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Teacher Perceptions of Classroom Management Programs to Improve Whole-School Measures of Attendance, Disruptive Classroom Behaviors, and Academic Outcomes

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Teacher Perceptions of Classroom Management Programs to Improve Whole-School Measures of Attendance, Disruptive Classroom Behaviors, and Academic Outcomes

by
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Approval Page

This applied dissertation was submitted by Charles Natt, Jr under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Nova Southeastern University.

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Statement of Original Work

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Abstract

Teacher Perceptions of Classroom Management Programs to Improve Whole-School Measures of Attendance, Disruptive Classroom Behaviors, and Academic Outcomes. Charles Natt, Jr., 2022: Applied Dissertation, Nova Southeastern University, Abraham S. Fischler College of Education and School of Criminal Justice. Keywords: student behaviors, classroom management, Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, Capturing Kids' Hearts, Multi-Tiered System of Supports

This qualitative case study explored how the implementation of Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) classroom management programs when implemented together affected students and teachers of a Louisiana K-12 school compared with using the Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program alone. Teachers at the school who had used the PBIS alone and then also used the newly implanted CKH and MTSS programs participated in in-depth interviews to examine the practical effectiveness of both program implementations upon students and classroom learning effectiveness. Teacher perceptions were also compared with ex post facto data for the school from the last 4 years of PBIS only implementation and the first 4-years of implementation for CKH and MTSS.

Findings showed how implementing MTSS and CKH programs created a more positive and cohesive school culture, while also improving whole-school student learning experiences and outcomes. These added programs emphasized a shared learning environment among all students (rather than focusing only on disruptive students), something that increased instructional time and learning effectiveness. Teachers reported that MTSS and CKH programs were more easily integrated into lesson plans than were PBIS interventions alone. The MTSS and CKH programs also increased parental involvement and support with their students' behaviors and learning effectiveness. Teachers also reported a cumulative effect upon student learning and behaviors as student cohorts advanced to successive grades each year.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The best learning environments foster student focus and learning engagement without allowing negative student disruptions to disturb and disrupt productive student learning activities. Although classroom disruptions may affect everyone, disciplinary actions against those students who create such incidents can be counterproductive, especially for students involved for the first time with minor infractions, often beginning a downward spiral of classroom failures that results in suspensions, expulsions, and dropouts with devastating consequences (Anyon, Geer, et al., 2018; Barrett & Harris, 2018; U.S. Department of Education, 2020). Education institutions in the United States cumulatively average over 2.5 million suspensions annually (5-6% of all K-12 students), yielding over 100,000 students being expelled yearly (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

In the 2016–2017 school year, new disciplinary programs—Capturing Kids' Hearts (Burgess, 2017) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (McIntosh & Goodman. 2016)—were introduced within a rural, public K-12 school district in Louisiana to reduce the number of in- and out-of-school suspensions. These two programs replaced the Zero Tolerance policies and Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (Horner & Sugai, 2015) that had been used in the district since 2002. Although the new programs have been in place for four academic years, other than ongoing administrative and operational reporting, no formal review of the program implementation's practical effectiveness among teachers has been conducted (C. Nicholas, personal communication, October 1, 2020). This research study explored the implementation of two new classroom management programs—Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS)—and what effects they had on (a) changing classroom behaviors, (b)

improving student learning experiences, (c) reducing disciplinary events, and (d) increasing student academic performance, when compared to the previously implemented program: Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Statement of the Problem

The research problem was determining the benefits of newly implemented, school-wide behavior management programs to mitigate disruptive student behaviors affecting classroom learning environments (Carrell et al., 2018). Although most school-based disciplinary interventions have emphasized restorative approaches by focusing on the detrimental effects of punitive methods on the academic success of instigators (Anyon, Geer, et al., 2018), the researcher also sought to determine what negative effects classroom management of disruptive students might have had on nonoffending students in both attendance and measurable classroom learning outcomes as a meaningful indicator of program success.

Because the state where the study took place has had historically low success ratings regarding academics (The National Assessment of Educational Progress, 2021), school administrators and community leaders have been increasingly concerned about the rates of student suspensions and expulsions (Barrett & Harris, 2018). This, qualitative case study reviewed the effectiveness of existing disciplinary behavior management systems, including punitive actions to remediate students, while also considering teacher perceptions of positive classroom behavior programs for (a) changing student behaviors, (b) stabilizing classroom learning environments, and (c) improving learning outcomes for all students (Gregory et al., 2018).

Phenomenon of Interest

For decades, educators have struggled to find the balance between classroom

discipline and behaviors and how they influence student learning and achievement (Corcoran et al., 2018; Lester et al., 2017). Within this context, Riddle and Sinclair (2019) found a strong negative relationship existed between student achievement and persistence the degree and intensity of disciplinary interventions (see also Whisman & Hammer, 2014). Other experts have shared similar concerns that suspensions lower academic achievement, while also disrupting classroom learning environments, negatively affect observing but nonparticipating students (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2019; Lacoe & Steinberg, 2019). The sustainability of disciplinary programs have shown mixed results in creating meaningful behavior modifications because of the temporary nature of reported program measures (McIntosh et al., 2016). Although programs to improve student behaviors in classrooms have produced limited benefits, it remains unclear whether behavioral changes directly influence improvements in student academics success because such improvements do not happen overnight and are more difficult to measure longitudinally (Freeman et al., 2016). The effectiveness and viability of these school disciplinary programs, although widely implemented and broadly supported, deserved additional review.

Background and Justification

Although classroom management programs are designed to prevent and mitigate initial or minor disruptive behaviors within a classroom setting, persistent or more serious disruptive behaviors often require more remedial and behavioral modification interventions that remove offending students from their normal classrooms and instead place them in high-supervision detention areas or which result in various levels of student suspension outcomes (Anyon, Geer, et al., 2018; Bacher-Hicks et al., 2019; Gregory et al., 2018; Lacoe & Steinberg, 2019). Research has documented how most out-of-school

suspensions also remove students from their school interactions, counseling, and academic support resources (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2019; Henderson & Guy, 2016). Henderson and Guy (2016) identified how out-of-school suspensions also disproportionately forced ethnic minorities and poorer students to receive short-term suspensions more severely and more frequently than their peers. In this respect, many or most punitive practices are too often being applied unfairly to different student groups within the same school environment (Bacher-Hicks et al., 2019; Barrett & Harris, 2018; Henderson & Guy, 2016). Disruptive student behaviors have also created lasting effects on both teachers and students (Blank & Shavit, 2016).

Classroom discipline is a complex issue often created or exacerbated by multiple factors outside the control of teachers and schools, such as (a) socioeconomic levels (Mizel et al., 2016; Welsh & Little, 2018), (b) home and neighborhood conditions (Osher et al., 2015), and (c) mental health issues (Rose et al., 2017). Many of these contributing factors are too often ignored, misinterpreted, or discounted when dealing with in-class disruptive behaviors (Jeynes, 2019). Although character education programs have shown long-term successes with improving both classroom behaviors and student academic outcome measures when implemented through school-wide interventions, most behavioral modification programs have either ignored or poorly implemented the same self-management skill development among both general student populations and discipline-tracked students (Jeynes, 2019). The primary focus on behavioral modification through operant-behavioral approaches that attempt to extinguish negative behaviors and reinforce positive behaviors have been marginally effective in classroom settings and can be manipulated to overreport program successes (Anyon, Geer, et al., 2018). As a result, many teachers have become overwhelmed with increased pressures to meet multiple

classroom objectives amid more dysfunctional classroom behaviors (Moeller et al., 2018). Accordingly, program effectiveness is still fraught with lingering questions about actual benefits to students when programs appear to change frequently with newer or "improved" programs and approaches, which too often are then replaced before their value, reliability, and consistency can be validated (Anyon, Geer, et al., 2018; Barrett & Harris, 2018, Jeynes, 2019; Moeller et al., 2018).

