concerns for providing sufficient opportunities to develop belongingness were

interpreted as a barrier, the approach to inclusion within the current theme can not be easily defined as either a barrier or a facilitator to online learning. This interpretation is given because the strategy of approaching RIM education in a colourblind approach may evidence the teacher's desire to provide accessible, respectful, and equitable education to all students, irrespective of individual needs. Simultaneously, it may prevent the teacher from recognising the individuality of each additional culture, affecting the teacher's cultural responsiveness and practical repertoire in responding to individual needs.

## 4.3. Research question 3: What are the perceived ways educational psychologists can be best utilised to support teachers' self-efficacy in successfully supporting Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods?

*Table 11. Themes for RQ3 Group A*

| *Research question 3 (Group A)* | |
|---|---|
| *Sub-themes* | *Main themes* |
| (1) Individual work with RIM children<br>(2) Individual work with teachers<br>*(3)* Provider of training | **EP to provide consultative and developmental support within their remit.** |

### Theme nine: Educational Psychologists to provide consultative and developmental support within their remit

Participants engaged in discussions about their perceptions regarding the potential contributions of educational psychologists (EPs) to enhancing their self-efficacy beliefs. Responses from participants allowed insights into their understanding of the role of EPs and the support believed to be more beneficial for the participants.

Participants from group A communicated that a welcome contribution of the EP was their work with individual RIM children to help the children better understand their situation or for fact-finding and dissemination purposes.

*"…they could do some… I suppose they could do some sessions with the children to understand about moving to a new place, almost like a transition package…"* - Participant 002[a]

*"…it might be retraining the refugee or immigrant children to obviously, not get them to blank out what they've done, but to help them learn from that and how they can then access the learning here…"* - Participant 015[a]

*"…I suppose if they come…and made some recommendations and gave some advice on what they deem to be the immediate needs of the learner, that would support me in understanding how to pick certain things or to work with the family to support them to support their learning…"* – Participant 004[a]

The quotations above underscore participants' grasp of an educational psychologist's role and ability to offer a unique psychological perspective to help the children understand their new context. The quotes also demonstrate the participant's understanding of the EP's expertise in gathering and synthesising information from various sources. The generation of such responses may be attributed to participants' previous interactions with educational psychologists. While not incorrect, the excerpts demonstrate a potential misconception that EPs do not work eco-systemically and cannot simultaneously support the child, the school and the community. However, this belief is not confirmed to be held by the participants.

There was also an observed value to be placed on the EP's potential to deliver training and advice suited explicitly for teachers, resulting in the identification of the final subthemes of the current theme. Participants suggested that EPs can provide

individual work with teachers that slightly deviates from training in the traditional sense.

*"…And we would carry out the recommendations from yourselves and just constantly monitor whether that's working or not, and trying new approaches if it's not working, that's my sort of idea you're sort of helping us approach the child as a result of your extensive observations and things like that.…"* - Participant 0013[a]

*"…if I was experiencing concerns or issues with…either my relationship with the [RIM] child or my ability to communicate with the child or my ability to teach the child, then I would ask questions of an educational psychologist that I didn't have to know the answers to, and therefore I may be able to move that situation on in a positive way for that child.…"* - Participant 003[a]

The response from the participant above highlights an expectation held of educational psychologists to provide a consultative role where teachers can utilise the EP's problem-solving skills for the specific difficulties they are encountering. As demonstrated through the quotes selected below, these difficulties can emanate from either the classroom or be personal to the teachers themselves. This contrasts the preventative approach to training opportunities and suggests a more personalised and responsive help style. The quotes below highlight a possible interpretation where the EP is described as a "sound bank" to echo relevant advice and ways of thinking.

*"…a sound bank for support, advice, feedback, ideas. Umm, a guide for potential questions and queries that I might have as an educator. So a bit like a facilitator really …"* - Participant 003[a]

Additionally, the participant below, in a similar vein, views the EP as a potential support structure for their psychological preparedness to teach RIM children online.

*"…I think it would help me because… its about being…for me, to be successful I'd need to be in the right mental frame of mind. I'd need to…be able to approach teaching a child of refugee background successfully every time, from the first time onwards. So I think an educational psychologist would be able to help me with this…"* - Participant 008[a]

The value of training and guidance was also repeatedly mentioned by participants, highlighting the perceived importance of this development method. The variance in the priority areas concerning the focus of these training opportunities was of particular note. The quotes below demonstrate how one participant's focus of training they desire is within developing rapport with RIM children, whereas the second participant is unsure of a particular priority area.

*"…So I think an educational psychologist would be able to help me with expertise in that area. They would have handy tips and tricks in setting up and establishing a good relationship with a child with a refugee background which would…establish that trust and set up a healthy//learning relationship"* - Participant 008a

*"…I suppose there's probably some sort of training that could be offered, but I don't know what that would entail…"* - Participant 002[a]

Further examples of the variance in focus areas will be discussed when exploring the themes gathered from the responses of Group B below.

*Table 12. Themes for RQ3 Group B*

| *Sub-themes* | *Main themes* |
|---|---|
| (1) Provider of training<br>(2) Toolkit expansion and resource signposting | **EP to provide support with the pedagogical aspects of online education.** |

## Theme 10: Educational psychologists to provide support with the pedagogical aspects of online education

The participants within Group B discussed the importance of receiving direct support from EP's, similar to members of Group A. However, the focus of the support tended to skew towards improving pedagogical knowledge and skills in areas such as assessment, the development of good practice for pupils of RIM backgrounds and signposting to suitable resources.

*"…umm I think they would be able to provide me with tools, techniques, adaptations like, er, you know, maybe if the child doesn't speak English and there's a software or program that would transfer my speech into their language that they understand…they point us into the right direction, materials that could be used to further help the child…"* - Participant 011[b]

*"…I guess just for me some sort of tips, some sort of takeaway tips that you could give to teachers to best sort of support them online, so just ways to differentiate your lesson because obviously, they [RIM pupils] can only just see a PowerPoint online so ways to make that better for students who are immigrant or refugees background…"* - Participant 009[b]

*"…Providing maybe some information or some strategies, it depends where they've come from because if you've met one refugee, you've met one refugee, they've all got different stories and different things, and I think maybe supporting through things like trauma…"* - Participant 001[b]

While not definitive, one possible reason for the distinction in focus between Groups A and B could be the added lived experience held by Group B, which informed their awareness of areas of professional development in which they were deficient. The suggestion that educational psychologists would be best suited to providing pedagogical support was an overwhelmingly strong code that appeared in five out of the six interviews for group B, strengthening the idea that some element within the shared experience of the participants may influence the opinion that an EP's most significant contribution to the development of their self-efficacy is to provide training/continual professional development on online education pedagogy.

# Chapter 5

The findings of this study give an insight into possible contributing factors to the development and maintenance of self-efficacy perceptions when teaching RIM background children online. Also explored are the insights into the identified facilitators and barriers of successful online teaching and how EPs are perceived to be valuable in developing teachers' self-efficacy in educating RIM-background children online. The study has identified attitudes held by a sample of teachers and analysed how they relate thematically to one another and against the existing literature. This chapter will discuss the study's findings concerning each of the three research questions and how the findings compare and contrast against the topics covered in the literature review and the works of other relevant authors.

## 5.2. Research question 1: What contributes to primary and secondary phase teachers' perception of their self-efficacy in educating Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods?

The current study participants discussed the importance of the cultural and communicative adaptations needed to feel secure in teaching RIM-background children online. The cultural adaptations perceived were analysed to be multi-faceted. They did not just refer to the environment changing to meet the cultural expectations of the newly joined child but also changing the ideas, customs and social behaviour of both the teachers themselves and the other children included within the online learning environment. This awareness of the shift required is reflected within the subthemes identified, which were centred around responding to the need to develop positive sociocultural behaviours and to reflect the teacher's change in pedagogic and psychosocial behaviours. These themes are prevalent

throughout the study. However, the following section will discuss the identified subthemes in light of the first research question and the existing literature base.

**Value of trauma-informed teaching**

Participants within the study expressed concerns about the implication of trauma on the outcome and ability of their RIM background children to adapt to online teaching in a foreign culture. This concern is revealed in the literature to be shared amongst other individuals within education. Meyer et al. (2023) proposed from their interview data with teachers that the limitations on in-person interaction and reduced knowledge of students' situations due to the pandemic and distance learning led to concerns about adolescent refugee students' practical, psychological and sociological needs. One of these needs was identified to be the impact of trauma.

Awareness of the importance of trauma-informed working is recognised as a whole school priority. As McIntryre and Hall (2020) mentioned, teachers, senior-level management and headteachers share concerns about providing appropriate provisions to children with traumatic experiences.

The prevalence of post-traumatic experiences, including war-related trauma and severe life events, varies between unaccompanied and accompanied refugee minors, as suggested by Fuller and Hayes (2020). Therefore, it is difficult to predict whether or not the children that teachers come into contact with will have these experiences. This lack of knowledge with regards to the history of the RIM children can then lead to unfortunate events where post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) symptoms can disrupt the daily functioning of children and the adults that support them, much like the experience described by participant 012 where the reading of a book caused traumatic memories to resurface. Therefore, understanding children's

histories and experiences is paramount for teachers to perform without the anxiety of triggering their children and impacting their ability to focus on learning.

Activities or facilitative language models can be considered psychologically safer than asking children to directly list or describe significant markers within their history. Similar to the works of Ballentyne et al. (2020), Hulusi and Oland (2010), Morgan (2018) and Doggett (2012), who all used the projective technique of talking stones with refugees and unaccompanied asylum-seeking children, teachers could receive support or training in using similar techniques to give coherence and definition to events that are too difficult, painful or emotionally challenging to divulge. Thus, sensitive topics that can be avoided when planning learning experiences can be brought to the teacher's attention before offence is caused.

**Children's grasp of the learning**

The participants in the current study expressed concern about how much pupils of RIM backgrounds could grasp an online lesson. This apprehension may be linked to the perceived linguistic difficulties the child may possess and the limitations it places in understanding given instructions and explanations. Gkougkoura et al's study (2022) triangulates with this hypothesis, given that teachers in their study suggested that the most prevalent problems encountered by RIM-background students studying online are linguistic barriers and the inability to understand the instructions on the platform. Therefore, this concern may be reduced should children's linguistic needs be addressed fully before online learning with input on transactional or education related lexis and grammar.

It is also noted that the participants mentioned that they would collect feedback from the children at the end of the hypothetical lesson where an identified RIM

background child joined them. As mentioned in Chapter 4.1, the need for validation post-experience is congruent with research in self-efficacy, as Bandura wrote. However, more recent research has shown that personal experience and environmental feedback correlate with technology-supported teaching self-efficacy (Blonder et al., 2022). Therefore, the participants in the current study have highlighted a contributing factor to their perceived general and technology-supported teaching self-efficacy, according to the literature. The extent of this moderation may depend on the person and their environment. Also, the literature does not comment on the effect of teaching RIM-background children using technology-supported methods, thus revealing a gap in the evidence base.

**Development of belongingness and inclusion**

The discussion on developing a sense of belongingness and inclusivity with students of migrant and ethnic backgrounds has been discussed by several participants within the study, in addition to numerous pieces of literature included within the review. Belongingness is described as the extent to which one feels a sense of connection to others through regular social contact, a sense of inclusion and an absence of a sense of exclusion from a group or society (Malone et al., 2012). The benefits of developing an environment that promotes genuine belongingness and inclusion for children of RIM backgrounds can include protective effects against the negative consequences of bullying, decreased risk of depression and overall happiness, amongst others (Jiang & Liang, 2021; Morgan, 2018; Shah et al., 2021). With the difficulties of establishing consistent contact channels via remote learning being exposed, creativity in establishing a sense of inclusion within the digital space is vital for both the teacher's lesson quality (Seynhaeve et al., 2022) and the student's mental health and well-being (Meyer et al., 2023), which may explain the

preoccupation exhibited within the current study participants' interview responses. Additional context challenges can also exacerbate the pressures as the potentially unstable movement patterns of RIM background children and their families could mean that communities inside and outside of school are not correctly formed in time (Lwin et al., 2022). The need for strategies such as communicating through video conferencing 'team' pages or daily check-ins (Desjardins, 2021) is essential if children are to experience the tenets of belongingness mentioned above despite external factors impacting their geographical location.

In developing inclusivity in the classroom context, an understanding of its definition is essential. UNESCO describe inclusion in schools as removing barriers to education and ensuring participation by those vulnerable to exclusion or marginalisation. Booth and Ainscow believe that inclusive education should include equal valuing of staff and pupils, increased participation, reduction of barriers to learning, consideration of differences and cultivating mutually supportive relationships between and within schools and communities (UNESCO, 2000; Booth & Ainscow, 2014, as cited within Parmigianni et al., 2023).

Providing a positive and inclusive classroom environment is recognised as an example of best practice and policy by education providers and professionals in other disciplines that work with children of RIM background, i.e. social care and youth justice. (Isik-Ercan et al., 2017). However, striving to build an inclusive learning environment can result in unintended negative consequences, possibly causing more harm than good. Tobin and Hieker (2021) discussed a possible barrier to participation that teachers could unknowingly instigate in their attempts to assist learners of migrant backgrounds. They mentioned a risk of education providers providing a watered-down learning experience because of the lower expectations

regarding them. This could be due to assumptions about the child's linguistic or cultural background or history. While the interview data does not suggest that participants maintain a notably reductive outlook on RIM-background children outcomes, their responses consistently centre on the challenges, constraints, and compromises linked to teaching and learning from the perspective of RIM children rather than focusing on the strengths, advantages, and possibilities. This skewed perspective can potentially influence the extent of preparation and expectations concerning RIM-background children in online settings. Consequently, this could impact the teachers' workload, the subsequent feedback they receive and ultimately influence self-efficacy evaluations.

