



Teacher Well-being, Classroom Composition, & Coaching in a Public Preschool Program

Todd Grindal, Erika Gaylor, Kirby Chow, & Tejaswini Tiruke | SRI International

Child Care and Early Education Policy Research Consortium (CCEEPRC) Annual Meeting

Washington, DC | April 17–18, 2019

BACKGROUND

- Teacher well-being is important for supportive teacher-student relationships and positive child outcomes (Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).
- Children's behavior in a classroom has been linked to teacher stress (Friedman-Krauss et al., 2014), and other aspects of classroom composition probably affect teacher wellbeing.
- Coaching may help early childhood educators develop needed skills to mitigate job-related stress (Early et al., 2007).

PARTICIPANTS

- 102 center-based preschool teachers in Virginia Preschool Initiative - Plus (VPI+) during the 2017–18 school year
- Preschool teaching experience : Median = 4 years (range 1–36)
- All teachers had bachelor's degrees; 50% master's degree or higher

MEASURES

Construct	Measure
Teacher well-being	
Teacher efficacy	Early Childhood Teacher Experiences Survey (ECTES) (Fantuzzo et al., 2012) – 10-item teacher efficacy scale (e.g., I can generally deal successfully with behavior problems in my classes; I am satisfied with the progress of most of my students) that teachers rate from 1 (<i>strongly disagree</i>) to 4 (<i>strongly agree</i>). The sum score is converted to a T score with a range of 20 to 62. (spring)
Teacher stress	ECTES (Fantuzzo et al., 2012) – 7-item job stress scale (e.g., I am often under a lot of pressure at work; I am often frustrated at work) that teachers rate from 1 (<i>strongly disagree</i>) to 4 (<i>strongly agree</i>). The sum score is converted to a T score with a range of 29 to 68. (spring)
Teacher supports	
Relationship with coach	"I have a positive collaborative relationship with my coach." 1 = teacher reported <i>strongly agree</i> ; 0 = <i>somewhat agree, somewhat disagree, OR strongly disagree</i> (spring)
Teacher characteristics	
Teaching experience	Number of years teaching preschool (Log2 transformation)
Education degree	1 = graduate degree (master's degree or higher); 0 = bachelor's degree
Classroom composition characteristics	
Classroom average literacy score	Phonological Awareness Literacy Screening Preschool (PALS-PreK) summed score (Invernizzi et al., 2004) (fall)
Classroom average self-regulation score	Heads Toes Knees Shoulders (HTKS) task (Ponitz, McClelland, Jewkes, Connor, Farris, & Morrison, 2008). (fall)
Classroom average positive behaviors	Classroom mean percentile rank for the behavior control subscale score on the Teacher-Child Rating Scale (T-CRS 2.1) (Hightower & Perkins, 2010). (fall)

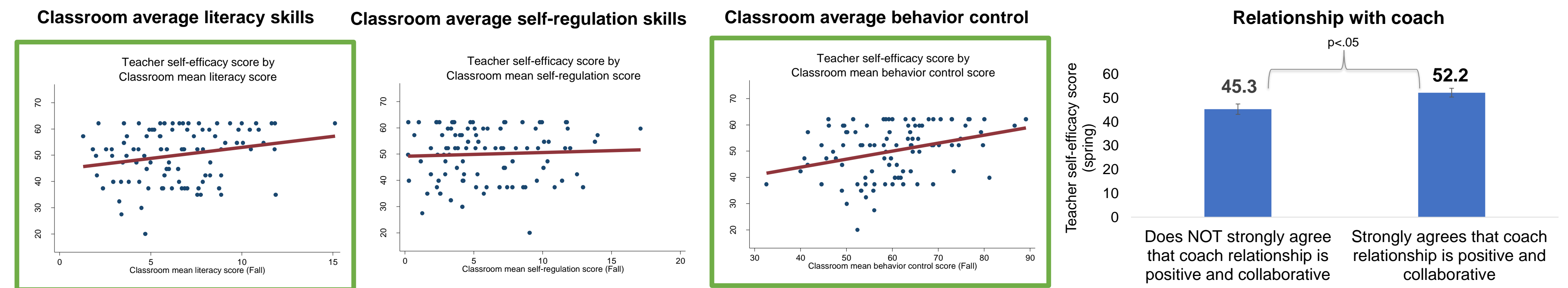
RESEARCH AIMS

- Extend research on the associations between classroom compositional characteristics and early childhood teachers' well-being
- Examine other compositional characteristics (e.g., children's literacy and self-regulation skills, family income) as they relate to *both* stress and efficacy, using more complete data
- Examine whether supportive coach relationships predict teacher well-being

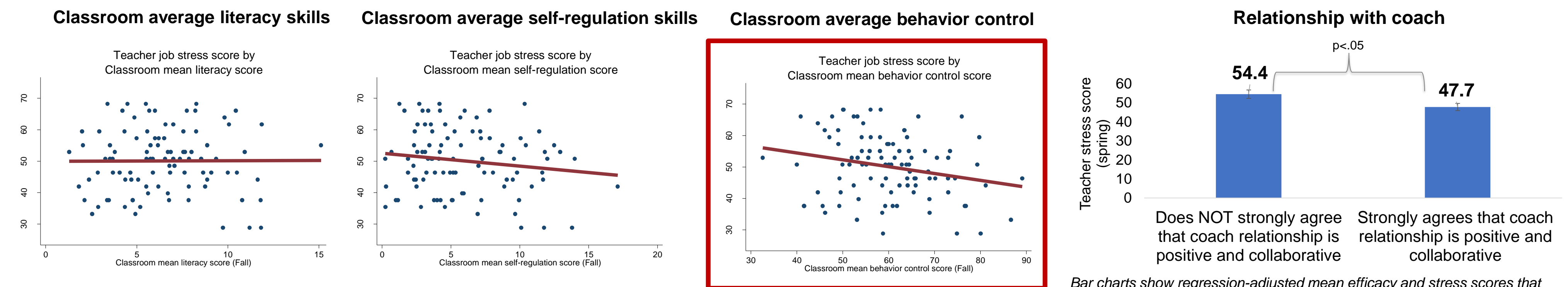
ANALYSIS & RESULTS

- Teachers reported **higher teaching efficacy** in the spring, on average, when classrooms were composed of children who entered preschool with higher levels of positive literacy skills and/or higher levels of behavior control ($p < .05$).
- Teachers reported **lower job stress** in the spring, on average, when classrooms were composed of children who entered preschool with higher levels of behavior control ($p < .05$).
- Teachers who reported a **positive, collaborative relationship with their coach** reported lower job stress and higher teaching efficacy ($p < .05$).

Teaching efficacy



Teacher job stress



Green borders represent a positive relationship, and red borders indicate a negative relationship. Analysis uses OLS regressions that control for number of years of preschool teaching experience and educational degree.

Bar charts show regression-adjusted mean efficacy and stress scores that control for number of years of preschool teaching experience and education degree. Strongly agreeing that the coach relationship is positive and collaborative was a significant predictor of both stress and efficacy at $p < .05$.

DISCUSSION

- Teachers' sense of teaching efficacy may be a reflection of the literacy and behavioral skills that children bring with them to school rather than a measure of their actual effectiveness as a teacher.
- Supporting children with challenging behaviors appears to have negative implications for teacher well-being.
- Having a strong positive and collaborative relationship with a coach may help support teacher well-being.
- Taking into account children's academic and behavioral skills (via a screener) and family background before preK entry when making decisions about classroom composition could help support teacher well-being.