Deficiencies in the Evidence

The fundamental question is not whether schools have operational programs for behavioral management but whether those programs are producing improvements in both classroom behaviors and increased student learning, a question that is neither new (Barbetta et al., 2005; Metzler et al., 2001) nor fully resolved (Anyon, Geer, et al., 2018; Jeynes, 2019; Robertson et al., 2020). Many well-intended programs are not being implemented productively or have fundamental flaws in relevance or effectiveness. For example, many degree and certification programs for teachers lack training for classroom behavior management (Stevenson et al., 2020). Furthermore, numerous behavioral problems are caused and must be resolved outside teacher-controlled school settings (Robertson et al., 2020).

In the past, many new programs (Barakat, 2014; Gay, 2016) were introduced without sufficient review and assessment of their effectiveness, benefits to student learning, and how they compared to previous conditions. Moreover, many new implementations of behavioral programs faced barriers, limitations, learning curves, and opposition from students, teachers, and other stakeholders (Gay, 2016; Robertson et al., 2020). Because many classroom-management and behavioral-modification program studies are site specific and include unique situational contexts, aggregated and

generalizable research data must often be revalidated by interested local schools to identify actual student outcomes in those settings (Barrett & Harris, 2018). Another challenge for behavioral program assessments is that they frequently focus on only quantitative information without including qualitative assessment variables or constructs contributing to or explaining the results (Back et al., 2016; Moltudal et al., 2019).

One major issue for behavioral interventions is defining which behaviors should be included in program assessments and how they are classified (McIntosh & Goodman. 2016). Disruptive classroom behaviors can range from eating in class, using a mobile phone or wearable device, talking out of turn, fighting, throwing, or walking out of class without permission to more disruptive and dangerous classroom behaviors or physical confrontations; however, reporting structures do not effectively or consistently differentiate levels among these behavioral variances (Burden, 2020). Because disruptive behaviors vary from classroom to classroom, subject to subject, teacher to teacher, and school to school, thus making comparative evaluations inconsistent (Stevenson et al., 2020). Therefore, the reliability and validity of measured variables for behavioral management programs might not represent reality or accurately assess actual changes in classroom environments or student learning experiences (Long et al., 2018). From larger contexts, student engagement levels seem to be positively correlated with more positive classroom behavior and learning experiences, such that classroom disruptions occur more frequently in remedial or required core programs than they do in elective, advanced, or honors courses where students have higher participation and engagement levels (Stevenson et al., 2020; Teacher's Reports on Managing Classroom Behaviors, 2018). Effective coping strategies also vary widely, suggesting that more intensive training is needed to avoid one-size-fits-all program uniformity expectations (Lochman, et al.,

2017). Two additional questions remain unanswered: What are the real differences between schools and classrooms without behavioral management programs and those implementing behavioral management programs? Is it possible that by drawing attention to inappropriate behaviors that class discipline programs likely promote or contribute to an environment or culture of classroom misbehaviors?

Audience

This study is directed to students, teachers, administrators, and policy makers of the study site and other similar school settings, as well as to researchers exploring practical applications of school disciplinary and behavioral modification programs in school or classroom settings. The audiences most affected and applicable to this study are students and classroom teachers, who face and who must respond to inappropriate classroom behaviors frequently and consistently. Because classroom disruptions cannot always be anticipated, teachers must not only respond quickly and effectively to student misbehaviors, but teachers must also adjust their instructional delivery to reconnect to students after being distracted. In addition, observing students must develop effective coping strategies to recover from lost instructional time and quality because of classroom disruptions, while also recovering from any emotional consequences of classroom conflicts.

Definitions and Terms

Academic success is a measure of students' success based on their academic performance. This information is traditionally recorded and tracked through teacher-based or standardized assessments.

Aggressive behavior is an action labeled by societal perception as harmful based on the extent of harm received, which can include offense, violation of norms, and injury.

Not limited to kids or specific individuals, aggressive behaviors can be paired with societal behaviors that ultimately produce power struggles with self and society.

Behavior management or behavioral modification programs emerged in the 1950s and 1960s in U.S. schools to frame and reshape inappropriate student behaviors. Although these programs initially focused on non-compliant students, more recent behavioral programs have merged with or augmented classroom management programs, such that *behavior management* and *classroom management* terms are often used interchangeably among teachers, in schools, and in the literature.

Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) is a school-wide behavior management program that provides focused, professional development for teachers to improve skills for enhancing student-teacher relationships (Burgess, 2017). The impact of CKH can be measured using key performance indicators of public schools, such as attendance, discipline referrals, graduation rates, student performance, and teacher job satisfaction.

Classroom discipline defines enforcement or implementation of classroom rules and procedures by teachers to deter interruptive, counterproductive, or disruptive behaviors by or among students.

Classroom management describes teacher in-class behaviors aimed at preventing or minimizing student misbehaviors in classroom settings, which also include initiating appropriate classroom discipline protocols and procedures. As such, classroom management efforts encourage acceptable behaviors among all students with positive reinforcements of good behaviors by students. The goal is to create positive learning experiences for students that are both safe and supportive.

Disruptive behaviors are student actions that disturb the classroom learning environment before, during, or after planned instructional activities. Although often

described in general terms of social behavior by schools or districts, undesirable events are usually identified at the teacher's discretion, which may be inconsistently applied within situational contexts of teacher perceptions and biases (conscious or unconscious).

Disciplinary events are formal documented reports from a teacher or administrator to track disruptive student behaviors, identifying a violation of campus protocols based upon the incident's negative or potential impact on classroom instruction or school academic environment.

Disciplinary interventions are prescribed actions taken by teachers or administrators expressly tailored to mitigate specific disruptive student behaviors. This includes instructional or behavioral actions both in and out of the classroom. Examples are redirection or one-on-one mentoring to get to the root of the problem and deter repeated disruptive student behaviors.

Expulsion permanently removes student from their regular classroom setting because of major school rules or policies violations. This official act removes the student from all school involvement or direct responsibility. Only readmission reverses it.

In-school suspensions are temporary disciplinary actions removing students from assigned classroom schedules, while students remain on campus in a separate location where students receive supervised instruction. Students assigned in-school suspension typically have committed a minor offense (e.g., tardiness, improper uniform, cellphone use, inappropriate language, etc.).

Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is a structured support system that combines punitive and incentive-based interventions (e.g., peer-to-peer, student-to-peer, and parental involvement) to create a more acceptable classroom learning environment. MTSS encourages small disciplinary modifications that provide direct and progressive

consequences that address case-specific student behaviors. Although the program was specifically designed for underperforming children, MTSS has typically been implemented for all students because most students struggle with one or more subjects and different teachers. This approach includes collaborative support teams and interactions (McIntosh & Goodman. 2016).

Out-of-school suspensions temporarily remove students from their regular school setting because of major or excessive disciplinary events (e.g., violence against a student, teacher, administrator, or staff or continued violation of school or district policies).

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a school-based program set out to create a learning environment supporting appropriate behaviors that naturally occur. The program (Horner & Sugai, 2015) uses three tiers of support, using a progressive disciplinary process that escalates general efforts first on everyone, then adds additional focus to some repeating offenders, and then adds more structured controls and individual accountability to a few more persistent offenders. The program focuses on conditioning and reinforcement theories.