Within the literature, work with parents and communities is often cited as an example of best practice when supporting RIM-background children. The impact of this can be evidenced when considering theoretical models such as Bronfenbrenner's eco-systemic framework (Bronfenbrenner, 1996) and the interactive factors framework model by Frederickson and Cline (2002) where family and community are said to affect child functioning and development. The objective impact of working with families and communities could be observed through raising awareness of cultural specificities, devising personal plans of learning that take context into consideration and facilitating further integration into the school community (Akbar & Woods, 2019; Lwin et al., 2022; Primdahl et al., 2021). The participants in the current study did not raise family and community working within their responses enough to discern an emerging theme. Two participants did mention the home environment, but this was in the context of physical space and the availability of devices. While the current study only includes a small sample of teachers, the findings do challenge existing research that suggests that working and networking with families is a concern for

teachers and presents a potential barrier to successful online learning (Isik-Ercan et al., 2017; Kaiper-Marquez Anna et al., 2020; Lwin et al., 2022). Therefore, the current study's findings could suggest a potential need for teachers to be prepared and trained in working collaboratively with parents and communities, thus facilitating their perceived ability to promote an inclusive learning environment.

**Language barriers / Impact on non-verbal communication**

Communication issues were a common theme raised by the participants of the current study, with the majority of the concerns levied around linguistic barriers impacting the accessibility of learning and assessment methods online. Challenges in providing practical support to children who are not proficient in the primary language of instruction during distance or remote teaching have been reiterated by participants in other studies (Gkougkoura et al., 2022; Primdahl et al., 2021), reflecting a recognised area of support for teachers. However, the literature also explores further implications of communication difficulties partially reflected in the responses from the current study's participants.

Participants in the current study referenced the impact of being unable to exercise non-verbal communication strategies to maintain rapport or facilitate assessment. Researchers within the collated literature have explored communication difficulties caused by interacting through remote teaching methods, which do not facilitate non-verbal communication as quickly as physically being present. However, teachers can somewhat bridge this gap using software features and technological advances. Unfortunately, the knowledge required to do this smoothly heavily depends on individual factors, mainly digital competency differences. As mentioned in the critique of Salazar-Márquez's works in chapter 2.2, the current study did not seek to collect

information on the participants' digital competence and, therefore, is not in a position to compare responses of those who may or may not consider themselves as 'digital immigrants' (Salazar-Márquez, 2017). The impact of digital competency can present as a risk factor from the teachers' perspective as few opportunities to interact effectively with children online are realised. It is also thought within the literature that children who are not competent with technology are at increased risk of isolation because of the reduction in accessing networking and interacting functions (Kaiper-Marquez Anna et al., 2020; Salazar-Márquez, 2017). This can lead to well-being concerns as the anxieties surrounding providing support are exacerbated (Primdahl et al., 2021). Teachers are then at further risk of developing a disaffected attitude toward using online technology (Gkougkoura et al., 2022), similar to what was observed in some of the responses of the current study's participants.

While digital competency presents one potential barrier, social inequity presents another, as the literature explored presents the suggestion that children from disadvantaged backgrounds, including those of refugee and migrant backgrounds, that have reduced access to stable devices or internet connections can also struggle to remain connected to the communicative classroom (Kaiper-Marquez Anna et al., 2020; Tobin & Hieker, 2021). These technical difficulties may contribute to the difficulty in providing rich and uninterrupted teacher-learner speaking opportunities online. This omitted interaction pattern could result in comparatively higher learner-content interactions and reduced social and linguistic development (Seynhaeve et al., 2022). Similarly, the literature suggests that technical issues can impact teachers' perceived effectiveness, preference and satisfaction with distance teaching depending on their experience and confidence in virtual pedagogy (Radwan et al., 2022). The implication of these dimensions on teachers' self-efficacy in using online

teaching methods has been observed (Bai et al., 2021), where increased satisfaction leads to increased perceived self-efficacy.

The positive value in resolving communication issues for children of RIM backgrounds has been explored within the included literature in Chapter 2 and demonstrates the need for research to facilitate this. Morgan (2018) found through their interview with asylum-seeking youth that the support and encouragement they received from their teachers regarding their acquisition of English was highly valued and contributed to their positive experience and valuation of schooling in a foreign country.

The significance and effectiveness of fostering communication through online teaching methods become evident by integrating the literature review findings and the data presented in the current study. There is a highlighted need for further investigation into developing belongingness and inclusion within the online learning environment for children of migrant backgrounds in future research and teacher development programs.

**Awareness of uncontrollable distractions/loss of environmental control**

In order to achieve thematic synergy, the remaining themes of research question 1 will be addressed concurrently. This is because both themes explore the participants' pre-online teaching experience being interpreted as a source of possible apprehension. Existing literature suggests multiple aspects of face-to-face learning that were not easily maintained during the transition to online teaching by insufficiently prepared teaching staff. Among them is maintaining meta aspects of the environment in addition to physical ones such as assessment integrity, where

preventing cheating during online assessment is considered a challenge facing education (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020).

Difficulties monitoring children's engagement during online education is a concern mentioned by the current study's participants and within the explored literature. The teacher's inability to control the environment and receive direct feedback has been seen to affect the teacher's preference for online teaching. In a study of university lecturers' preferences for online teaching by Saha et al. (2022), difficulty monitoring students and insufficient feedback were rated as the second and third-ranked challenges of online teaching, respectively. While the participants of the current study teach at a less sophisticated curriculum level than at university, the results of Saha et al.'s study raise the implication that similar challenges in teaching online pervade even with the matured development of the students.

Other researchers have suggested strategies to manage the excessive cognitive load and challenges to concepts of self that can result from changing pedagogic approaches to manage the environment. An example of a strategy mentioned is "flipping" the roles and having children lead the synchronous teaching based on what they did outside the classroom. This strategy facilitates connecting with students' home lives through incentives for homework and reconceptualising the roles and expectations of discipline and routine to better engage with both the physical and online environment (Chen, 2023).

The significance of socioeconomic status on outcomes is unexplored in the current study but mentioned within the critical literature by Meyers et al. RIM children of lower socioeconomic status may have to contend with different stressors, such as a lack of support in the home environment using the child's native tongue and the

presence of additional responsibilities (Meyer et al., 2023), which may impact attention and engagement with lessons. Most of the current study participants did not demonstrate awareness of the impact of low socioeconomic status on achieving outcomes during online learning. Therefore, it is impossible to derive from the interviews whether this dimension of the RIMs profile was perceived to affect the participants' self-efficacy.

The challenges associated with teachers' perception of their role, resources and limitations are essential given the possible impact on their well-being suggested in the literature. The pedagogic strategies that participants in the current study refer to include interpersonal strategies, such as classroom management and student engagement, and instructional strategies, such as delivering and assessing curriculum content. Research suggests that teachers' held self-efficacy beliefs in strategic areas can have a correlational effect on teacher burnout during online teaching, suggesting that low self-efficacy in these dimensions is associated with increased teacher burnout (Daniel & Van Bergen, 2023). Consequently, to prioritise the well-being of teachers, it becomes crucial to consider their perception of their role during the shift to online teaching. Additional research is required to adequately assess the impact of these evolving perceptions when teaching RIM-background children online.

**Summary of RQ1 findings**

The analysis of responses from participants in the current study reveals numerous factors that may influence the development and maintenance of their self-efficacy in teaching RIM-background children online. One significant aspect is creating a welcoming and inclusive environment, as participants emphasised the need to be

mindful of trauma-experienced histories among the children and employ trauma-informed teaching strategies to facilitate their integration.

Additionally, concerns regarding effectively transferring learning online may hinder teachers' self-efficacy. Factors like the children's engagement, motivation levels, and linguistic capabilities can impact this process and add further apprehension to the teacher’s evaluation of their ability. Furthermore, participants also expressed apprehension about the pedagogic challenges posed in classroom management with the transition to online teaching, as it may require adjustments to their traditionally established strategies and approaches, thereby influencing their perceived self-efficacy.

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced various uncertainties and challenges to teaching competency and effectiveness, particularly in distance teaching. Even after the return to face-to-face instruction, these concerns persist. Among the many consequences of the pandemic on education, there is a possibility of psychological trauma among teachers who feel disadvantaged, wary, or anxious due to the shift from their accustomed teaching methods. Professional support will be essential to help them cope with these changes. Likewise, concerns around trauma and migrational trauma presented as a priority for the participants when considering the experience of refugees and immigrants. However, participants in the current study did not make mention of ongoing or acculturational trauma and stress resulting from living in a completely different culture. These difficulties are also in addition to the potential effects of the pandemic and the mandatory isolation on anxiety levels and mental well-being for children of RIM backgrounds. Therefore, teachers would be best placed to consider the impact of ongoing trauma that can affect RIM-background children in the online learning environment of a foreign culture.

In conclusion, after analysing the data from the current study's participants and synthesising the knowledge from relevant literature, it is evident that exercising inclusive practices, facilitating successful learning experiences, and creating communication opportunities can be considered as possible implicating factors to primary and secondary phase teachers' perceived self-efficacy in teaching refugee and immigrant background children online. Therefore, developing these aspects will be crucial in providing a consistent teaching experience in such contexts.

## 5.3. Research question 2: What are the perceived barriers and facilitators to successfully teaching Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods by teachers with experience in teaching RIMs online?

Where the first research question examined factors that may have implications on the perceived self-efficacy beliefs of the participants, the second research question aimed to investigate what the participants believed to be the practical implications of teaching RIMs successfully online. Many aspects mentioned in the exploration of research question one are also applicable here, such as the language barrier in teaching RIM children and the implications of the concessions to the practical experience of teaching RIMs online. However, further barriers and facilitators perceived by the teacher were uncovered from the data, such as the teachers' internalised attitudes towards the teaching medium and the impact of psychosocial perceptions held by the RIM child. The following section will discuss the particular subthemes within each theme with further analysis provided through links to existing literature.

**Online teaching is regarded as serving a specific purpose, and curriculum challenges when online.**

Participants in the current study discussed the suitability of using an online teaching methodology with RIM background children. The participants communicated the contextual specificity that they believed online teaching belonged to, with several participants in the group believing that online teaching was an appropriate solution for the mandated distance learning context of the pandemic but nothing else. This opinion was interpreted to be bolstered by the second subtheme that emerged, the belief that the online learning platform is not conducive to several curriculum strategies and resources.

The transition to online teaching as an emergency response from the standard in-person delivery can be considered seismic regarding the expectations it placed on all systems. The speed with which resources and pedagogy needed to be adapted to a digital format was unprecedented, bringing to the forefront the distinction between online teaching and emergency response online teaching, such as during the pandemic (Jnr & Selwyn, 2021). Emergency response online teaching brings additional detrimental impacts on education, including reduced in-class time, a loss in established communication methods and a loss in the stable pedagogical structure that has been developed either through an extensive testing and prototyping procedure, as is the case with subscription-based digital instruction packages, or provided after teachers have received adequate training and preparation time (Gkougkoura et al., 2022; Jnr & Selwyn, 2021). It has been described as contrasting against the quality and effective instruction involved in planned online education (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). Emergency response online teaching also holds the disadvantage of allowing for less time to prepare for the socio-economic inequity

among children and teachers as factors such as device availability, connection, and learning space quality are all affected (Gkougkoura et al., 2022; Kaiper-Marquez Anna et al., 2020; Lwin et al., 2022).

While the implications of transitioning abruptly to online teaching bring the disadvantages mentioned above, they also contribute to the perpetuated stigma that online learning as a whole is inferior to in-person teaching (Hodges et al., 2020). They also do not insinuate any favourable implications of experiential learning which can impact how teachers address future instances of online teaching.

The attitudes of the current study's participants do not align with certain literature texts' suggestions that the pandemic could have been a catalyst for professional development and the acquisition of new competencies. Moorhouse and Wong (2022) explored through their mixed methods study how select teachers perceived their readiness for using digital technologies in lessons before the pandemic, how they professionally innovated and developed throughout it and what impact the pandemic had on their pedagogical and professional development. Teachers within their study reported a positive impact on their perceived competency in using digital instructions following the pandemic. On a Likert scale between 1-4 that judged the participant's perceived competency, 56.2% of participants rated themselves as 3, an increase from the 37% who scored themselves as 3 when face-to-face teaching was first suspended at the beginning of the pandemic (Moorhouse & Wong, 2022).
Given that the interviews in both the current study and Moorhouse & Wong's writing occurred post-pandemic, participants could be employing a mental heuristic such as survivor bias (Elston, 2021) or a cognitive defensive mechanism such as the unconscious repression of the trauma (Boag, 2010), and thus do not recall the extra effort required of teaching online. Therefore, attitudes towards remote teaching could

help or hinder the perception of competence. One possible short-term gain is that the attitudes could bolster the perceived confidence in teachers' ability to provide online teaching in times outside of emergencies by reducing the risk factors of perceived unpreparedness. However, on the other hand, teachers may also be prevented from learning from the experience of emergency response online teaching that could apply to general online teaching practice, affecting practice development.

It is vital to maintain that the attitudes mentioned by the participants of the above-explored literature refer to teaching online in general and not the specific teaching of RIM-background children online. Therefore, further investigation is needed to ascertain whether the added demographic of refugee and immigrant children affects perceived attitudes towards online teaching in any conceivable way.

The perception of online teaching being solely adequate during emergency response times and its associated concessions to curriculum delivery could be alleviated with prior addressing through training and development programmes. As mentioned above, schools were not privy to expertly curated resources and the managerial planning preceding such a transition that would have addressed these concerns (Strielkowski, 2020, as cited within Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). Therefore, many teachers could not secure training and preparation for adapting to virtual teaching successfully (Adedoyin & Soykan, 2020). Findings published by the National Foundation for Educational Research (NFER) revealed that only 17.5% of teachers in England had professional development in integrating technology into instruction, with particular disparity observed between areas of high and low socioeconomic status (Galvis & McLean, 2019).

Therefore, in addition to addressing the barrier of circumnavigating IT-influenced concessions to the curriculum, implementing a structured professional development programme to improve the quality of teachers' online instruction can be considered a beneficial strategy.

**Language barriers and the perceived increase in difficulty for teaching and learning online.**

The impact of language and communication barriers has already been discussed earlier in the exploration of research question 1. However, that was in light of the barriers' effect on teacher's self-efficacy. The participants' responses also suggested that the language barriers affected the practical operation of online education.