Student learning environment describes both traditional or non-traditional locations used for instructional purposes in which a teacher employs behavioral management to create space for formal and informal instruction that includes both direct and passive communication, such as behavioral modeling and mentoring.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative case study sought to understand from participating teachers' perspectives how well recently implemented classroom management programs were, when compared with the previous behavioral management program to have (a) changed classroom behaviors, (b) improved student learning experiences, (c) reduced

disciplinary events, and (d) increased student academic performance outcomes. A case study approach was used for the research methodology because it allowed for an exploratory research investigation of the experiences and perspectives of teachers who used both program implementations with their associated outcomes from the school's classroom and behavioral management programs used before and after the 2016–2017 change.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The following focused and complete review of literature was foundational to this qualitative study by examining the underlying theories and issues surrounding effective classroom management programs that foster effective student learning. Programs for student discipline, behavior modification, and classroom or behavior management are deeply rooted in the theories and practices of motivation, classical and operant conditioning, self-efficacy, and other learning models. This literature review explores the underlying concepts and principles needed for teachers to facilitate learning and self-management skills necessary for productive student learning. Seminal works includes Bandura's (1971) social learning theory and later to become social cognitive learning theory (Bandura, 1988), which seeks to understand both why behaviors happen and what influences how people learn, specifically in the areas of self-evaluation, self-regulation, and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1971, 1973, 1977a, 1977b, 1978a, 1978b, 1988).

The following review of literature includes the inception and development of ideas emerging from Hull's (1935) biological theory into psychological explanations exploring behaviors in the workplace and classroom as described by Maslow (1958), Herzberg (1964), Skinner (1974), and Glasser, 1986). Analysis of these supporting theories helps explain the relationships for students among personal needs, behaviors, and learning, leveraging psychological and educational research to evaluate how learning is enhanced through applying balanced classroom management and actionable educational constructs. This review examines the origins and adaptations of school-based disciplinary programs as they influence student and teacher success, specifically through the lens of internal and external motivating factors. Over several decades, several applications grew into extended programs that eventually included multitiered behavior models, focusing

on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) followed by the Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS), both of which were developed to reduce student disruptions and promote classroom learning (Horner & Sugai, 2015; McIntosh & Goodman. 2016).

Theoretical Background: Social and Cognitive Learning

Many modern psychological theories of learning evolved from the major theoretical contributions of Bandura (1971, 1973, 1977a, 1977b, 1978a, 1978b, 1988, 1993), which emphasized developing learner skills through observing, modeling, and imitating the behaviors of others. Bandura's theoretical frameworks for social and cognitive learning developed over decades, advancing psychological understanding of learning and learner control, while also supplementing and reshaping widely accepted theories for conditioning behaviors (Pavlov, 1927; Skinner, 1938). Social learning also includes emulation of observations of what others have done, not just to get attention, but to seek approval and acceptance (Bandura, 1988). Whereas self-efficacy, as explained by Bandura (1993), establishes the foundation for motivation for developing personal responsibility for learning management and developing individual competencies.

Social Learning Theory

Bandura (1963, 1965, 1971) initially began his work on social learning theory within the context of personality development. Social learning theory (1971, 1977a) suggests that learning takes place better while demonstrated predictive outcomes are observed by learners, especially when seen directly after desirable behaviors or actions. Predictive outcomes are used to identify causal factors that result in behavior change. Bandura believed that almost all learning phenomena result from direct learning experiences that most often occur vicariously when observing behaviors by other people along with the consequences that follow (Bandura, 1971), thereby forming positive or

negative emotional responses from witnessing cause-and-effect outcomes of the modeled behaviors. Bandura noted that learning does not always result in behavioral changes without additional motivational drivers, whether intrinsically or extrinsically based. This contrasts with many traditional behavioral theories that align behaviors directly with consequences alone as conditioned responses (Bandura, 1986). In contrast to Bandura's longstanding findings, a more recent study of identical twins and their parents challenged Bandura directly, questioning whether self-efficacy is genetically driven rather than learned (Waaktaar & Torgersen, 2013). However, one major limitation noted in the study was that twins raised together confounded the environmental and genetic factors being measured, especially with self-reported measures of closely associated familial factors as primary study variables. A follow-up longitudinal study of twins (Kandler et al., 2019) confirmed the findings by Waaktaar and Torgersen (2013) that some association of personality and successful learning traits with genetic factors likely exist for twins, suggesting that some shared familial variables, whether nurture or nature, might contribute to shared learning and behavioral traits. However, the generalizability of such finding for twins to general populations cannot be directly implied.

Bandura (1973) later applied the framework of social learning analysis to aggression, such as intentional or emotional reactive behaviors that result in personal assault, injury, or destruction (Bandura, 1978a). Individual attention from an outside factor causing damage or harm comes from observation, which is a form of social learning, regardless of its outcome. Bandura (1973, 1978a, 1978b) identified three origins of aggression, including (a) observational learning, (b) reinforced performance, and (c) structural determinants. These originating factors were influenced or motivated by modeling behaviors that Bandura referred to as instigators (e.g., peer pressure influences,

aversive treatments, or incentive inducements). Actions can be labeled as adaptive or destructive, depending on who receives the aggression, potentially leading to additional counterproductive behaviors. This is synonymous with both painful and pleasurable experiences. For example, children of parents using repeated aggressive interactions with their children tended to train their own children to mimic those same negative aggressions towards others when acting on their own (Bandura, 1973).

Further magnifying and reinforcing negative behaviors are media-driven visualizations (known as symbolic models) where children ingest large amounts of violent conduct as entertainment (Bandura, 1978b). Symbolic conditioning may be a limited, explanatory rationale; however, an individual's primary motivation is based on emotional reactions whether fictional or non-fictional (Bandura, 1971). Many emotional reactions are not always towards people, as they can include reactions to objects. It is not uncommon for symbolic stimuli to produce positive or negative experiences and be associated with success or failure. Bandura believed that emotion-arousing words can also be a vehicle for symbolic conditioning. The use of words to stir up feelings can also be used to create new feelings. Descriptive word usage can be associated with negative connotations directly related to symbolic conditioning. As a result, viewing social aggression (a) teaches aggressive styles, (b) changes restraints leading to aggressive behaviors, (c) desensitizes feelings surrounding violence, and (d) re-images individual perceptions of aggression realities from the perspectives of having power and control over others (Bandura, 1971, 1973, 1978a). Bandura's findings were also confirmed by Cline et al. (1973), who demonstrated autotomic desensitization of children to repeated television viewing, a result predicted by Bandura (1965).

Bandura's (1973, 1978a, 1978b), review of aggression as a component of social

learning theory is an extension of the frustration-aggression hypothesis first proposed by Dollard et al. (1939; see also Miller, 1941) and later redeveloped by Berkowitz (1969), which examined how frustrated individuals (those not able to achieve desired goals) often manifest angry behaviors and aggressions without conscious linkage to the causing frustrations. The corollary does not always hold true, such that aggression is not needed to become frustrated (Berkowitz,1986). Overall, a person's elicited behavior is depicted on the igniting source of arousal is knowingly appraised, increasing effectiveness of previously observed reactions and behaviors (Bandura, 1977b). Although frustration leads to anger, it does not always lead to aggressive behaviors as a natural outcome. Frustration provokes anger in people who have learned to respond through aggressive conduct as patterned behaviors (Bandura, 1973), suggesting the social learning factors that contribute to more negative outcomes were learned through prior and repeated observations.

Angry and oppressive behaviors are easily transferred directly into classrooms, altering student overall emotional responses towards courses, teachers, and classmates (Bandura, 1978a, 1978b). These day-to-day involvements and interactions shape similar social dispositions in observing participants and can become infectious and referenced forms of symbolic modeling or behavior patterning (Bandura, 1977a, 1977b). Aggressive behaviors observed by an individual, and the triggers associated with learned patterns of behavior, often stimulates the same aggressive triggers previously observed (Bandura, 1978a; Huesmann, 1988). In other words, all forms of observed behaviors not only shape student behaviors but become direct reinforcements, subsequently justifying those behaviors (Bandura, 1977a, 1978b; Berkowitz, 1986). Traditionally, aggressive behaviors are de-escalated with putative aggressive measures. With the many varying styles of

aggression come selective reinforcement. Selective reinforcement is the type of intervention associated with aggressive social behaviors even though behaviors of support also complement conditioning behaviors through reinforcement practices (Bandura, 1977b).

Social Cognitive Theory

In the process of developing social cognitive theory, Bandura (1971, 1986, 1989) expanded upon his insights in social learning theory by exploring the psychosocial factors that influence individuals' moral or thoughtful judgments and associated behaviors, specifically when presented with modeled behavior and its consequences. Models can emerge from interpersonal interactions, as well as metaphor or storytelling. For example, in the classroom, modeled behaviors can include directly observed aggressive behaviors from student-to-student such as running, kicking, hitting, stealing, or indirectly observed positive behaviors such as helping, assisting, or empathizing demonstrated by the main character in a story (Bandura, 1986).

Bandura (1986) found that social factors impact human behavior, including the community with whom one interacts, the duration of interaction (time spent within the community), and the desired outcomes and interests of those within the community (e.g., culture and position). Bandura found that the influences of each factor on behavior are not equal in strength, nor is there evidence of a simultaneous or sequential response on behavior from the presence of a given social factor. Behavior is most influenced by the frequency of action and the level of thought that goes into the execution of that action. Fundamentally, when presented with new opportunities, ways of being, or human connections, individuals first observe, next think about it, and then act, react, or execute. This can result in various levels of learner response, ranging from a copycat-style of

action to fully developed strategies of carefully planned action. Bandura (1993) later translated this into the four key aspects of social cognition: self-observation, self-reflection, self-regulation, and self-efficacy.

Bandura's (1986, 1988) fully developed social learning theory and social cognitive learning theory derivatives (1989, 1993, 1996, 1997) emphasized how student self-efficacy, as demonstrated through learned self-evaluation and self-regulation skills, are essential to mastering adult forms of effective self-directed learning. As a result, Bandura's research found that more mature forms of learning or adult learning require direct active learner involvement and assumed responsibility in directing one's individual learning activities, meaning that learning must be internally motivated to become fully functional and sustainable (Bandura & Schunk, 1981; Bandura et al., 1996).

Self-Efficacy

To understand the process of positively influencing student behaviors in the classroom, the following factors must be understood from a psychological perspective as the foundational elements of self-efficacy and self-belief (Bandura, 1989, 1993). Self-efficacy is understood to be how individuals view themself and adjust their thoughts and actions in response to personal learning challenges, thereby denoting an individual's belief and capability to control their own actions and personal events in life (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is a direct reflection of how one believes in themselves enough to overcome challenging situations through perseverance, preparation, and changed behaviors. Within an educational setting, students often view themselves in various ways throughout the school day, constantly changing based upon their classroom surroundings for which they have limited or no control. As such, developing strong self-efficacy skills is a dynamic and often fluctuating experience, especially during initial development.

Self-efficacy also reflects the comfort zone with which students perceive themselves with a teacher or subject, a factor complementary to individual student self-esteem. These theories provide insight on why learning happens (motivation based on biological, psychological, and social needs), how reward and punishment affect outcomes (operant conditioning), and the role of social reinforcement for desired outcomes (social learning).

Self-efficacy has been at the core of research and application in education and educational psychology for over three decades. Studies show that self-efficacy is linked to numerous outcomes in everyday life, such as stress resilience, performance improvement, and learning success (Huang et al., 2020; Kustyarini, 2020; Pumptow & Brahm, 2021; Toharudin et al., 2019; Zamfir & Mocanu, 2020). A study conducted by Pumptow and Brahm (2021), found a correlation between self-efficacy and motivation to attain set goals within the context of digital media applications, illustrating the breadth of self-efficacy among newer disciplines. The aspect of student motivation is also captured by Huang et al. (2020), who explained that high achieving students are more likely to manage their time, handle distractions, control negative emotions, and attain better outcomes. A related conclusion was attained by Toharudin et al. (2019), who found that the ability of self-efficacy and self-regulation indirectly assists in learning objective achievement.

The link between self-efficacy and learner behavior relies on developing skills for regulating (a) anxiety, (b) motivation, (c) engagement, (d) effort, and (e) perseverance (Zamfir & Mocanu, 2020). These findings establish a strong correlation between higher levels of self-efficacy and student behaviors in learning settings, where students perceived strong levels of support from teachers at school and parents at home. The absence of parental support was found by Zamfir and Mocanu to be a significant

detractor in student behavior, achievement, and self-efficacy (pp. 13–14). Considering that high self-efficacy is linked to positive behavior among students, it can also be argued that low self-efficacy is also highly connected to disruptive behaviors. Low self-efficacy is characterized by low motivation, limited engagement, poor regulation of anxiety, and lack of perseverance, all of which are prerequisites for poor behaviors. As explained by Kustyarini (2020), self-efficacy comprises self-belief and outcome expectancy—a person's belief to master behaviors needed to attain a set goal or objective. With limited belief to fulfill the set goals, people are likely to develop disruptive behaviors due in part from their perceived inability to control emotions that adversely affect their actions.

Bandura's interpretation of self-efficacy was an expansion of social learning theory within the context of personality development (Bandura 1963, 1971, 1977b); however, rather than focusing on personality traits, Bandura found that self-efficacy emphasized skill development, meaning that it was learned at some levels across the full range of both personalities and intelligences (Bandura, 1986, 1988, 1989, 1993). Although initially applied by Perry (1971) into school settings, this theory was further integrated by Perry et al. (1986) into applied conditioning, asserting that an individual's behavior is contingent on the perceived consequences (positive or negative) they might or will receive. As such, understanding the degree of likelihood of an outcome happening and its relative magnitude become factors individuals learn to consider before taking actions or making decisions. Linking actions to outcomes is a fundamental component of self-efficacy because it empowers individuals to act rather than to be acted upon (Bandura, 1988). Educators must approach each opportunity or interaction with care and caution, so as not to push students away with language or tone that suggests an inability to change by students or their having a lack of control. If students understand that based

upon their actions they could be expelled, they are less likely to initiate extreme harm or violence. Should students think that regardless of what they do, they will still be expelled, then there is little incentive for actions they think will not change outcomes. This essentially frames the basis for modern behavioral interventions, especially in school settings (Bandura, 1997).

The value of personal agency is expressly stated in Bandura's (1986, 1988) model of self-efficacy. Each element of this model characterizes an aspect of self-efficacy regarding the psychological development of individual progression, including (a) positive experiences of success and connection to the effort, (b) peer and group encouragement relative to the educational setting, (c) seeing successful experiences from positive role models or mentors, (d) willingness for risk taking and exploration, and (e) positive perceptions of stress and anxiety management when dealing with success and failure. Each of the elements can increase or decrease (e.g., encourage or discourage) an individual's involvement and effectiveness learning and applying self-efficacy to self-directed learning (McKim & Velez, 2017; Zimmerman et al., 1996). Developing student self-efficacy skills have shown strong positive associations with student academic measures (Olivier et al., 2019), even though a relationship with school climate was not found (Zysberg & Schwabsky, 2021), suggesting that academic performance might be independent from school-associated experiences because individually driven student achievement skills often were tied to out-of-school, self-directed learning activities.

Self-Management. Self-efficacy (the perceived awareness of one's ability to complete a task to expectations) and self-management (the functional ability for one to plan and complete a task) appear to be closely related and well documented, especially in the areas of healthcare education (Allegrante et al., 2019; Hoffmann et al., 2011;

Papadakos et al. 2022; Zakrisson et al., 2019), where patients were taught to manage major portions of their own healthcare maintenance treatment. As such, teaching patients to have confidence (self-efficacy skills) both motivated and helped shaped patients learning and developing their competence (successful self-management) of predefined self-assessments with correctly self-administered medical protocols (Hoffmann et al., 2011; Papadakos et al. 2022).