The impact of language differences has been explored within recent literature, and, similar to the current study, a negative impact on teaching and learning outcomes is observed. In a study by Taskin and Erdemli (2018) of the lived experiences of Turkish teachers educating Syrian refugees and the difficulties they encounter, the most populated theme to be interpreted from the interview responses was the identification of language barriers, suggesting that it is the primary difficulty faced by the participants of that study. Among the strategies employed by the teachers in Taskin and Erdemli's study is the incorporation of fellow refugee students who have proficiency in both the target language and language of origin to act as translators and reliance on body language to be the primary communication method. The method of circumventing linguistic challenges with human translators has been alluded to within the current study as a method perceived to be unsuitable for the online environment. Additionally, using body language to interpret intended communication has obvious limitations within online video conferencing due to

problems such as video desynchronisation and reduced non-verbal information transfer. Taskin and Erdemli's study was conducted in offline environments, which may be one possible rationale for their participant's use of these strategies. Further studies are therefore required to explore potential strategies to alleviate the difficulties in teaching within the online educational environment that language barriers present.

In light of interview responses analysed for research question 2, a possible unique discernment is the interpretation of RIM background children's response to the language barrier regarding accessing the learning and cultural environment.

The school environment's sociocultural context has been explored in the existing literature to affect the psychological adaptation and acculturation of RIM background students and their academic achievement. In their study, Haim (2019) mentions that research in the United States has shown that language barriers and other obstacles to immigrant background children's ability to express themselves can be linked to complex adjustment processes and complicated identity negotiations. Language barriers are also believed to contribute to feelings of loneliness, alienation and disengagement (Haim, 2019), which can impact the learning process from both the teacher and pupil perspective.

Therefore, given the subthemes identified within the current study and in light of the above-referenced literature, it can be interpreted that resolving language barriers is vital for RIM pupils to acquire psychological well-being, which can affect the teaching potential of teachers online.

**RIM children's perception of their belonging and the impact of various psychosocial factors on RIM children's engagement online.**

The importance of the school's psychological protective factor to the functioning of children with refugee and asylum-seeking backgrounds has been documented previously. Schools with understanding staff members sensitive to the increased challenges for RIM children are more likely to contribute to the outcome of those children remaining and succeeding in education.(Ott & O'Higgins, 2019). Challenges have been noted to be a lack of English language support, bullying and social issues and staff who lack understanding of mental health and well-being.

With these challenges in mind, the participants interviewed within the current study shared responses that suggested the mental health, well-being, and sense of belonging by the RIM students may affect not just the child but also the facilitation of successful online learning.

The prioritisation of concerns around RIM children's sense of belonging observed in the current study is similar to the prioritisation made by teachers within Serin and Bozdag's (2020) study in which they examined the metaphors used by teachers to describe the experience of teaching Syrian refugee children. Within this study, the most frequent category of metaphors was seen to be "child with cultural adaptation and belonging problems", in which teachers used metaphors that included 'guests', 'fish out of water', 'alone' and 'bird with a broken wing' (Serin & Bozdag, 2020, p. 1462). The study's findings demonstrate a possible cross-cultural consideration of the importance of belongingness concerning refugee education.

Maintaining an awareness of belongingness has also been observed to hold a potential physical health and well-being implication, as inferred from existing quantitative research. For example, a clinical study by Kia-Keating and Ellis (2007) found that perceptions of school belonging by Somalian adolescent refugee students

were associated with lower depression scores and higher self-efficacy scores regardless of past experiences and exposure to adversities. While Kia-Keating and Ellis's study employed a cross-sectional design, which limits the applicability of its results in addition to the inability to comment on the causality relationship between the variables, the findings it presents have been seen to be consistent with other studies of similar design, whilst simultaneously presenting a rationale for the emphasis on belongingness development in the school environment as suggested by the current study's participants.

Participants in the current study made mention of collaboration in the development of inclusion and belonging when discussing the perceived input of educational psychologists. However, there is also potential for joint working with other professionals, such as wellbeing officers, local inclusion teams with the local authority and refugee charities to establish a genuine and culturally sensitive sense of belonging (Dovigo, 2021).

Within the current study, the participant's responses have been interpreted as suggesting the additional consideration of ensuring psychosocial and belongingness development as a potential barrier to successful online education, as they contribute to another area of preparation that teachers need to be cognizant of, potentially for as long as interactions occur. Many participants mentioned the perceived impact of trauma on educational and acculturational outcomes. However, as mentioned in the analysis of research question 1 above, there was a tendency to view trauma as an event or object that occurred pre-journey with little awareness that trauma can arise from current experiences such as accommodation, separation from family and community and persecution or racism (Hart, 2009). Therefore, a revelation that is difficult to process but possible is the notion that the experiences acquired in the

destination environment, despite the intentions of its natives, may be more detrimental to the mental health of refugee and asylum-seeking children than the atrocities witnessed or experienced in their country of origin (Gorst-Unsworth & Goldenberg, 1998). Educators and other stakeholders would be best placed to bear this in mind when preparing experiences for RIM-background children, even years after relocation initiated.

**Concessions to teachers' sense of control and the loss of established teaching behaviours.**

Many participants' perceptions of barriers to online teaching appeared to be influenced by the identification of concessions they needed to make to the teaching content and pedagogy. Predominantly, their opinions were grounded in recognising the concessions as leading to amplified challenges within the online instructional setting compared to in-person instruction. Similar views on the loss of pedagogical strategies in the transition to online are previously explored in the analysis of research question 1, albeit concerning perceived self-efficacy. Participants' view of concessions ultimately was interpreted as contributing to the perceived barriers because of the perceived comparative strengths and resource richness of teaching offline. However, some existing literature cautions against comparative evaluations predicated on perceived disparities between the two learning environments. Hodges et al. (2020) suggest that evaluations should not be based on directly comparing face-to-face teaching with online teaching due to the impossibility of one medium being more objectively effective than another. However, they should be based on factors such as the stakeholder's definition of success. This definition could include students' learning outcomes, attitudes (i.e. interest, motivation) and the faculty's attitude towards the online instruction medium (Hodges et al., 2020). Therefore,

while online provides significantly high implications for some hands-on curriculum items, such as within physical education, teachers must focus on possible positive adaptations. For example, using self or home study to advance particular learning areas further. In utilising novel strategies, feedback from the RIM background children can be used to inform the practices of the involved teachers, creating a continuous development loop.

**Desire to not perceive RIM children as different and the transferability of efficacies.**

Participants described some belief systems that helped them maintain a positive perception of efficacy in this area. Among them is recognising similarities across various efficacies they perceive as strengths and utilising them as a confidence model. Within the data, it is seen that some participants believed their experience and confidence in being able to provide for children of SEN or EAL designation would allow them to be equally successful in providing for children of RIM background online. From a perspective of pure self-efficacy development, using knowledge from existing experiences is a positive practice that will benefit teachers' perceptions of themselves concerning facilitating online education. The mental heuristic has been interpreted as both a barrier and a facilitator to successful online learning. While relying on the confidence and skillset gained from similar experiences can bolster perceptions of adequacy and effectiveness, it also presents a potential barrier as it prevents developing and utilising thought patterns specifically suited to the situation.

Similar contradictions in the interpretation of benefits can be seen in the decision not to view RIM children as different.

Several participants in the current study referred to children as ‘just children’, removing the idiosyncratic value of their immigration status and perception of any educational differentiation between non-RIM and RIM background children. Participants communicated that when provided with the same high-quality teaching as a native child, there is no difference in the academic outcome and that the child's political and legal status, cultural upbringing and history with education have no bearing on the developmental aspects of a child’s profile.

This viewpoint on the decision to view all children universally has been raised in existing literature by other teachers of children with refugee and immigrant backgrounds. Within Serin and Bozdag’s (2020) content analysis on teachers’ interpretation of teaching Syrian refugee children, one of the categories presented from the data was the perception that a Syrian refugee child is no different from other children. Metaphors used by the participants included perceiving the children as ‘human’, ‘normal students’, ‘our students’ and ‘students of this country’ (Serin & Bozdag, 2020, p. 1461). Once again, the presence of an evidence base from an international context offers strengthened interpretations of the importance of this theme for teachers of this population.

Some participants in the current study expressed these beliefs as an accepted truth, while others expressed them as a desired truth in an “ideal world”. While establishing an inclusive and accepting learning environment, irrespective of individual differences, is well-intentioned, it may inadvertently overlook the significance of specific attributes that influence social and linguistic development. This approach could hinder the implementation of suitable learning strategies and, consequently, impede the provision of an optimal educational experience for children of diverse cultural backgrounds (RIM background). Should teachers fail to recognise the

necessity of providing additional preparation, resources, and psychological perspectives in their instruction for RIM children, they will miss out on the chance to embrace the growth children can achieve due to differentiation (Levy, 2008). Additionally, as stated in Dovigo's study– *"RC [refugee children] constitute a considerable challenge for teachers, whose teaching skills should be expanded to acquire the basic level of intercultural competence needed to work with RC*" (Dovigo, 2021, p. 171). Without the distinction of RIM children to inspire the acquisition of required competences, teachers risk not eliciting the full potential of RIM children's learning.

Lastly, additional arguments against members of the wider school community not promoting an attitude of indifference to the individual backgrounds of RIM children have been explored in existing literature. According to some authors, the distinction between refugee status is essential to ensure that adequate and appropriate support is put into place. Within McIntyre and Hall's study of headteachers, the participants expressed the importance of 'labels' when managing the pupil population in their schools, not as a barrier to education but to ensure that no child's needs are misidentified and the child does not end up leading a double life (McIntyre & Hall, 2020). Naturally, the priorities of a headteacher differ vastly from that of a class teacher. While a class teacher needs to consider the individual and day-to-day operations with the individual child, the headteacher needs to have a systemic approach to consider not just the members of their own school, but the school's very reputation and position within the community. This is further exemplified by the headteachers within McIntyre and Hall's sample, who spoke of frustration that their school was perceived as a "dumping ground" for children with EAL or refugee backgrounds (McIntyre & Hall, 2020). Further research will be needed to investigate

whether the opinions of all faculties of school staff vary further when collected amidst differing contexts such as standard online and face-to-face education settings.

### Summary of RQ2 findings

The primary objective of answering this research question is to investigate the factors teachers deemed impactful in effectively instructing children with refugee or immigrant backgrounds in an online learning setting. While this inquiry intersected with the concept of perceived self-efficacy, it primarily focused on the practical and pedagogical considerations made by the participants and whether they could be perceived as obstacles or facilitators of successful online education.

Various topics were examined by analysing participants' responses and relevant literature, with attitudinal values towards various aspects of online education emerging as a pervasive theme throughout the analysis. Participants communicated attitudes of displeasure and a sense of futility regarding utilising online education outside of emergency response teaching and with some regions of the curriculum and associated pedagogy. Additionally, they expressed attitudes regarding the implication of communicative and psychosocial needs for RIM children in online education. These needs were perceived as both RIM pupils and teachers contending with language barriers and considering the development of belongingness and mental wellbeing. Participants also communicated strategies in which their experiences with similar efficacies and the valuation of RIM children being no different from native-born children impacted how they approached the challenge of online instruction. The preoccupation with these attitudes was identified as a common barrier to effective online teaching, potentially hindering teachers from innovating and developing more accessible and conducive online teaching practices.

However, potential advantages of these heuristics were also discussed, rending the proper interpretation of whether the attitudes are obstructive or facilitative to the individual user.

Lastly, one of the most significant observations is the similarities in themes that weave through research question 1 and research question 2. The impact of language issues and attitudinal values on online education and offline education have been interpreted to be equally vital to the practicalities of teaching online. Given the relationship between belief systems and actions carried out, this finding is expected despite the impossibility of identifying causality between the two variables. Suggestions for future research that explore potential relationships between self-efficacy beliefs and practical decisions made in the provision of online education for RIM children will be made in Chapter 6.8.

## 5.4. Research question 3: What are the perceived ways educational psychologists (EP) can be best utilised to support teachers' self-efficacy in successfully supporting Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods?

Within the current study, analysis for research question 3 is the only one that allowed for comparisons between the two groups of participants. While purely observational, some similarities and differences in emerging themes can be seen. This is most notable in the participants'' discussions around the EP's role of providing training. Below, the subthemes that arose from this theme are explored.

### Individual work with RIM children and teachers

Many participants in the current study provided insights into their beliefs on how they could effectively utilise an EP's support to develop their perceptions of their capabilities. Some participants believed that EPs could help by providing

individualised support to children and their families through direct working. In contrast, some participants suggested a range of ways in which they believed an EP could help by developing the teacher's practice. However, when observed in closed groups, the above themes were exclusively drawn from group A's responses, while group B participants exclusively referred to the suggestion of educational psychologists providing training, "tips", "tricks", and "advice". Because of the ontological position of the current study, it is not philosophically coherent to draw conclusions from a direct comparison of the two groups. However, observations can be made from the lack of variety in group B's responses to potential EP expertise usage.

One inference that could be made is that the participants in group B may collectively possess a misconception or limited comprehension of the functions performed by educational psychologists, which might influence the scope of known remits held by EPs. This interpretation aligns with the findings of a research report on the role of educational psychology services conducted by Kelly and Gray (2000). The authors highlighted that an existing obstacle to effective collaboration between schools and EPs stems from certain schools' perceptions and expectations regarding the role of EP services. Some schools tended to perceive the role of EPs primarily as focused on assessing individual children, or in this case, the provision of training, often without considering the potential for broader working (Kelly & Gray, 2000).

Another possible inference for the differences observed could be, as mentioned in Chapter 4, the impact of the lived experience of teaching RIM children online that Group B possessed. The participants could demonstrate an increased awareness of the competence required to succeed in online teaching and, therefore, are more accepting of further training. In Goodwin's (2002) study of teacher's preparation in

the education of immigrant children, he suggested that teachers must become accustomed to ways of working beyond their initial training routes. Goodwin suggests that "*teachers need to know about instructional differentiation, informal diagnosis and assessment…positive learning and behaviour support plans and community building*" (Goodwin, 2002, p. 187). Goodwin makes further suggestions, including working with families and improving familiarisation with second language acquisition theories. Given EPs' expertise and training regarding disseminating knowledge, EPs are well placed to help teachers in the myriad ways suggested by Goodwin and the participants within the current study.

Regardless, it should be noted that both inferences above are purely hypothetical and further research is required to address the particular needs of teachers who are transitioning or have already transitioned to online teaching with their RIM background children.

Participants within group A seemed to perceive the contributions of EPs primarily in terms of offering practical suggestions and interventions without acknowledging the EP's capacity to influence attitudinal values around the teacher's understanding of culture. This observation aligns with the findings of Akbar and Woods (2019), who noted in their study that school staff lacked cultural awareness of specific cultural and religious aspects within their student populations. This lack of awareness was evident across various domains, including interactions with individual children, engagement with communities, staff training, and recruitment.

Hence, considering the responses from the current participants and the existing literature, it is advisable that prioritising an understanding of the extent of an EP's role and resources should be paramount when considering the most effective ways

to engage EPs in enhancing teachers' competencies. This approach minimises potential obstacles to effective collaboration and empowers all teachers to take full ownership of addressing their developmental gaps.

**Provider of training and toolkit expansion**

When analysing responses from participants who offered insights into ways an EP could enhance their sense of self-efficacy, the subject of upskilling emerged frequently amongst both groups. The significance of training was implicitly highlighted across the interviews, aligning with research presented in the literature review area 4 (Chapter 2.5), in which one of the observed benefits of educational psychologists was communicated to be providing specialised training. Of particular relevance are the findings presented within research conducted by Dolighan and Owens (2021), where the positive impact of additional training on teachers' perceived self-efficacy was observed. In the present study, participants recommended supplementary training, including continuous professional development (CPD) and signposting to relevant materials and resources, which could foster improved confidence and self-efficacy. Training is widely acknowledged as a typical responsibility of EPs (Fallon et al., 2010). However, when contextualised within the realm of enhancing staff proficiency in specific socio-cultural considerations, such as navigating the intricacies of interactions with diverse cultural groups and providing insights into the psychosocial dynamics of various communities (Marku et al., 2022), training assumes an additional advantage that schools should actively leverage.

The notion of digital competence was frequently raised throughout the analysis of both groups as a reference to a hindrance to perceived self-efficacy. In connection

with this observation, it was inferred from the responses that participants recognise the potential for EPs to aid in surmounting these obstacles. Participants proposed that EPs could offer assistance by focusing on the provision of assessment strategies and general strategies for online teaching. Such provision of pedagogical guidance is well within the scope and expertise of EPs, as posited by authors such as Fallon et al. (2010).

Lastly, an additional interpretation discernible within the participants' responses involves the belief that their efficacy could be enriched through the EP's illumination of the RIM child's experience in terms of language acquisition and cultural navigation. EPs using their knowledge of existing psychologies to heighten the awareness of school staff regarding the migration experience has been indicated in existing literature. Gilsenan and Lee (2021) proposed that EPs are optimally positioned to steer school staff through the psychological dimensions of migration, harnessing their knowledge of established theories such as acculturation (Berry, 2003) and ethnic identity (Phinney, 2003), among numerous others. Gilsenan and Lee recommend referencing relevant theoretical findings during staff training, engagement with parents and communities, and critical transitional junctures such as between year groups or phases. Comprehending some of the psychological aspects linked to the impact of the RIM experience on the pedagogical facet of teaching can unearth benefits such as gaining awareness of which subjects or languages to avoid. In addition, this knowledge also equips schools and educators to be better equipped to manage interactions with members of marginalised communities (Marku et al., 2022), thus impacting multiple dimensions of self-efficacy for multiple involved professionals positively.

### Summary of RQ 3 findings

The participants in the present study held diverse interpretations of the role and scope of the EP. These interpretations are believed to influence the methods they envision for effectively using an EP in enhancing their self-efficacy. Furthermore, it is deduced that the EP is perceived as a repository of knowledge spanning various domains. Some of these domains pertain to facilitating improved learning access, encompassing the development of digital teaching competency, assessment facilitation and inclusion promotion. Hence, the inference drawn is that, alongside offering training for enhancing teaching practices, teachers in this study would appreciate and benefit from cultural and diversity training tailored to the needs of RIM children entering their classes. This learning demand requires the EP to possess a broader and more nuanced knowledge base to support them effectively.

The expectations that participants in this study have of the EP might arguably be construed as extending beyond the conventional purview of an EP's role. Participants conveyed an assumption that the EP would possess background information on RIM children and the implications of their migration journey, even though such knowledge would typically only be available following preliminary involvement and to relevant stakeholders involved with the RIM child in question. However, this assumption could stem from a misunderstanding of remit, resulting from the interdisciplinary nature of EPs' work process. Nonetheless, given the multitude of competencies and resources accessible to EPs for information gathering, a skilled and well-resourced EP could explore and communicate an individual RIM child's culture, history, needs, and strengths if requested.

# Chapter 6

The concluding chapter will critically examine the knowledge contributed by the current study to the overall understanding of the topic and its impact on educational psychology and school practice. The chapter will then evaluate the methodology utilised, analyse the potential impact of researcher bias and suggest recommended directions for future research before drawing the study to a close with concluding remarks and reflections.

## 6.1. Implications for practice: Educational psychologists

The present study revealed that the teachers who participated valued the capacity of EPs to offer training on how to support children from RIM backgrounds best. Given that training sessions and workshops are considered integral to the array of services offered by EPs (Fallon et al., 2010), this study suggests leveraging these training opportunities to enhance teachers' cultural responsiveness. Culturally responsive practice entails harmonising cultural priorities between home and school environments, thereby dismantling the dichotomy that often exists (Minkos et al., 2017). Schools should be assisted in developing approaches that cater to linguistic, cultural, academic, and physical requirements, thus fostering provisions for social, emotional, and mental well-being. For instance, by implementing group interventions to counteract feelings of loneliness and isolation among individuals from RIM backgrounds and minoritised ethnic groups, EPs can suggest evidence-based advice on adapting the classroom context in a manner that acknowledges and celebrates cultural knowledge while addressing potential avenues for systematic

development of school approaches (Charbonneau et al., 2021). The study highlights that inclusion is regarded as a significant contributing element to perceived self-efficacy in teaching RIMs online within this cohort of interviewed teachers. Through the EP-led strategies mentioned above, teachers are in a position to develop more consistently inclusive environments.

Educational psychologists are well poised to contribute across all echelons of the school system in ensuring the implementation of culturally responsive practices. While individual training was mentioned by the study participants, instituting training at a school-wide level can mitigate misconceptions and inadvertent interactions that might propagate a divisive climate.

Furthermore, disregarding the cultural distinctiveness of a child from a RIM background, as hinted at by some participants who mentioned that / to the effect of "...kids are just kids", could inadvertently render that child culturally deficient. School leaders and administrators might inadvertently normalise invisibility by projecting a stance of race-neutrality or 'colour-blindness' as a facet of their school culture, thereby depreciating or demeaning the linguistic and cultural identity of these young individuals (Subedi & Maleku, 2021). Even well-intentioned policies, whether officially established or enforced subculturally, such as a preference for English language usage within a classroom or school environment, can perpetuate feelings of estrangement and isolation. This stance may hold particular significance for some RIM background children, as their primary language serves as a conduit for academic success and a connection to their cultural roots (Haim, 2019).

Educational psychologists can collaborate with schools to cultivate a multicultural environment that endorses the integration acculturation strategy for individual

children (Berry, 2003). This undertaking should span all levels of interaction with faculty members. EPs' array of duties, encompassing consultations, observations, assessments, and training, should be underpinned by multidisciplinary, theoretically informed and culturally responsive thinking and practice.

Teachers participating in the current study conveyed attitudes towards online teaching that might not be entirely conducive to optimal practice. These attitudes often originated from less-than-satisfactory experiences with digital instruction, encompassing students' engagement and teachers' digital proficiency. Certain teachers also expressed a willingness to receive training on effectively harnessing online pedagogy. While the array and quality of online instructional software are far-reaching, making it impractical to anticipate an EP to possess intimate knowledge of each, this situation does present an opportunity for EPs to disseminate their understanding of how to approach online education from a psychological standpoint. Domains such as psycholinguistics, motivation and engagement, attention, and strategies for reducing cognitive load are realms where EPs are well-placed to provide insights.

Lastly, EPs are optimally positioned to identify and address any underlying biases or deficit perspectives educators might hold regarding children from refugee and immigrant backgrounds. In this study, educators predominantly fixated on the negative connotations of migration, frequently invoking the stereotype of fleeing conflict. This perspective could suggest the adoption of a deficit model for refugee and immigrant children influenced by various sources, including media depictions. EPs are positioned to offer a clearer perspective, detached from the immediate context, to observe, critique, and rectify such biases. This suggestion diverges from the proposition of increased training and would allow an EP to present a constructive

critique of the school environment and ethos from an additional perspective. Existing literature further supports the notion that EPs are well-placed to engage with schools on a systemic level by fostering connections between schools and migrant communities through inclusive practices. This approach aids in diminishing prejudicial attitudes and discreetly educating staff (Abu Khalaf et al., 2023; Gilsenan & Lee, 2021; Parker et al., 2020).

The ongoing immigration crisis, propelled by global factors like the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, the aftermath of governmental regime changes in Afghanistan, and administrative delays in movement caused by the pandemic, has heightened the possibility of local authorities assuming responsibility for migrant children or adolescents in their schools in the near future. Consequently, EP services are ideally positioned to enhance their skills in light of the insights derived from the research presented here. This concept of continuous upskilling aligns with recommendations outlined within the literature review, indicating that EPs must remain committed to perpetual learning as an integral aspect of their role as in-service professionals (Parker et al., 2020).

### 6.2. Implications for practice: School staff

The present study delved into the perspectives of classroom teachers; however, the implications of the discussions and the exploration of the literature can be extended to encompass other members of the school faculty.

In educating children from RIM backgrounds, the significance of understanding their history and migration journey has been implicated in the discussion. Therefore, it becomes vital for school systems to establish an efficient and transparent communication mechanism for these factors. It is plausible that some RIM children

might have gaps in their historical records during their initial phases of school integration. These gaps could arise from various reasons, including considerations for their safety or administrative oversights. Nonetheless, any available information, including their current living conditions or known cultural specifics, should be shared with their classroom teacher. This knowledge ensures that pedagogical strategies can be appropriately tailored to suit the needs of all children. Therefore, cooperation between different school bodies such as inclusion managers, SENCOs, Headteachers and designated safeguarding leads needs to be established so that vital information can be shared with relevant teachers, and vice versa, in a timely and transparent manner. The role of cooperation by school practitioners has also been suggested in existing literature where the extent of shared responsibility extends beyond senior management and special education teams but includes administrative support staff (Dovigo, 2021). By widening the shared remit to such positions as admin staff, coordination of attitudes and operations can be established and presented from the point of first contact by those outside the school's system, such as families and public members.

The current study also suggests that teachers and school staff would value implementing a formalised feedback system that accommodates children with varying language comprehension abilities. Additionally, school administrators could leverage such a feedback mechanism to evaluate the quality of online instruction, specifically from the viewpoint of children with RIM or EAL backgrounds. Subsequently, this feedback would aid schools in crafting a more equitable online learning experience that caters to children with diverse educational backgrounds.

The present study has delved into the multifaceted value of EP input across various themes. Teaching staff could benefit from supplementary training and preparedness

offered by EPs, which would help optimise the online teaching pedagogy and the engagement of children from RIM backgrounds. Participants within the current study expressed views towards computer technology and the individuality of children with RIM backgrounds, which could be considered non-conducive to a successful and inclusive online learning environment. Therefore, exploration of profoundly ingrained culture and attitudinal values such as these, which might not be readily apparent to school community members, could be undertaken by an external observer such as an EP. As a consequence of acquiring this new perspective, staff can then proliferate and disseminate the attitudinal shift to members of the wider school community, including non-teaching staff, parents and relevant members of the migrant community. SENCOs and senior management teams within schools would be well-advised to explore the potential of commissioning educational psychologists for broader work beyond individual child assessments.

Finally, a significant contribution of the present study lies in the impetus for school professionals to contemplate their self-efficacy beliefs and how closely they align with the findings presented in this study. The potential resurgence of online education, whether as a responsive measure or an extension of instructional reach, is conceivable, and teachers will need to engage with psychological dimensions such as preparedness, self-efficacy, and self-confidence as a result. By proactively assessing their stance concerning the discussed themes in this study, teachers and school staff can ensure that their personal and practical resources are adequately equipped to tackle any forthcoming challenges.

### 6.3. Evaluation of the current study as a piece of qualitative work

As mentioned above, the current study posits itself as qualitative research, which means it is also subject to the quality control and scrutiny demanded of similar types of work. When considering the quality of the research, the criterion suggested by Yardley (2000) has been consulted. The table below provides an overview of what she considers to be characteristics of good qualitative research.

*Table 12. Characteristics of good qualitative research*

| **Essential qualities** | **Examples of form** |
|---|---|
| Sensitivity to context | *Theoretical; relevant literature; empirical data; sociocultural setting; participants' perspectives; ethical issues* |
| Commitment and rigour | *In-depth engagement with the topic; methodological competence/skill; thorough data collection; depth/breadth of analysis* |
| *Transparency and coherence* | *Clarity and power of description/argument; transparent methods and data presentation; fit between theory and method; reflexivity.* |
| Impact and importance | *Theoretical (enriching understanding); socio-cultural; practical* |

*Adapted from Yardley (2000, p.219).*

The study satisfies a number of the essential quality criteria suggested by Yardley in the following ways.

### Sensitivity to context

Data gathering for the current study was conducted during the receding end of the pandemic when students and teachers had generally returned to the physical classroom. However, the COVID-19 pandemic has not finished, as evidenced by the emergence of reported variants as recently as the 10th of August 2023 (Mundasad, 2023). Therefore, returning to lockdown and distance learning platforms remains a

possibility. Also, as mentioned within the study, ongoing geopolitical events, such as the war in Ukraine, can and have led to an increased movement of children and their families, resulting in significantly increased migration to and from this country (Tondo, 2023). This consideration of the contextual background highlights the relevance of the current study to the socio-cultural setting in which it takes place.