As with healthcare patient education, links between self-efficacy and self-management have also been noted in educational settings (Anwar et al., 2021; Dishman, 2005; Soner, 2019); however, such research has more difficult to document because educational activities are often more difficult to define and monitor than for strict medical protocols and outcome assessments, while also being a more developed research topic for healthcare applications in recent years than for educational settings (Achtziger et al., 2018; Lorig, 2003; Lorig & Holman, 2003). Some exceptions have been in the areas of athletics (Karpova & Peshkova, 2021) and online educational formats or settings (Zhu, 2021). However, some recent small group and single subject research has shown that for behavioral issues in classroom settings some self-management programs have proven successful in improving both academic and behavioral outcomes (Chen et al., 2021). Still, some whole school programs for self-management that support developing skills in self-efficacy are consistent with more strict cultural settings in China (Meng & Ning, 2021).

Influential Theories of Behavior and Learning

Programs for behavior modification and student discipline management in classrooms have their early sources in behavioral theories of classical and operant conditioning. Eelen (2018) explained that behavior therapy studies intensified when the Pavlovian classical conditioning paradigm was developed and applied to education just

before cognitive psychology in education became more dominant in the 1980s. However, Eelen emphasized that it must also be remembered that with conditioning studies that rats, dogs, and humans are not the same, especially when considering different levels of learning and cognitive thinking. Classical conditioning originally has its roots in the early works of Pavlov (Pavlov, 1927; Todes, 1997), Thorndike (1898), and Watson (1913), studies that still play major roles in defining current classroom behavioral models over the last two decades (Kern & Clemens, 2007; McSweeney & Murphy, 2014; Srivastava, S., & Prabhakar, 2020). Classical conditioning focuses on environmental factors affecting responses and behaviors, such as classroom conditions in which learners do not actively influence the outcomes but only respond to manipulated variables. Such learning often works best with lower levels of learning, skills training, and aggregated learning, such as chunking, the assimilation of smaller component into larger constructs (Miller, 1956).

Operant conditioning, as developed by Skinner (1938), built upon classical models but added direct involvement of participants or students through reinforcing or extinguishing behaviors by varying levels and intervals of feedback stimuli in response to operant (e.g., student) interactions or behaviors. The model indicates that behaviors are not reflexive, but they are voluntary and learned. Skinner used animals, such as rats and pigeons, to study the development of certain behaviors related to pushing a lever. His experiments addressed two principles, which include contingency and reinforcement. First, contingencies influence the likelihood of the occurrence of a behavior. Second, the contingent reinforcers can strengthen a particular behavior, which includes those of biological significance such as food. Additionally, Skinner showed that reward associated with the desired behavior could influence the likelihood of behavior if it is connected to the reinforcement (e.g., food).

Unlike Maslow (1958) and Glasser (1986), Skinner (1974; see also Toates, 2009) saw external motivators as the most significant in determining one's behavior instead of internal needs, bringing upon the theory that the concepts of punishment and reinforcement, which schools often use to control student practices. Many consequences can lower or increase the magnitude and frequency of student dysfunctional and destructive behaviors. Educator preparations influence the understanding of various antecedents that influence student behavior. Variations of a given classroom setting act as a stimulus condition that can reinforce behaviors. Some learners can portray undesirable behaviors during classroom instruction based on their setup or teacher response, since their behavior may enable them to access the desirable stimuli, such as teacher attention.

Classroom use of operant conditioning has been pervasive in various forms since the 1940s and serves as one of the major pillars of school programs for behavior modification and school disciplinary interventions (Akpan, 2020). Positive reinforcements have new incentives irrespective of whether the action in question is appropriate or not, while negative reinforcements lead to the disappearance of the stimulus that produces positive conduct (Eelen, 2018). Classical conditioning is apparent in modern classrooms in which teachers use aids or punishments to modify student behavior.

Operant conditioning concepts prompted educational reforms in U.S. schools by creating learning settings that foster positive behavior. A historical review by Kelly and Pohl (2018) showed that stakeholders required schools to produce students with productive citizen qualities. Thus, learning institutions implemented harsh punishment methods; punitive approaches became an integral part of the education system. Zero-tolerance guidelines and severe conservatory settings quickly became popular because

industrialization and necessitated the school system to produce staff ready for factory work. Institutions heightened the adoption of rigid and consistent curriculums that promoted a factory-like environment. Potter et al. (2017) observed that zero-tolerance policies dominated the school and criminal justice systems during the late 20th and early 21st centuries in the United States. Policymakers implemented harsh and strict rules to prevent school violence by punishing students who carried drugs or weapons to school. The rigorous strategies produced insignificant results toward behavior modification in learning institutions. Kelly and Pohl (2018) confirmed that the authoritarian interventions did not provide the desired results. Schools heightened investments in safety resources, including cameras and security staff; campus police forces became prevalent (Kelly & Pohl, 2018).

Operant conditioning has been a leading concept used in behavior modification strategies for modern learning institutions beginning in the 1960s (Darling-Hammond & Harvey, 2018). The transition from classical to operant conditioning ideas toward the end of the 20th-century provided policymakers with more functional behaviorist methods to promote positive behavior through reinforcements and punishments, thereby continuing Skinnerian (1974) ideologies of operant conditioning and including reinforcements for sustaining positive behaviors. Accordingly, many U.S. schools implemented policies based on reinforcement and punishment concepts to modify student behaviors (Griffin, 2019). In contrast, some institutions implemented policies that incorporate cultural values in learning, while other schools adopted zero-tolerance-like guidelines to produce a conforming workforce ready for factory work (Darling-Hammond & Harvey, 2018).

Although most programs for behavior modification, classroom behavior management, and school discipline now use friendlier titles directly or implicitly using

positive behavior reinforcement phrases, all still use the fundamental theories and practices developed between 1950 to 1980 (Rafi et al., 2020). Key elements of these programs included Maslow's (1958) humans' hierarchy of needs, Herzberg's (1964) two-factor, satisfaction-dissatisfaction domains, Skinner's (1974) associative learning dimensions of child development, Bandura's (1963, 1965, 1971, 1986, 1988) expanded social and cognitive learning constructs, and Glasser's (1986) basic needs components of human survival. The most significant program changes have been the inclusion of multiple motivational theories used together that consider an individual's intentions, drives, or abilities by initiating or leveraging actions, which encourage more active learner involvement and direction (Rafi et al., 2020). As such, learners have become more active participants in their behavioral changes, stimulated more effectively through internally motivated purposes.

Maslow (1943) first proposed an approach that can delineate how satisfying the learner's needs influence classroom behaviors. Students are more often motivated to study when their basic needs have been functionally met, giving higher levels of learning more immediate relevance to learners. Based on Maslow's theory, five fundamental needs are arranged in a hierarchy with the lower needs usually preceding higher need, such that unmet, dominating needs can emerge and take precedence over higher-level learning needs. The hierarchy of needs are classified into physiological, safety, belonging, esteem, and self-actualization based on the order of prepotency, ranging from survival to inspiration. However, Maslow (1943, 1999, 2019) emphasized that need fulfilment was not exclusively focused on one need at a time, suggesting a more dynamic interaction among various needs independently or collectively. Unproductive behaviors exemplify scenarios where someone's fundamental needs are not being satisfied.