Lastly, ethical consideration (as described in Chapter 3.14) was considerably explored, and participants were informed at multiple points on how their participation was respected, what would happen with their data and their right to withdraw. Ethical considerations involving the context include conducting interviews remotely despite the return to mixing during data collection. While this helped to alleviate the logistical difficulties of interviewing teachers in different physical locations, it also eliminated the risk of transferring infection and risking the well-being of the participants, the researcher and the wider community.

**Commitment and rigour**

Commitment to the thoroughness of data collection can be observed in the level of detail collected on the participants' demographics and the detail given on how the methodology was constructed and used. The rigour of the data analysis can be demonstrated through the use of research supervisors to oversee and confirm codes identified within the data. However, further rigour could have been sought by triangulating the data with other methods, such as observations and examination of records (Yardley, 2000), or with the participants themselves by asking them to comment on the analysis conducted. This missed opportunity occurred due to time constraints and decisions made in the recruitment stage regarding participant contact. This missed opportunity would be rectified in further research in this area.

### Transparency and coherence

As described by Yardley, Coherence pertains to the "'fit' between the research question, the philosophical perspective adopted, and the method of investigation and analysis undertaken" (Yardley, 2000, p. 222). The current study presents an example of a good fit, as demonstrated in Chapter 3, where the ontological position of the study is outlined. Adopting an interpretivism paradigm (i.e. relativist and constructionist positions) demonstrates that knowledge is not presumed to be held solely within the researcher, nor is it objectively proved or disproved through the chosen methodology. Instead, knowledge is co-created and explored between participants and researcher through language and experience conveyed in the interviews.

Transparency is the "degree to which all aspects of the research are disclosed" (Yardley, 2000, p. 222). The current research details the process, including the previous design and decisions that led to the current iteration of the study. In addition, a reflexive exploration of my bias that may have entered into the study is provided to clarify implicating factors that led to the current research and its findings (see Chapter 6.7). Regarding transparency around the interviews, the analytical methods employed are also presented within Chapter 3.12, where a discussion on Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-stage approach to thematic analysis is provided. Examples of the themes produced are given in the findings section, with an example code map also provided in the appendices. Transparency on the thinking involved with designing the interview schedule and the rationale for using talking stones is also provided in Chapter 3, allowing for understanding and replication of the methodological decisions made.

Transparency of the current study could have been increased if the analysis and findings were shared with the participants to confirm or challenge the information found. As mentioned above, this was not done due to limitations in the time available for data collection and the wording of the participant recruitment material, which promised no further contact beyond the interview as an indication of how little the time investment for participants was.

**Impact and importance**

The current study and findings present an opportunity to impact the behaviour and thinking patterns of teachers, education stakeholders and educational psychology services interacting with refugee and immigrant student populations. As mentioned earlier, the ever-changing nature of COVID-19 presents a risk of returning to distance education, meaning that understanding the contributors to teachers' self-efficacy in delivering successful online learning experiences is very important.

The impact of the study could have been interpreted differently by utilising a quantitative methodology to include experimentation and control of the variables. This change would allow for more robust hypothesising on the maintenance of self-efficacy through controlling variables. However, this would require changing the ontological positioning of the study and a change in methodology and require a level of resources and time not available within the timeframe permitted following the change in topic.

Instead, the impact and importance of the current study lies in its potential to influence and stimulate thoughts and discussions on how best to support teachers within this self-efficacy domain. As explored above, the findings and supporting literature allow for the evaluation of the implications for school staff and educational

psychologists. Therefore, alongside suggested introspection on current practices for a wide range of professionals are recommendations on the practical utilisation of the knowledge explored within the current study.

### 6.4. Evaluation of the virtual talking stones technique

The current study adopted the talking-stones interview technique (Wearmouth, 2004) and demonstrated its viability within the online environment. Within the literature explored, the technique has been used primarily in offline settings and with teachers and pupils (Henderson, 2010; Morgan, 2018; Wearmouth, 2004). The study's use of the virtually adapted talking stones interview technique could be considered an additional strength of the current study. The majority of the participants reflected positive feedback from the pilot on the creativity and enjoyability of the activity. As part of the interview schedule, a question was asked about what participants thought of the activities and whether they would implement them when working with children or adults. Many participants reflected on the ingenuity of using stones with subtle physical differences, which helped them formulate more nuanced responses and considerations. Many participants also responded that they would use it in their lessons to get children to voice their opinions of something, thus providing participants with a potentially new teaching strategy that they can utilise or adapt further. Conversely, some participants found the stones distracting and preferred to answer a rating scale or the question in a more open format.

Using stones in the virtual environment can be considered a success. Depending on the possible culture, age or experience of the clients or participants it is used with, it is possible that the projective nature of the stones is too abstract to engage with fully and may present as a distracting feature of the interview schedule. Researchers are

encouraged to pilot the technique extensively to predict likely trends in engagement with the stones as per the dominant culture of the research participants and context.

Educational psychologists are frequently tasked with information gathering from children and adults where levels of engagement/disaffection and motivation to divulge information are widely variable. Language comprehension also becomes a significant barrier when working with diverse groups. It is then suggested that EPs adopt additional techniques in their bank of resources, such as talking stones, when trying to elicit views. While not framed as a replacement for existing techniques, talking stones does increase the practitioner's range of methods, especially when working with physically or emotionally hard-to-reach clients. The technique can be considered complementary to existing personal construct activities such as kinetic family drawings (Burns & Kaufman, 1970), drawing the ideal self (Moran, 2001) and others. Equally, the 'virtual' talking stones methodology could be encouraged to be used by teachers to gather feedback from children, including RIM background children following online interactions.

## 6.5. Strengths of the current research

The originality and relevancy of the study are some of the biggest strengths of the current research. The study was conducted within the sociocultural context of the ongoing recovery from the effect of the coronavirus pandemic and increased geopolitical tension in Europe and the Middle East. While most primary and secondary phase institutions have returned to face-to-face teaching, many higher education institutions still teach remotely as part of their timetables, even at the risk of receiving financial penalties, as suggested by the Universities Minister of the UK (Edkins, 2022). The potential incidences of a new vaccine-resistant variant of COVID

or the rise of a new infection are now firmly within the realms of conceivability and warrant examination of key workers' self-efficacy with the tools they will be expected to use. Therefore, the current study's findings and implications can be applied to a wide range of educators across geographic boundaries and demonstrate a potentially long period of relevancy until its foundations have been built upon with further, more robust exploration.

Another testament to the relevance of the present study's findings extends beyond their utility in resuming emergency remote teaching; self-efficacy persists as a pertinent topic for educators in the present era. The study directly employed firsthand evidence from practising teachers, capturing their perspectives on the factors influencing their self-efficacy in this domain. Every participant could contribute viewpoints to the examined subject matter, thereby presenting a shared and contemporary concern within the realm of education. Hence, a recognised strength of the study lies in the broad applicability of the knowledge it has generated in understanding the primary and secondary online teaching experience.

Another strength of the current research was that I both collected and analysed data myself. This allowed for complete immersion and familiarisation with the data set from the first moment of collection and resulted in more opportunities to interpret and re-code emerging themes. The themes generated were shared with the research supervisors at the sub-level and macro levels, thus increasing the research's trustworthiness (Shenton, 2004) and enhancing the identified themes' dependability.

## 6.6. Limitations of the current study

The current study pertains to several limitations. Immediately noticeable, certain methodological limitations arise, such as the limited sample size. A bigger participant pool would have led to a richer analysis result with more codes and themes identified. However, the study's primary limitation lies in its assumptions on the homogeneity of experiences. Societal presumptions, expectations and values involving the terms refugee and immigrant that would impact an individual's cognition and opinion are too vast to be explored within most modern-day research, permitting a level of assumed homogeneity in the analysis. However, the current study recruited primary and secondary teachers, interviewed each with the same interview schedule, and analysed the responses within the same data set as one homogenous group. The study, therefore, had a limited capacity to consider the differences in experiences in teaching varying age groups, as their experiences will have impacted their sense of efficacy accordingly (Bandura, 1978). For example, the experiences of teaching a year two child online and a year eleven youth online will potentially be very different, given the psychological developmental differences in attention, motivation and engagement.

An additional assumption of homogeneity within the study is the grouping of Refugees and Immigrants. The study attempts to ensure that participants know they are different populations despite not correcting or educating them on the differences. However, future research should explore teachers' attitudes regarding each population as a discreet group.

The study's vernacular of putting together the population groups of refugee and immigrant backgrounds demonstrates a reductionist attitude that does not consider the length of experience or residence in England. As one participant in the interviews acutely pointed out, an immigrant background child who entered the UK as an infant

and one who entered recently will have vastly different experiences adjusting to educational and cultural expectations of learning online, with the unfamiliarity of the online medium being the only constant. Specification of the details of the immigrant status may have improved the accuracy of the teacher's perception of their self-efficacy. Similarly, the study would have also benefitted from exploring teachers' attitudes and efficacy towards a particular race or group of refugees, providing insight into some of the values and attitudes held towards particular groups by teachers mandated to teach all groups fairly.

Another limitation of the study is the possibility of teachers using their internal models to formulate their reported answers on their self-efficacy. Some teachers may have been referring to an internal deficit model of the experience of teaching refugee and immigrant children. Questions that explored the teacher's views on teaching RIM background children may have experienced contamination/interference from these deficit models. This could be particularly problematic when interviewing teachers without experience teaching RIM-background children online.

The interpretations of trustworthiness and transparency could have been improved by sharing the themes with the participants for their feedback. As a condition of recruitment and incentive to partake in the study, participants were told they would not be contacted further beyond their participation in the interview. This was done regarding the many demands on the teacher's free time and to ensure maximum participation given the reduced time available to collect data having changed topics. While the coding and thematic process were shared multiple times with supervisors as a form of triangulation (Shenton, 2004), richer and more accurate triangulation would have been carried out had the themes and transcripts been shared with each participant for first-hand feedback on the interpretations of their words.

It is possible that the limitations observed resulted from increased time pressures that resulted from the change in topic. As mentioned in Chapter 1, the thesis topic originally intended to explore acculturation strategies and ethnic identity within looked-after children. However, given difficulties in accessing the population due to increased pressures on children's social services around the country, a considerable amount of time had passed with no collected data. It was deemed necessary to change the focus of the study to a more accessible population. Therefore, the time between the reapproval of an adapted ethics application and final data analysis approximated six months instead of the standard minimum of 12 months given to other students. Additional preparation time would have allowed the minimisation of some of the critical discrepancies and a more robust investigation.

## 6.7. Impact of researcher bias

Like all research, the present study is subject to biases that may have influenced the overall integrity of the findings. Empirical biases, such as cultural, response, recall, and sampling bias, could be deemed unavoidable due to the limited recruitment and study conduct scope. However, the bias introduced by myself as the primary researcher holds particular significance, given its impact on all study aspects, from the recruitment phase to data analysis. The following section will explore potential areas most susceptible to bias from me and their likely effects.

### Conceptualisation of the study in its current form

The decision to focus the study on class teachers, which followed an unsuccessful initial design (as detailed in Chapter 1.2), might have been influenced by my background as an English as a Foreign Language teacher, both in online and in-person settings. During this period, I encountered challenges such as student

motivation, device and internet connection quality discrepancies, and filtering adequate online resources from ineffective suggestions. Although this experience predated the pandemic phase, awareness of potential challenges prompted the reflexive contemplation of whether I could have effectively taught within the pandemic context. This contemplation on self-efficacy significantly shaped the final design of the study. It is, therefore, plausible that in the absence of this bias related to the subject, the study might have explored a different phenomenon or population, yielding distinct findings.

**Interview design and conduct**

I designed and conducted the interview schedule based on my interpretation of the research questions and study objectives. The use of the same person as both the designer and interviewer introduces bias into the data collection process. It is conceivable that questions might not have elicited the same responses from participants if they were posed by an individual who did not possess an internalised model of the question's purpose. A change of interviewers could have led to the creation of alternative follow-up questions or different enunciation patterns. Furthermore, since I conducted all interviews independently, question delivery might have been influenced by psychological factors such as fatigue, concentration and the need for resolution, clarity and certainty in interview responses (Norris, 1997), potentially impacting participants' responses.

Lastly, the impact of having me as the interviewer may have led to observer bias or the Hawthorne effect, wherein the researcher's intentions unconsciously influence participants' behaviour or responses. In the current study context, this influence could stem from formulating and delivering the questions in a particular way and lead

to participants answering in ways they believe will please the researcher. Alternatively, I may have missed vital information due to observing the data with a particular ‘lens’.

**Analysis of data**

Lastly, since I have adopted multiple roles, there is a possibility that the analysis findings and process may have been subject to bias. Having been involved with creating and delivering the interview schedules and then involved with the analysis allows the discovery of codes and themes to be skewed by the desire to fulfil the study's aims, and some findings may have been missed or overrepresented. Another potential source of bias during the analysis phase could have originated again from my prior experience as an English as a Foreign Language teacher. In this capacity, language challenges among students of foreign origin was the most significant difficulty addressed, inadvertently fostering heightened sensitivity or anticipation of these specific needs during the coding process. Mitigative measures were undertaken by subjecting the findings to oversight by other individuals engaged in the research, including supervisors. Nevertheless, there remains a possibility that bias could have exerted an influence on the analysis.

The opportunity for researcher bias to affect the analysis findings is exacerbated by the fact that they were not corroborated with the participants, a limitation explored in section 6.3 above. This resulted in the discovery of themes and interpretations that were situated within my worldview and may not be wholly representative of the views held by the participants.

Bias is considered an inevitable part of research (Mehra, 2015; Norris, 1997) as research cannot be performed within a vacuum, avoidant of the researcher’s

experience and beliefs. Therefore, the realisation of the potential bias that may have affected the current study should not be considered as a limitation on the validity of the findings but rather reflect the conscientious approach taken to acknowledge and address any factors that could have influenced the research outcomes.

## 6.8. Directions for future research

As mentioned above, the diverse experiences of the refugee population signify that individuals arriving from the same origin country could have experienced vastly different circumstances in their place of origin, migration journey, and resettlement in the host country. Keeping this in mind, conducting multiple replications of the study to explore teachers' perceived efficacy in supporting refugees and migrants from specific demographic backgrounds would offer numerous research contexts and contribute significantly to our understanding.

A similar focus should be applied to settled migrants who possess prior experience within the education system in their origin country or those who may have a functional grasp of English. Exploring teachers' perceived efficacy in educating these groups of children could shed light on attitudes beyond those investigated in the current study, such as language barriers and integration concerns.

Future studies in this domain should gather separate perspectives from primary, secondary, and higher education staff rather than amalgamating primary and secondary teachers into a single category and excluding higher education teachers. Concentrating on specific educational phases would enable a more detailed analysis of the attitudes and values relevant to each phase and raise awareness of the perceived challenges unique to each phase rather than amalgamating them. Incorporating the higher education perspective would also enable the collection of

experiences from educators accustomed to working with individuals with a more mature psychological and behavioural profile. For instance, factors like perceived racial discrimination's detrimental effects (Yip, 2018) and additional pressures, such as the need for employment to achieve higher standards of living (Li et al., 2016), could influence motivation and behaviour in online learning environments, thus impacting the self-efficacy of higher education teachers.

Similarly, future research should group the sample based on variables such as teaching experience and length of service. This approach would enable the exploration of the influence of pre-training routes and multicultural education input (Serin & Bozdag, 2020) alongside the effects of accumulated service length and classroom experience (Dolighan & Owen, 2021) on perceived self-efficacy.

A study design such as this one would have benefited from additional data from a quantitative perspective. The comparison of perceived self-efficacy beliefs against gathered self-efficacy scores could provide increased richness in the interpretation data and increase the generalisability of the study.

Expanding on the above, a promising avenue for future studies would involve examining the pre-service training curriculum compared to König et al.'s (2020) findings. Their study revealed that teachers who received digital competence training during initial training were more likely to possess higher self-efficacy for online education. A similar quantitative study, controlling for this variable yet exploring self-efficacy in teaching online to refugee and immigrant background children, would provide valuable insights into the field and inform future teacher training programs.

The current study delved into teachers' perceptions of how educational psychologists could further enhance their self-efficacy in effectively teaching online to children from

refugee and immigrant backgrounds. This foundational knowledge could be extended by investigating the viewpoints of educational psychologists themselves regarding their contributions to this domain. Future studies could quantitatively and qualitatively explore EPs' perspectives and their roles in supporting teachers' self-efficacy. This approach not only captures a current snapshot of practices but also presents an opportunity for self-reflection and enhancement of services offered by educational psychology services through knowledge sharing.

Further research would benefit from long-term investigations into teachers' self-efficacy in this domain and perceived barriers and facilitators for successful online teaching. Considering the UK government's trajectory toward a "living with COVID-19" mindset (UK Government, 2022) and the potential emergence of vaccine-resistant variants (Scientific Advisory Group for Emergencies, 2022), educators' competence and confidence in online teaching could significantly benefit from sustained monitoring and rigorous research.

## 6.9. Conclusion

The present study investigates the factors influencing primary and secondary educators' perceived self-efficacy when teaching refugee and immigrant background children online. A qualitative exploration of participants' perceived self-efficacy was conducted through interviews, revealing various perspectives, including apprehension over linguistic barriers and maladaptive attitudes towards computer technology. The study's outcomes underscore that the theme of inclusion is essential for the academic and social progress of refugee and immigrant children, a concern

interwoven within the identified facilitators and barriers to effective online education for this group of participants.

Upon analysing the key elements contributing to teachers' perceived self-efficacy, the interviewed participants raised language disparities, the importance of acknowledging trauma history, and a perceived loss of acquired pedagogical strategies. Consequently, considering the insights gained from the reviewed literature, this study contributes to an enhanced understanding of teachers' perceived self-efficacy in delivering online education to refugee and immigrant children.

In terms of the study's trustworthiness, the concept of transferability can be applied, enabling the findings to be applied by readers and stakeholders in education and related domains, including training directions and professional development pathways, with a degree of assurance.

## 6.10. Concluding reflection

Within the context of my educational journey, the present study holds paramount significance as the most substantial independent research endeavour I have undertaken. I sincerely appreciate that this undertaking converged with areas where I possess a profound personal and vocational connection. My motivation for undertaking this research was rooted in curiosity and professional empathy, cognisant of the augmented stress and tribulations accompanying an already demanding profession.

Engaging in conversations with educators during the data collection phase renewed my appreciation for the imperative of lucidity concerning roles and contributions, especially within multi-disciplinary collaboration with educational psychologists. While the study's sample size and design preclude the application of broad generalisations, it does offer illustrative instances of potential outcomes when educators remain unaware of the multifaceted roles educational psychologists can assume. For instance, if educators are unaware that the contributions of EPs extend beyond direct engagement with students, a plethora of untapped potential in supporting teachers, families, and communities remains unexplored, potentially leading to suboptimal outcomes.

While the study did not entail direct interaction with refugee or immigrant background children, it fulfilled its intended purpose by shedding light on theories, psychological insights, and experiences that might have been hitherto unfamiliar to the readers of this study. In summation, I am inclined to assert that the present study and its exposition champion the notion that bolstering teachers' self-efficacy in online education for refugee and immigrant children assumes paramount importance. This endeavour ensures that every child, regardless of citizenship or upbringing, is offered equitable opportunities and not left behind.

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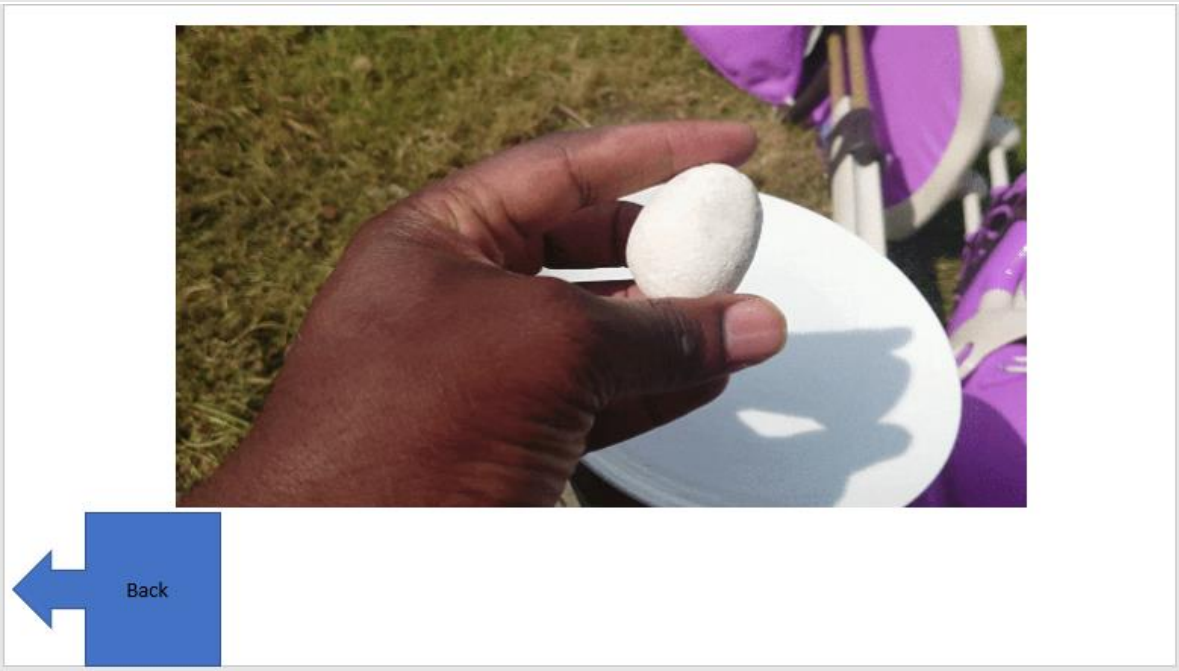
# Appendices

## (i) Stone presentation examples

## (ii) Coding process (example)

*Research question 2: What are the perceived barriers and facilitators to successfully teaching Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods by teachers with experience of teaching RIMs online?*

**Group B – Experienced in teaching RIM children face-to-face & online**

| Raw codes (all group B dataset) | Amalgamated similar codes | Subthemes | Final themes |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. Time and exposure led to increased confidence online<br>2. Online teaching is a necessary adaptation/survival skill<br>3. Difficulty is expected, perfection is not<br>4. Offline is the standard/default/average experience<br>5. Time is an enabler of success/efficacy<br>6. English is a barrier to online self-efficacy<br>7. Lack of pre-service training<br>8. Similarities to efficacies around SEN support.<br>9. Importance of having cultural awareness from a school security sense<br>10. Physical accessibility concerns / background context<br>11. Acceptance of the difficulty but also exceptions and strengths present<br>12. Child motivation/engagement a significant factor<br>13. Insecurities about own ability to teach successfully online<br>14. Child's feedback significant<br>15. Child's perception of belonging a factor<br>16. Curriculum barriers to teaching online<br>17. Non-transferable topics or themes through digital methods<br>18. Change of culture where spontaneous non-verbal | • **Offline is the standard/default/average experience X3**<br>• Online teaching is a necessary adaptation/survival skill<br>• Online serves a purpose when no better/any alternatives exist<br><br>~~• Negative perceptions of online teaching~~<br>~~• Online assessment tools not as effective/preferred as f2f tools~~<br>~~1. Teachers are blind to a lot online – behaviour management~~<br>*(insufficient occurrences to become a subtheme)*<br><br>• **Non-transferable topics or themes through digital methods X4**<br>• Concerns about knowledge gaps<br>• Planning can help alleviate some shortcomings of online teaching<br>• Curriculum barriers to teaching online | 1. Online teaching regarded as serving a specific purpose<br>2. Curriculum challenges when online | Navigating Purposeful Online Teaching and Curriculum Challenges |
| | • **Language barriers: increased difficulty for teacher X5**<br>• Language barriers an source of anxiety for teacher when collecting feedback<br>• Absence of people that are available in f2f to alleviate language barrier | 1. Language barriers increase the perceived difficulty for online teaching<br>2. Language barriers increase the | Language Barriers and Perceived Difficulties in Online Education |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| communication channels are the primary<br>19. Outside distractors for children/ lack of control<br>20. Lack of control and loss of learned experience<br>21. Loss of control a significant barrior to perceived self-efficacy<br>22. Inability to exert control on the child's environment<br>23. Loss of pedagogic strategies<br>24. Within child factors of acculturation<br>25. Additional barriers to overcome when teaching RIM<br>26. Barriers are exacerbated when online<br>27. Online experience dependent on what experiences child brings with them<br>28. Language barriers: increased difficulty for teacher<br>29. Hierarchy of difficulties : languagce>cultural differences<br>30. Cultural differences and the integration<br>31. Rougher experience for RIMS online<br>32. Importance of being aware of child history/background<br>33. Trauma-informed teaching<br>34. Colourblind when approaching feedback<br>35. Colourblind<br>36. Desire to treat them the same as other children<br>37. Importance of children comfortability and wellbeing<br>38. Technological limitations / device<br>39. Online prevents formative assessment<br>40. Impact of not having non-verbal communication<br>41. Online assessment tools not as effective/preferred as f2f tools<br>42. Language barriers: translation of instructions | • Absence of knowledgeable and attuned others who share mother tongue.<br>• RIM students not sharing struggles and requiring teacher's awareness<br>•<br>• ~~Hierarchy of difficulties : language>cultural differences~~ *(insufficient occurrences to become a subtheme)*<br>• **Language barriers: comprehending learning X5**<br>• Language barriers: understanding teacher instructions<br>• Language barrier: understanding instruction<br>• Lang barrier: engaging in interactions<br>• Language as a barrier: access to learning in general<br>• | perceived difficulty of RIMs accessing learning. | |
| | • ~~Child motivation/engagement a significant factor~~<br>• ~~Online experience dependent on what experiences child brings with them~~<br>• ~~Additional barriers to overcome when teaching RIM~~<br>• ~~Child's feedback significant~~<br>• ~~Importance of feedback from the child~~<br>• ~~Importance of within child qualities: experience and ability with learning~~<br>• *(insufficient occurrences to become a subtheme)*<br>• **Child's perception of belonging a factor X4**<br>• Concerns around belongingness / inclusion within the environment<br>• Concerns for RIMS sense of belonging<br>• Priority to convey a sense of community and support between teaching and RIM | 1. RIM Child's perception of their belonging<br>2. Impact of various psychosocial factors on RIM child's engagement online | RIM Child's perception of psychosocial experiences and the impact on online teaching |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 43. Cultural differences in the response to learning content<br>44. Extra responsibility for ethical education<br>45. Increased difficulty to carry out assessments live<br>46. Language barriers: comprehending learning<br>47. Concerns about knowledge gaps<br>48. Impact on the social expectations of the classroom<br>49. Impact on general pedagogic tools (differentiation)<br>50. Impact of previous knowledge and experience in comprehending the online lesson<br>51. Advice and supports<br>52. Negative perceptions of online teaching<br>53. Disruption to teaching pedagogy<br>54. Technology is a barrier to effective learning given the added skills needed<br>55. Frustration with the repeated difficulties.<br>56. Frustration with the disparity in technological expertise<br>57. Frustration with the impact on motivation and engagement that technological limitations has<br>58. Curriculum subject advantages<br>59. Technological limitations apprehension<br>60. Transferability of skills from other efficacies<br>61. Dealing with additional emotional difficulties of teaching RIMS online<br>62. Similarity across efficacies<br>63. Equity differences (availability of IT) and the challenges it brings<br>64. Technology issues impacting lesson success<br>65. Language barriers: understanding teacher instructions | • **Awareness of the overload RIMS may experience X7**<br>• Importance of being aware of child history/background<br>• Trauma informed teaching<br>• Concerns around their wellbeing<br>• Dealing with additional emotional difficulties of teaching RIMS online<br>• Within child (psychosocial) factors i.e. acculturation<br>• Importance of children comfortability and wellbeing<br>• | | |
| | • ~~**Technology is a barrier to effective learning given the added skills needed X4**~~<br>• ~~Frustration with the disparity in technological expertise~~<br>• ~~Frustration with the impact on motivation and engagement that technological limitations has~~<br>• ~~Technology issues impacting lesson success~~ *insufficient occurrences* ***across the group*** *to become a subtheme, all of the above are from 1 participant)*<br>• ~~Equity differences (availability of IT) and the challenges it brings~~<br>• ~~technological limitations / device~~ *(insufficient occurrences to become a subtheme)*<br>• | 1. ~~Implication of technological expertise on teaching and learning~~ | ~~Technological barriers of entry to successful online teaching and learning~~ |
| | • Change of culture where spontaneous non-verbal communication channels are the primary<br>• Impact of not having non-verbal communication<br>• Impact on general pedagogic tools (differentiation)<br>• **Loss of pedagogic strategies X8**<br>• Outside distractors for children/ lack of control<br>• Lack of control and loss of learned experience<br>• Loss of control a significant barrior to perceived self-efficacy<br>• Inability to exert control on child's environment | 1. Concessions to teachers' sense of control<br>2. Loss of established teaching behaviours | Adaptations in online Teaching Practices in Response to Changes in pedagogic control and Behaviours" |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 66. Language barriers an source of anxiety for teacher iwhen collecting feedback<br>67. Gap in outcomes due to engagement and participation online<br>68. Lack of proximity impacts rapport building and formative assessment<br>69. Importance of time and rapport building<br>70. Language barrier: understanding instruction<br>71. Lang barrier: engaging in interactions<br>72. Importance of awareness of RIM background / trauma informed teaching<br>73. Missing knowledge/expertise in working with RIMS online<br>74. Concerns for RIMS sense of belonging<br>75. Concerns around belongingness/inclusion within the environment<br>76. Concerns around their wellbeing<br>77. Priority to convey a sense of community and support between teaching and RIM<br>78. Online serves a purpose when no better/any alternatives exist<br>79. Online can be engaging<br>80. Sporadic engagement from students<br>81. Colourblind approach to the status of the child<br>82. Additional preparation needed<br>83. Language as a barrier: access to learning in general<br>84. Internalised difficulties<br>85. RIM students not sharing struggles and requiring teacher's awareness<br>86. Language barriers : Instruction understanding<br>87. Absence of resources that are available in f2f<br>88. Absence of knowledgeable and attuned others who share mother tongue.<br>89. Trauma informed teaching | • Impact on the social expectations of the classroom<br>• Loss of control of the student's environments and context<br>• Absence of resources that are available in f2f<br>• Lack of proximity impacts rapport building and formative assessment<br>• | | |
| | • ~~Importance of time and rapport building~~<br>• ~~Cultural differences and the integration~~*(insufficient occurrences to become a subtheme)*<br><br>• **Colourblind approach to the status of the child X3**<br>• Colourblind when approaching feedback<br>• Colourblind<br>• Desire to treat them the same as other children<br>• **Transferability of efficacies digital methods x2**<br>• | 1. Desire to not perceive RIM children as different<br>2. Transferability of efficacies | Educational equity is considered a facilitator of positive online learning experiences. |
| | | | |
| | | 1. | |
| | | | |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| 90. Absence of people that are available in f2f to alleviate language barrier<br>91. Impact of online on facilitating requests for help.<br>92. Loss of control of the student's environments and context<br>93. Planning can help alleviate some shortcomings of online teaching<br>94. Teachers are blind to a lot online – behaviour management<br>95. Importance of feedback from the child<br>96. Curriculum specific difficulties<br>97. Awareness of the overload RIMS may experience<br>98. Importance of within child qualities: experience and ability with learning<br>99. | • | 1. | |