Students can better attain self-actualization levels of learning (i.e., peak experiences) after first satisfying their basic needs. Maslow (1958) indicated that meeting these preliminary learning needs usually requires support and facilitation from others who encourage or guide the process, until the higher needs become stronger learning drivers independently to the learner. Educators and administrators may be able to influence the personality and conduct of their students by satisfying the learner's unmet personal needs (Maslow, 1958. To this point, the form of support that each student wants, or needs, will likely vary (Maslow, 1999, 2019). Although Maslow's theories were criticized as not being supported by data and being culturally insensitive (Sommers & Satel, 2006), subsequent extensive quantitative research found Maslow's hierarchy of needs theories were not only sound and verifiable but were consistent across broad cultural diversities (Diener & Tay, 2011).

As a precursor to Maslow's hierarchy, Hull (1935) emphasized that top-of-mind motives can be classified in terms of their weighted priority or influence among other pressing drives individuals are at the time experiencing. Hull's drive reduction theory identified how the most pressing drives overpower other motives until satisfied enough to bring the individual back into balance or equilibrium. The imbalance among conflicting drives was framed in the context of establishing a homeostasis, the idea that all drives exist to rebalance and to satisfy biological needs (Hull, 1935).

Human motivational theory was further expanded by Herzberg's (1964) two-factor theory (originally known as motivation-hygiene theory) distinguish between motivators and demotivators (hygiene factors). Hygiene factors lead to a full range of dissatisfaction for the experience being assessed, while the motivation factors create various levels of satisfaction or motivations based on experience. Motivational factors are

typically intrinsic or internalized needs, such as growth, responsibility, advancement, recognition, and achievement. In contrast, hygiene factors are usually extrinsic or external influences, such as organizational policies, working conditions, and supervision. Both motivating and demotivating factors must be considered jointly because of how different factors counter each other (Herzberg, 1964). Hertzberg's two-factor theory can explain how some demotivational factors can adversely affect students and teachers in their learning interactions (Chu & Kuo, 2015). Motivational learning experiences that students usually enjoy can be overwhelmed by a teacher's demotivational attitude, or teacher enthusiasm can be frustrated or become ineffective by student disruptive behaviors. Because of concurrent motivational and demotivational interactions, classroom dynamics can create unintentional and dysfunctional operant conditioning exchanges that become counterproductive to both teaching and learning (O'Connor, 2020).

As an additional approach consistent with both Bandura (1972, 1986, 1988) and Maslow (1999), Glasser (1986) introduced choice theory based on five fundamental needs controllable by individuals, incorporating self-agency and personal autonomy into the understanding of emotional and psychological needs. Glasser's identified needs include (a) surviving and reproducing, (b) loving and belonging, (c) gaining power, (d) being free, and (e) having fun. Such needs are integrated into people's genetic makeup, and any behavior embodies one's best attempt to meet any one of them. For this reason, Glasser identified that one's behavior is tied to personal choice and preferences, where individuals can control their own actions but not the actions of others. Students need their own sense of power or control over learning to demonstrate productive behaviors (Louis, 2009). How students or teachers respond to various conflicts and to other individuals is

both learnable and more controllable, once individuals understand and accept the limits of their immediate control over situations or others (Chandra, 2015; Glasser, 1986).

Another theoretical model that has direct classroom management implications is Gardner's (2003) theory of multiple intelligences that augments traditional intellectual measures with broader definitions and categories. According to Şener and Çokçalışkan (2018), Gardner proposed that intelligence occurs as a spectrum of mutually exclusive traits instead of a single construct of intelligence. Gardner (2020) has recently identified nine different intelligence dimensions that share unique and measurable characteristics of abilities: (a) logical-mathematical, (b) linguistic, (c) interpersonal, (d) intrapersonal, (e) musical, (f) visual-spatial, (g) bodily-kinesthetic, (h) naturalist, and (i) existential. As a result, students might excel in one or two of these areas, while being average in most, and or below average in others (González-Treviño et al. 2020; Maxilom, 2016; Pratiwi & Ayriza, 2018; Yaumi et al., 2018). Students should be encouraged to develop stronger talents, while also recognizing some abilities might be more challenging for individually than for other students (Armstrong, 2018; Maxilom, 2016; Yaumi et al., 2018).

As Bandura (1978a) explained, aggressive behaviors can be triggered when someone is forced to perform in an area where they lack training or skill, suggesting that multiple intelligence sensitivity by teachers might avoid unnecessary conflicts (Armstrong, 2018; Gardner, 2004, 2009). Gardner's (2000) research has also shown that students often develop their own understanding of the world into faulty knowledge constructs, something which takes time for sensitive teachers to replace with more accurate knowledge, requiring more personalized learning activities (Gardner, 2009). Overall, educators can promote behavioral and academic success by integrating multiple intelligence concepts into their teaching process. Whenever instruction becomes more

approachable, relevant, and engaging to students, disruptive behaviors are much less likely to occur, resulting in increased academic gains (Manikam et al., 2021; Yoder et al., 2019).

School-Based Programs Addressing Negative Classroom Behaviors

When trying to deter negative behaviors, instructors should manage classrooms efficiently to minimize disruptions and enhance student engagement (Perry et al., 1986). Postholm (2013) argued that classroom management aims to help students develop both academically and socially, leveraging Bandura's (1986, 1996) theories within social learning contexts. Classroom management is a significant challenge for many educators (Gage & MacSuga-Gage, 2017). Because children most often learn by observing immediate surroundings from behavioral models, teachers must first overcome the attention battle for the minds and hearts of students from parents, others within the family, peer groups or friends, characters in movies or on television, youth group advisors, and other schoolteachers (MacLeod et al., 2018). As such, student learning experiences need to become less passive and become more active or even proactive to engage student learning effectively (Deslauriers et al., 2019).

Beyond the needs identified by Maslow (1943) and Glasser (1958), the value of personal agency and individual learning involvement is fundamental to developing student skills of self-efficacy (Bandura, 1986, 1997). Learning can be impaired if teachers lack training and support to handle classroom behaviors effectively. In their exploratory research, Collier-Meek et al. (2018) found that expanding classroom demands, limited support from administration, and gaps in educators' skills, hindered effective behavior and classroom management practices. Other factors that can affect student outcomes include teacher burnout and stress. Herman et al. (2018) found

unresolved classroom stresses affect teacher health, while negatively influencing learner outcomes, resulting in less-effective instructional practices. Having unresolved stressors is further exacerbated because many teachers are not well prepared to handle extensive and persistent learner misbehaviors in classrooms, while also trying to meet teaching and learning objectives (Flower et al., 2017; Nagro et al., 2019). Accordingly, school administrators must ensure that teachers have sufficient training and support structures to handle the full range of classroom behaviors that interfere with learning.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS)

The intervention program or framework now known as PBIS (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports) began in the 1980s as a center for distributing evidenced-based information to educators to help them independently develop their own programs for behavioral disorders (Surgai & Simonsen, 2012; see also Surgai & Horner, 2002). However, in the 1990s, with additional program development assistance from the University of Oregon over the prior decade, PBIS became the preferred school program with the reauthorization of the Individuals with Disabilities Act (1997) and was widely implemented throughout the United States with the following purposes and methods:

> PBIS is an implementation framework that is designed to enhance academic and social behavior outcomes for all students by (a) emphasizing the use of data for informing decisions about the selection, implementation, and progress monitoring of evidence based behavioral practices; and (b) organizing resources and systems to improve durable implementation fidelity. (Surgai & Simonsen, 2012, p. 1)

Originally, PBIS was often implemented in special classes or as part of existing school or district programs, until it became obvious that the program worked best when managed as part of a cohesive and comprehensive schoolwide applicable to all courses, teachers, and

other academic activities (Ruffin et al., 2019; Surgai & Simonsen, 2012).

Schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports (SWPBIS) programs advocate good classroom atmospheres by preventing unproductive behaviors. Although many studies show strong success of SWPBIS at elementary levels, some studies have demonstrated mixed effectiveness in high school settings (Jean-Pierre & Parris, 2019). For example, Malloy et al. (2018) found PBIS implementation in New Hampshire schools initially improved student behavior and reduced suspensions temporarily; however, in-school suspensions were most effective with first time and low-level offenders because it allowed students time to adjust within the school setting as an immediate wake-up call (Kramer et al., 2014). Malloy et al. (2018) also found that individualized behavior support programs played a crucial supplemental role in improving student behavior and mitigating dropout risks. However, researchers questioned the sustainability of such programs because of more intense and prolonged teacher-student interaction times needed to customize learning plans to individual student needs (Malloy et al., 2018).

Establishing sustainable schoolwide PBIS (SWPBIS) is essential. McIntosh et al. (2016) explored data from thousands of institutions with SWPBIS programs. They found that sustainability or fidelity goes beyond the staff and financial support that academic institutions offer during the early training (Malloy et al., 2018). High sustainability of evidence-based practices requires that instructors have significant external supports to implement an effective, sustainable PBIS program within classrooms (McIntosh et al., 2016). Traditionally, public schools have always had a more reactive behavioral approach to inappropriate student behaviors (Skiba & Losen, 2016). As such, cultural changes needed to implement PBIS programs require significantly more training and support

structure to help teachers balance both instructional demands and increased student support and learning feedback for more sustainable learning outcomes (Pinkelman & Horner, 2019; McIntosh et al., 2016; Malloy et al., 2018). Specifically, Ruffin et al. (2019) recommended that teachers receive supportive training in the areas of emotional intelligence (EI) to help them better understand how to apply PBIS concepts better by first preparing themselves for how they see and respond to behavioral situations as part of their classroom behavioral management practices (Ruffin et al., 2019).

One major criticism of PBIS has been its inability to be applied equitably across the full range of subgroups within a school, specifically dealing with race, disabilities, culture, and minority elements (McIntosh et al., 2021). These reported disparities seem to relate to student perceptions of individual teachers and teacher perceptions of widely different students within the contexts of specific incidents. Because perceptions are individually developed, qualitative and quantitative reports do not always agree. One of the challenges for equity based PBIS implementations comes from how programs are implemented, such that when emotions override facts or when either students or teachers feel threatened by the administrative reviews, less than productive or desirable results emerge (Bastable et al. 2021). Although PBIS programs have demonstrated meaningful reported improvements, the reliability of consistent quantitative data has become questionable because policy makers and administrators have been pressured to reduce the incidents or many reported disciplinary measures. One additional factor affecting PBIS assessments has be the multiple derivations and program additions that make program evaluations difficult to compare (Bastable et al. 2021; McIntosh et al., 2021; Ruffin et al., 2019; Smith, 2021). Several conflicting school implementations, such as zero-tolerance, have also contributed to mixed results and confounded assessment variables, further

complicating objective evaluations and addicting to PBIS program review disagreements (McIntosh et al., 2021).

Zero-Tolerance Programs

Even though the American Psychological Association Zero Tolerance Task Force (2008) came out strongly against punitive school disciplinary programs because there was no data supporting zero tolerance programs existing for more than a decade. As a result, many schools still have not yet fully eliminated such thinking and strategies from their school discipline programs. Amid strong media condemnation and public outcries (Curran, 2019), many schools moved quickly to squelch the dysfunctional effects zero tolerance policies had on schools, students, and communities (Skiba, 2014); however, after two decades of implementation, many schools found the ideologies and traditions of the ill-fated program continuing by inertia in the minds and practices among school administrators and within many school classrooms, although not formally nor openly promoted as such (Curran, 2019; Rottman et al., 2021; Skiba, 2014; Thompson, 2016).

Zero-tolerance policies, such as exclusionary punishments, do not work as behavior modification strategies in a school setting (Black, 2018). Negative perception by students, parents, and teachers is a leading reason why punishments do not work in today's secondary schools. Potter et al. (2017) alluded that increased zero-tolerance policies in learning institutions are associated with criminalizing student behavior instead of modifying it, but do not work well, thereby, alienating students. As a result, students were more likely to be labeled as agitators or offenders characteristically, while not lawfully. Data from some U.S. schools between 2012 and 2013 showed that harsh punitive policies resulted in increased expulsions or suspensions often from negligible violations (Potter et al., 2017). When guidelines are punitive, they escalate behavioral

violations and their intensity, thereby affecting students' learning time through unnecessary instructional breaks (Rottman et al., 2021). Exclusionary punishments were also associated with increased aggressive behaviors and perceptions of fear. Kelly and Pohl (2018) found that punishments were passive practices that only suppress a particular behavior. Thus, undesirable behaviors to often quickly returned once the punishment was withdrawn (Rottman et al., 2021). Imposed punishments failed to work as behavior modification methods in schools because those policies led to adverse learning outcomes, while downgrading the efforts to produce desired student conduct (Kelly & Pohl, 2018; Potter et al., 2017).

Although initially well-intended, poorly conceived zero-tolerance school programs were fundamentally flawed, ruthlessly and arbitrarily implemented, and catastrophically destructive to a whole generation of students, most of whom were disproportionally minority (Black, 2018; Rottman et al., 2021). Although the "letter of the law" of zero tolerance in schools is now officially past in mainstream educational settings, fortunately, school administrators have learned how "safety and academic opportunity are not mutually exclusive and that, by employing strategies to teach students what they need to know to get along in school and society, we strengthen our children, our systems, and our communities" (Skiba, 2014, p. 33). In addition, the severity of the undesirable behavior must be more definitively set. Traditionally teachers identify student behaviors as mild, moderate, or severe, which are often subjectively defined and applied disproportionally to different students or groups (Rottman, et al., 2021). Depending upon the observed behaviors, student learning interventions could be modified ranging from the least restrictive to the most restrictive. Assigning students rigorous strategies can potentially produce insignificant results toward behavior

modification in learning institutions. Kelly and Pohl (2018) confirmed that the authoritarian interventions did not provide the desired results.

Other Contributing Factors to Disciplinary and Behavioral Programs

Reinforcement interventions were designed to help student-teacher relationships because they influence significant behavior modification outcomes by promoting better interactions that included three essential practices: (a) developing a personal relationship between educators and students, (b) implementing rigorous educational prospects, and (c) designing learning institution centers inside the classroom (Potter et al., 2017). Although all three methods can work together to create a more conducive learning environment, the individual merits of each must be examined further to how they are applied in both individual and group situations.

When instructors develop a positive relationship with students, then they are rewarding good student behavior by helping them deal more efficiently and effectively with challenging classroom behaviors (Kelly & Pohl, 2018). Consistent with this approach, Kane (2017) found that by using daily report cards, as part of a system of dialogue journaling collaboration, teachers were better able to form positive student-teacher interactions and supporting positive classroom behaviors. It is important to note that it is not the recordkeeping that generates the beneficial results but the redirected focus by teachers and students to effectively engage with each other in positive and productive learning interactions. However, the recording process is one that is transparent to both teacher and student, which documents the incremental gains in learning and changes in behaviors, jointly observed and recorded (p. 73). Although classroom behaviors continued with varying levels of disruptions and gaps in learning progress, the individual dialogue journaling sessions between teacher and student brought a sense of

joint accountability to both student and teacher have proved productive (p. 71). This communication interaction remained effective even when behavioral problem continued and students were not always responsive to teacher comments, thereby providing a structure for discussion, resolution, and channel building. Due to its positive effect, schools that implement interventions that promote the constructive student-teacher relationships appear to have reduced behavioral incident frequencies with lessened severities of those incidents. The benefits of constructive student-teacher interactions were also evident in general and specific educational cases, mitigating disruptive classroom behaviors (Kane, 2017).