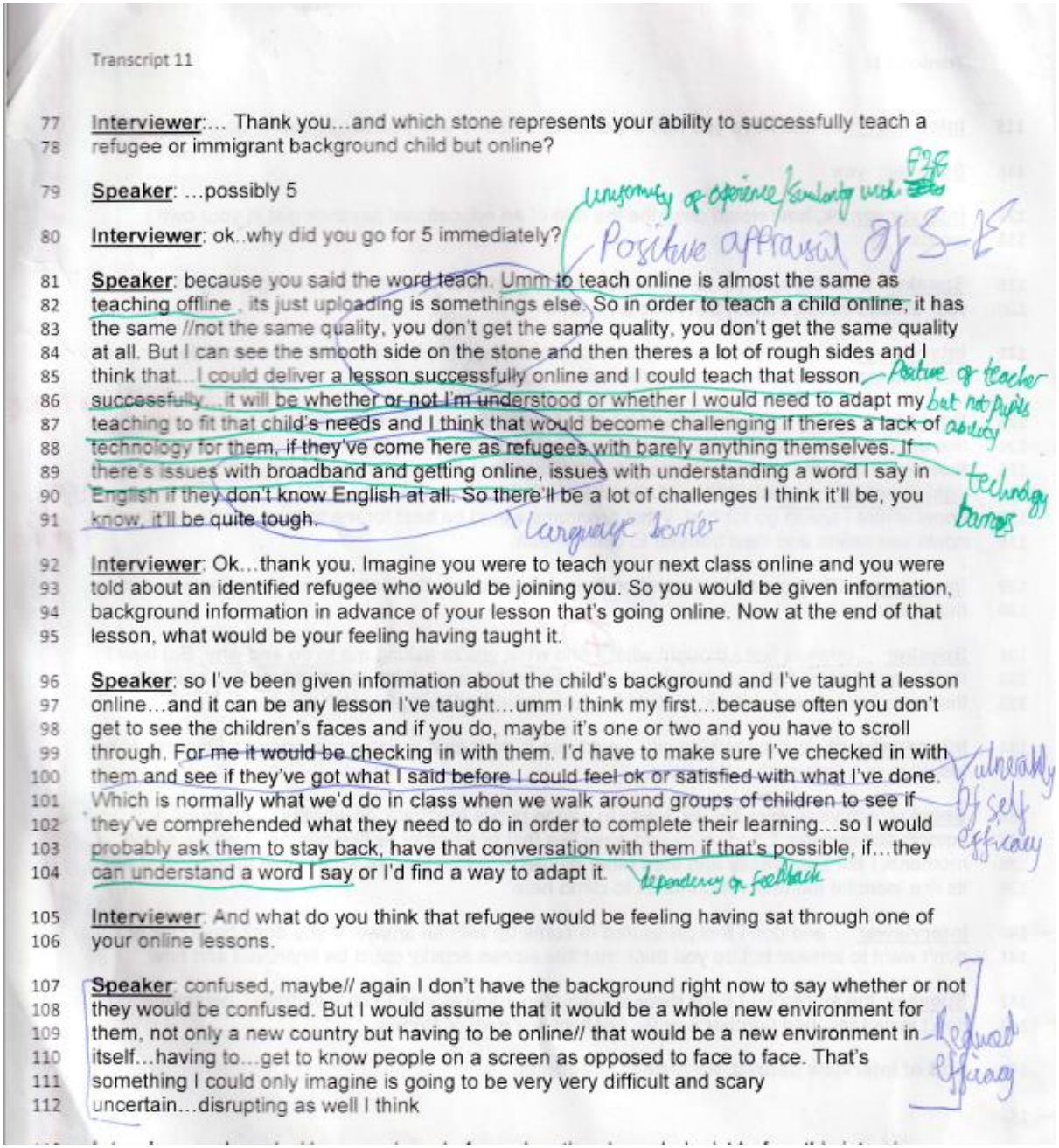
Research question 3: What are some perceived ways educational psychologists can be best utilised to support teachers' self-efficacy in successfully supporting Refugee and Immigrant background minors through online learning methods?

**Group B – Experienced in teaching RIM children face-to-face & online**

| Raw codes | Almagamated codes | Subthemes | Final themes |
|---|---|---|---|
| • EPs can provide training or insight onto the refugee experience.<br>• Trauma informed practice<br>• Trauma informed education<br>• Training on assessment methods<br>• EP as a source of information<br>• EPs to refer relevant materials | ~~Individual needs assessment with RIM children~~<br>*insufficient occurrences* ***across the group*** *to become a subtheme, all of the above are from 1 participant)*<br>• ~~**EPs can provide training or insight onto the refugee experience X3**~~<br>• ~~Trauma informed education~~<br>• ~~Trauma informed practice~~<br>*insufficient occurrences* ***across the group*** *to* | 2. Provider of training<br>3. Toolkit expansion and resource signposting | EP to provide support with pedagogical aspects. |

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| • Training or mentoring opportunities/ expertise sharing<br>• CPD<br>• Individual needs assessment with RIM children<br>• Highlighting psychological implications of the online experience for RIMs<br>• | *become a subtheme, all of the above are from 1 participant)*<br><br>• **EP as a source of information X6**<br>• Training on assessment methods<br>• Training or mentoring opportunities/ expertise sharing<br>• CPD<br>• EPs to refer relevant materials<br>• Highlighting psychological implications of the online experience for RIMs<br>• | | |

## (iii) Coded transcript examples



Transcript 11

**Interviewer**:... Thank you...and which stone represents your ability to successfully teach a refugee or immigrant background child but online?

**Speaker**: ...possibly 5

**Interviewer**: ok..why did you go for 5 immediately?

**Speaker**: because you said the word teach. Umm to teach online is almost the same as teaching offline , its just uploading is somethings else. So in order to teach a child online, it has the same //not the same quality, you don't get the same quality, you don't get the same quality at all. But I can see the smooth side on the stone and then theres a lot of rough sides and I think that... I could deliver a lesson successfully online and I could teach that lesson successfully...it will be whether or not I'm understood or whether I would need to adapt my teaching to fit that child's needs and I think that would become challenging if theres a lack of technology for them, if they've come here as refugees with barely anything themselves. If there's issues with broadband and getting online, issues with understanding a word I say in English if they don't know English at all. So there'll be a lot of challenges I think it'll be, you know, it'll be quite tough.

**Interviewer**: Ok...thank you. Imagine you were to teach your next class online and you were told about an identified refugee who would be joining you. So you would be given information, background information in advance of your lesson that's going online. Now at the end of that lesson, what would be your feeling having taught it.

**Speaker**: so I've been given information about the child's background and I've taught a lesson online...and it can be any lesson I've taught...umm I think my first...because often you don't get to see the children's faces and if you do, maybe it's one or two and you have to scroll through. For me it would be checking in with them. I'd have to make sure I've checked in with them and see if they've got what I said before I could feel ok or satisfied with what I've done. Which is normally what we'd do in class when we walk around groups of children to see if they've comprehended what they need to do in order to complete their learning...so I would probably ask them to stay back, have that conversation with them if that's possible, if...they can understand a word I say or I'd find a way to adapt it.

**Interviewer**: And what do you think that refugee would be feeling having sat through one of your online lessons.

**Speaker**: confused, maybe// again I don't have the background right now to say whether or not they would be confused. But I would assume that it would be a whole new environment for them, not only a new country but having to be online// that would be a new environment in itself...having to...get to know people on a screen as opposed to face to face. That's something I could only imagine is going to be very very difficult and scary uncertain...disrupting as well I think

**Interviewer**: ok…now what about the experience of teaching refugee or immigrant background children face to face. Which stone would you choose to describe that experience?

**Speaker**: …umm I'm gonna go number 8…because in the picture its doesn't look like a very solid stone, it looks like its made up of many particles. And I would say that you don't know ahh you're getting always. And I think that the people are. So its really hard, your plan doesn't necessarily// you've got to adapt it and its made up of those little particles that aren't fully formed in the way that you know of…theres that lack of knowledge of the culture, maybe. And you what you're getting.

**Interviewer**: ok…and what about online, would that experience be different?

**Speaker**: …no I don't think it will be any different. I think the only difference will be…is that you're hoping that they can understand what you're asking of them. so it would be harder because you// because if they're there with you, you could go to them, you could work with them as individuals but if they're online, you don't know if they're getting it. If they understand and you don't know if they're getting it, if they understand and again where they've come from a different environment, you don't know where they are against what your expectation or what your pitch is…you might have the pitch completely wrong…it depends on how long you've known them. If you've known them for a couple of terms, you should be able to pitch it. But if they're really new, it'd be quite difficult.

**Interviewer**: so then…which stone represents your ability to successfully teach a refugee or immigrant child face to face?

**Speaker**: umm number 2…and the reason is its got a lot of darkness in there so, its not necessarily smooth running and the dark bits are the blips that you come across that you think you're doing alright and then it goes a bit horribly wrong or just// it's a challenge for you…it's not necessarily what you would think it would be.

**Interviewer**: and…what are some of those dark blips that you're mentioning, what are some of the ways it could go wrong in your opinion?

**Speaker**: I think it could go wrong in a lot of ways. So again it could be massive language barriers. So they cant really understand and you might not be able to communicate with them. Umm but I think it could even go wrong//so I'm thinking of the child I was teaching and we were reading a book like a class reading book and it just opened up a whole can of worms and a whole complete breakdown with this child//he was an absolutely beautiful child, and he was really trying, he worked hard, he couldn't speak any English when he came to us and he really picked it up really quickly. And he was doing really well so I thought everything was smooth and fabulous. And then we sat and started reading this classbook and it was all about this child that was going through a difficult time. And he completely fell apart, and it knocked me as in-I

Transcript12

Transcript 4

**Interviewer**: hmm so are you saying the feedback makes it more difficult than you//

**Speaker**: // I think so, I think its really hard when you're teaching online and not getting the same level of feedback and not being able to see a learner properly go through the process in person, you know, cause if you're in a room, you can read a room and go ' I can see they're getting it, I can see they can't'. If you're just seeing faces of learners on a screen I think it is really hard to tell how much their grasping of the learning things and then therefore as part of teaching and learning the idea of the series of learning intentions that builds towards greater understanding, I think its hard to know how to build from one online lesson to the next because the learning is so unclear from one session to the next

**Interviewer**: hmm, and so thinking about now in your opinion, would the experience of teaching a refugee or immigrant child online be similar to that or would you say its different?

**Speaker**:I think you would probably find that this being something that I have very little experience in but I think you would probably find you would have similar but more exacerbated, potential difficulties// it would depend on whether English is a second language. If English is not a second language, I could see the experience being very similar. I think if English is the second language then I think your ability to gain an understanding of what they've understood just gets more difficult because , you know , there isn't someone there to support them that you might help with any translation within the home and family// you know unless parents are sitting with, and you definitely don't get the nuance of 'are they understanding things' through the screen/

**Interviewer**: hmm fair enough yeah, ok. So another stone question then. This time I'd like you to think about refugee and immigrant background children. Which stone best represents, in your opinion, your ability to successfully teach a refugee or immigrant background child in the physical classroom or face to face…ok and why

**Speaker**: umm I think because it would probably be spiky. It would depend on the topic and potentially the shared inferences that you sometimes need within classes that I could imagine could be challenging because potentially you know a lot of schools for example try to use everyday examples and I could imagine for some learners depending on how long they've been in the UK , whether English is their second language umm their general background, you would find some things would be easy cause you'd find points of reference but somethings might be, you know you'd use a real life example and that isn't something they've experienced for example.

**Interviewer**: and similar question which stone represents your ability to successfully teach a refugee or immigrant child but online?

**Speaker**: [laughs] what's the roughest looking stone there is…probably that one.

**Interviewer**: ok and why were you looking for something rough.

**Speaker**: I think because , all of the things I've just stated and you know the things I've

### (iv) Interview schedule

***Introduction script:***

*Once again thank you very much for agreeing to take part in this study. I know you received the information sheet but I just want to reintroduce myself and the study one more time. My name is Mickel Johnson and I am a 3rd year Doctoral student in Educational Psychology. As you know distance teaching and learning has received considerable focus recently due to COVID-19 and my research is interested in finding out what impacts a teachers confidence in their ability to teach refugee background children online and ways to support this confidence. As I've previously mentioned, it doesn't matter if you have had experience of teaching this group online. If there's anything you don't want to talk about or question you don't want to answer, then that's ok and we can stop at any time. Similarly, if you'd like to withdraw from the study at any point, this is also possible. This interview is all about you so there are no right or wrong answers. Is it ok if I begin to record this interview, just so it can help me to remember and understand what you say later?. I'll let you know when I've stopped recording, is that ok with you? (yes- continue, no-stop). Are you ok to continue?*

***Introduction to stones script***

*Before we begin, I'd like to introduce you to some stones. Can you see them on your screen?* ***What do you think about them? Do any jump out at you?*** *Some questions I ask will ask you to choose a stone to help you answer. If you select a stone, it will open up a page so you can see them more clearly. I'm going to give you control over the mouse, you should be able to move the mouse on my screen, give it a try (if ok, proceed, if problem see resolution A below).* ***Good,*** *now click on each stone to see them more clearly, if you need to return to this screen click on this.* ***Lets try another question: Could you choose a stone that you think best represents a typical Monday morning in your household? Why did you choose that stone?*** Great! *Let me know when you are ready to continue.*

**(continued below)**

**Key**

// = reformulation

| ***Area/Question*** | ***Follow up*** |
|---|---|
| | |
| How would you describe the terms refugee? Immigrant and minor | - Have you ever had one in your class? |
| What comes to mind when you hear the phrase "online teaching" | Are there any methods you're aware of |
| What comes to mind when you think of a "successful lesson"? | - Does this change when you think about a successful online lesson? How so? |
| Could you choose a stone that you think best describes the experience of teaching non-refugee children face to face/in the physical classroom | Why did you choose that stone? |
| Now could you choose a stone that you think best represents the experience of teaching non-refugee children online/through video lessons, VLE etc. | Why did you choose that stone? |
| In your opinion would the experience of teaching a refugee or immigrant background child in the context of face to face be different? | *Why?* |
| In your opinion would the experience of teaching a refugee or immigrant background child in the context of online be different? | *Why?* |
| Which stone best represents your ability to successfully teach a refugee or immigrant background child face to face/ in the physical classroom | Why did you choose this stone? |
| Now could you choose a stone that you think best represents your ability to successfully teach a refugee or immigrant background child through online teaching | Why did you choose this stone? |
| In your opinion what do you think contributes to this thought on your ability to teach them successfully online? | |
| Imagine you were to teach you're a class online and there was an identified refugee or | • What do you think would be the child's feeling, having sat |

| | |
|---|---|
| immigrant background child joining you, What would be your feeling at the end of the lesson? | through one of your online lessons?<br>• **Why?** |
| Have you heard of an Educational psychologist before this interview? | • Have you had experience with one? |
| How would you describe the role of an educational psychologist? | - |
| In what way do you think an educational psychologist could help you to feel more confident in your ability to teach uascs successfully online? | |
| **Last question** – What did you think about the "stones" activities during this interview? | - Is it something you would use in your own teaching?<br>- How could it be improved?<br>- did using the stones make the questions easier or more difficult to answer? |
| | |

**Debrief script.**

*Thank you very much, that is the end of the interview. So as mentioned that interview was interested in hearing how you have conceptualised your self-efficacy in teaching UASCs online. Self-efficacy is a concept that refers to an individual's belief in their capacity to complete a task. A person with high self-efficacy views challenges as things that are supposed to be mastered rather than threats to avoid. Whereas people with a low sense of self-efficacy view difficult tasks as personal threats and tend to shy away from them. Low self-efficacy can be linked to higher levels of stress and depression. This study does not measure self-efficacy and thus I can't comment on your individual level, However, If you feel affected by this interview and would like to explore ways to professionally improve in this or any other areas, I highly recommend opening up discussions with your school senior management team, SENCO or individual responsible for your Continual Professional Development. Do you have any questions for me? Great, I'm going to press stop on the recording now, once again I really appreciate you taking part.*

## (v) Information sheet

**Title: "*I can do this, right":* Understanding the perceived self-efficacy of educators in teaching refugee and immigrant minors online.**

(January 2021 – August 2022)

**Information sheet for participants**

**Who am I**

My name is Mickel Johnson, and I am a student at University College London's Institute of Education who is undertaking a three-year professional training doctorate in Educational Psychology (Professional Educational, Child and Adolescent Psychology). Successful completion of this programme will enable me to register with the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC) as a Chartered Educational, child and community Psychologist. I am undertaking this research for my doctoral thesis, supervised by staff from UCL IOE who have expertise in education and social science research.

Please take time to read the below information. It will help you to understand why the research is being done and to identify whether you meet the study inclusion criteria. If you do, then I very much hope that you will agree to participate.

**Who is carrying out and supervising the research?**

This work is being conducted by myself, Mickel Johnson, as the main researcher. It is being conducted under the supervision of

**Why is this research being conducted?**

The current COVID-19 pandemic placed renewed focus and energies on adapting education virtually to reach and engage pupils while simultaneously protecting the public from contagion. With adaptation comes expectations, challenges and new learning which may have an impact on one's confidence in themselves and their ability to succeed at a task. The purpose of this study is to gain an idea on what helps or hinders teachers' perception of their own ability to teach and assess children with refugee and migrant backgrounds via online methods including virtual classrooms (i.e. google classrooms), video technologies (i.e. zoom, Microsoft teams) and the use of other blended teaching resources (i.e. Pdf worksheets, voice recorded messages).

The current social climate has placed an ever-growing focus by the general public on asylum-seekers and immigrants in the UK. Events such as the political shift in Afghanistan, the Refugee Crisis that affected Europe starting circa 2015, Brexit and its associated reforms to migration laws are just some examples of social incidents that affect how society perceives migrants and refugees and vice versa. Teachers are very likely to come into contact with children of these circumstance and more, and this study seeks to identify ways that we educational psychologists can be best placed to support and empower you.

**Why am I being invited to take part?**

You are being invited to take part because you are a current teacher in a primary or secondary school located in England. **You do not have to possess experience of teaching a refugee/ migrant child or young person via online or face to face methods** as this study is focusing on your confidence in your own ability to be able to.

You are eligible to participate if you meet the following inclusion criteria:

| |
|---|
| You are aged 18 or over |
| You are employed in England as a either a Primary or Secondary phase teacher |
| You are **not** in your first year of teaching post qualification (i.e., your NQT year) |
| You have access to a computer with internet capabilities (access to the Zoom platform on either browser or application will be required) |
| You have native/near-native English language ability |

**What will happen if I choose to take part?**

You will be asked to take part in a 30-45minute interview over Zoom. During this interview you will be presented with pictures of some stones and then asked some questions while using the stones to help your answers. You will be asked questions about your understanding of teaching refugee or immigrant minors (RIMs) in both face to face and online contexts, how confident you feel in your ability (perceived self-efficacy) to teach RIMs and how you believe an educational psychologist could help you to raise your perceived self-efficacy. The only information collected will be your answers to the questions and your age. The interviews are completely anonymous and **will not** be shared with your employer/school in any circumstances but may be shared with relevant authorities if there is a significant safeguarding concern to yourself or a member of the public. You are free to withdraw any data submitted up to 3 months after completing the interview. If you choose to withdraw your data after 3 months of completing your interview, it may still be included in the analysis.

You won't be contacted again for any further research.

The interview will be audio recorded and transcribed to help with the analysis of your answers, I will delete the audio once this has been done and will let you know when I do.

**Will anyone know I have been involved?**

Any identifiable information given during interviews (for example, reference to specific people or places) will be anonymised and will not be used in the write-up. Your name will never be used in the research or write up and you will be given a code that will be used to identify your interview data. As mentioned above, your answers will not be shared with your employer/school.

**Could there be problems for me if I take part?**

There are no direct risks to you as a participant. Because we will be discussing online teaching methodologies which may have been used during the current COVID-19 pandemic, you may consider this a difficult topic. In addition, I will be asking you about your confidence in your own abilities as a teacher which may bring up potential complicated feelings. If you feel uncomfortable with any of the questions asked, then you can stop at any point. Anyone who provides consent is still free to withdraw at any time including after the interview and without giving a reason. Participating in or withdrawing from this research has **no effect on your employment status**

**What happens to the results of the research?**

The results of the research will be used in the write up of my doctoral thesis. The thesis will be available at UCL Institute of Education and may be published in an academic or practitioner journal. It is hoped that this research will give an insight into some of the ways teachers can be empowered when tasked with teaching and assessing this vulnerable group through online methods. It is anticipated that the research findings will inform educational psychologists', schools and local authorities understanding of how to ensure teachers receive appropriate support in this vital area of human psychology while also ensuring the ever-vulnerable population of UASCs receive high quality and consistent learning opportunities. Lastly the findings of this study could help to inform future policy and research.

Data from the interviews will be kept securely on a private VPN protected UCL network. All data will be kept secured under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). Data included in the thesis will be retained by UCL for a period of 10 years.

**Do I have to take part?**

It is up to you whether you take part. Attached to this information sheet there is a consent form for you to sign if you decide to take part. Anyone who signs a form is still free to withdraw at any time and without giving a reason. Please note if you wish to withdraw your data after 3 months of completing your interview, it may still be included in the analysis.

**What should I do next?**

If you agree to take part, please complete the consent form. If you have any further questions, please contact

**Data protection Privacy Notice**

The controller for this project will be University College London (UCL). The UCL Data Protection Officer provides oversight of UCL activities involving the processing of personal data and can be contacted at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

This 'local' privacy notice sets out the information that applies to this particular study. Further information on how UCL uses participant information from research studies can be found in the 'general' privacy notice for participants in research studies- https://www.ucl.ac.uk/legal-services/privacy/ucl-general-research-participant-privacy-notice.

The information that is required to be provided to participants under data protection legislation (GDPR and DPA 2018) is provided across both the 'local' and 'general' privacy notices. The lawful basis that will be used to process any personal data is: 'Public task' for personal data and 'Research purposes' for special category data. I will be collecting personal data such as ethnicity and local

authority of residence. Email addresses will also be collected from those participants that volunteer them.

Your personal data will be processed so long as it is required for the research project. I will anonymise personal data provided and minimise the processing of personal data wherever possible. I reserve the right to forward data to appropriate authorities should you disclose information alluding to a risk or danger to yourself or members of the public.

If you are concerned about how your personal data is being processed, or if you would like to contact us about your rights, please contact UCL in the first instance at data-protection@ucl.ac.uk.

where your issues can be resolved. Please be sure to include details of the incident, name of the researcher and any evidence you have. Recordings of the interview can be given freely to you to support your complaint. Issues regarding the conduct of the principal research can be directed to the supervising researchers listed at the bottom of consent form.

If you feel your complaint has not been handled satisfactorily, you are then invited to contact the Chair of the UCL Research Ethics Committee – ethics@ucl.ac.uk.

**Contact for further information**

If you have any further questions before you decide whether to take part, you can email me at

If you would like to be involved, please provide your consent via the attached consent form.

This project has been reviewed and approved by the UCL IOE Research Ethics

Committee.

Thank you very much for taking the time to read this information sheet.

**Mickel Johnson**

(vi) Consent form

**Title: "*I can do this, right":* Understanding the perceived self-efficacy of educators in teaching refugee and immigrant minors online.**

# Participant Consent Form

This consent form is in relation to the above named study. If you are happy to participate in the study, please complete this consent form by ticking each item and returning with your signature to the researcher on the contact details below. If you are unsure of anything written below, please contact the principal researcher (Mickel Johnson).

| | | Yes | No |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | I confirm that I have read and understood the information sheet, and have had the opportunity to consider the information, ask questions, and have had these questions adequately answered. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 2. | I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 3. | I know that I can refuse to answer any or all of the questions and that I can withdraw from the interview at any point. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 4. | I agree for the interview to be recorded, and that recordings will be kept secure and destroyed at the end of transcribing. I know that all data will be kept under the terms of the General Data Protection Regulation (GDPR). | ☐ | ☐ |
| 5. | I understand that reference to any specific individuals or places will be anonymised. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 6. | I understand that if any of my words are used in reports or presentations, they will not be attributed to me. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 7. | I understand that the results will be used to write a doctoral thesis and this will be available at UCL Institute of Education. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 8. | I understand that the results may be published in an academic or practitioner journal. | ☐ | ☐ |
| 9. | I have gained permission from the individual responsible for the internet service and/or computer that will be used to participate in this research | ☐ | ☐ |

*Please sign on next page*

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**Name:** **Signature:**
**(Participant)**

**Date:**

**Please return your signed form to:**
Trainee Educational Psychologist, UCL Institute of Education

**Name and Contact Details of the UCL Data Protection Officer:**
**This study has been approved by the UCL Research Ethics Committee: Project ID number:**