Consistent with dialogue journaling, Gage et al. (2018) found that developing teacher skills with behavior-specific praise in classrooms was effective in acknowledging positive student behaviors, something that motivated and reinforced desirable behaviors with students manifesting positive actions in class, while also modeling appropriate behaviors to observing students as examples worthy of praise. Because these behaviors are teachable skills, teacher professional development instruction was recommended by Gage et al. One immediate benefit supporting teacher acceptance and application identified that behavior-specific praise was a skill more easily adaptable to normal teacher curriculum and classroom practices and instructional goals, largely because it seemed more an enhancement of day-to-day teaching activities rather than being a separate program imposed upon teachers in addition to their lesson plans (Gage et al., 2018). Promoting positive teacher-student relationships leads to improved behavior outcomes and better academic performance. Positive student-teacher relationships contribute to transforming overall student behaviors inside classrooms, where benefits extend to improved cognitive outcomes with improved student performance.

Another communication factor affecting student learning was the alignment and consistency of how parents and teachers interacted with students. Independently, expectations of parents (Loughlin-Presnal & Bierman, 2017) and teachers (Gentrup et al., 2020) have direct correlations to student behaviors and student learning; however, having consistent student expectations can be stronger when teacher and parental expectancies are more closely aligned. Fisher and Spencer (2015) examined how adult perceptions were major contributors to improving student behaviors in school settings, such that when both teachers and parents had concordant expectations, students performed better in both classroom behaviors and individual learning measures. It was essential that when expected behaviors and reported behaviors observed in learning situation were more consistent, student learning and classroom behaviors improved, whereas discordant expectations among teachers and parents were counterproductive (Fisher & Spencer, 2015). Expectations for homework and associated behaviors surrounding its completion and quality were enhanced when students had some direct engagement with their parents and teachers as opposed to working autonomously (Núñez et al., 2019). Effective homework completion with parental engagement was shown to increase positive student behaviors and interactions in classrooms.

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2001 (2002), reauthorized as the Every Student Succeed Act of 2015 (GovTrack.us., 2022), clearly indicated student achievement gaps had continued by assuring all children had fair, equal, and significant access and opportunity to get high quality school experiences throughout their educational journey (Gay. 2018). One serious negative effect that NCLB had on students was increased negative behaviors by students in school settings (Holbein & Ladd, 2017). Negatively affected students were significantly more likely to have been minority

students, a factor that exacerbated and already challenging student outcome disparity (Anyon, Lechuga, et al., 2018). In contrast, measured academic results of students in primary discipline competencies did show improvements during NCLB, suggesting that behavior and academic achievement might be independent of each other at the school or district level (Parsons et al., 2018), a finding also consistent with Smith (2021), who found that behavioral improvements did not usually correlate with measured learning outcomes.

The use of behavioral interventions has traditionally been used towards students with social, emotional, and behavioral challenges, despite showing extreme, disturbing, and sometime aggressive behaviors (Collins et al., 2020). Teachers are required to maintain individual classroom management procedures to maximize classroom instruction, sometimes derived from intervention protocols that are applied to modify those behaviors (Wills, et al., 2018). There is always a conflict between individual and group behavioral interventions, such that focusing on students at one extreme often come at the expense of students at the other extreme. Finding the right balance for effective classroom management practices has always been a challenge for most teachers because of the differences in class compositions, student abilities, and situational contexts.

Multi-Tiered System of Supports

According to Pinkelman and Horner (2019), Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) is one form of PBIS, which is structured as a multitiered framework, comprised of three tiers that are aligned with individual student needs to address student-teacher relationships and teacher practices. Based off the usage of a three-tiered approach (i.e., primary, secondary, and tertiary tiers), behavior is categorized for each student, allowing teachers and administrators to offer behavior-based interventions (Briesch et al., 2020).

Tier I categorization describes the behavior is light in intensity as well as sporadic. Tier II is used when student behavior is less intense, allowing for possible group-based interventions. Tier III is used when disruptive behavior is unprecedentedly and extremely individualized.

According to Briesch et al. (2020), the first tier (primary level) aims at establishing a school climate containing effective teaching and classroom control practices. Applied practices within this tier include (a) collaboration with stakeholders during planning, (b) teaching expectations via exemplary instructional processes, (c) reinforcing desired behaviors, (d) correcting mistakes contingent upon disruptive practice, (e) gathering information regarding learner's conduct and integrity of treatment, and (f) reviewing data periodically for problem-solving. As described by Pinkelman and Horner (2019), the second tier (secondary level) provides learners with further support required to excel in normal classroom circumstances. The layer comprises small, targeted group interventions to remedy the deficiencies in academic and social skills. The third tier (tertiary level) involves intensive, individualized practices for remediating student skills deficits (Pinkelman & Horner, 2019). Cruz et al (2021) challenged the reported results of MTSS programs because too many studies only examined aggregated measure of program effectiveness when classified demographically. As such, assessments of unfair practices needed more rigorous program reviews (Cruz et al., 2021).

Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH)

Developed and introduced in the late 1990s, Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) is a an adjunct PBIS program that emphasizes the relationships between students and teachers (Holtzapple et al., 2011). The program was developed based upon Bandura's (1977, 1986) social learning theory and the premise that behavioral contexts are based upon

relationships, such that stronger and more positive relationships generate fewer behavioral incidents while increasing teaching and learning effectiveness (Quillen, 2011). Although early results reported by Holtzapple et al. (2011) found many early positive findings, later research (Rhea & Singh, 2020) examining Capturing Kids' Hearts implementation revealed that the program was not being implemented as designed or consistently applied within schools or across districts. Rhea and Singh also reported that although CKH was operational in 47 states, because of limited research on the program, it did not meet the U.S. Department of Education's evidence-based requirements for PBIS programs.

Initial reviews (Holtzapple et al. 2011; Rhea & Singh, 2020) of supporting elements from which CKH was developed shows it to be an amalgam of several popular theories and ideas, such as developing self-efficacy, fostering student engagement, and internalizing values, such as helping "students learn and practice integrity, initiative, work ethic, cooperation, confidence, and community service" (Rhea & Singh, 2020, p. 26). CKH includes added structure elements and interaction in daily classroom activities to facilitate student self-management, build relationships, and increase student safety (pp. 11–14). Clayton (2020) found that consistency in how CKH was implemented varied widely with those having the most fidelity to program intentions seemed to report the best results, although CKH fidelity was difficult to maintain over time for yet to be identified reasons.

Rhea and Singh (2020) described how with each new school year students are expected to create a social contract regarding classroom environment. Social and emotional learning (SEL) is an avenue for the use of prosocial skill development with the context of multiple educational interventions, such as character education, self-

management, bullying prevention, and conflict resolution (Rhea & Singh, 2020). Jones (2019) noted that the best results were with new teachers as opposed to veteran teachers because classroom management skills of new teachers motivated novice faculty members to apply the program elements more exactly and consistently, suggesting that any well-structured plan was better than having no plan or a poorly developed or incomplete plan. Jones also found that new teachers who participated in CKH had higher retention levels than did new teachers who had not yet participated in the program (Jones, 2019).

Rhea and Singh (2020) found that implementation results were similar across all age groups, such that levels of implementation mirrored those of middle and high schools, with little meaningful improvements made over the course of the research (Rhea & Singh, 2020). Research by Cano (2019) reported that teacher professional development training on CKH was essential to establishing and maintaining fidelity at some modicum level of acceptability because training sessions provided a common sense of community among teachers, many of whom shared similar problems, issues, and experiences. In short, Rhea and Singh (2020) summarized well the benefits and sustainability of Capturing Kids' Hearts with three key observations: First, the research showed no demonstrable benefit from CKH over other programs in behavior or student achievement. Second, the research showed that the goals of CKH were not being achieved as intended. Third, no statistically significant effects were shown by implementing CKH, even though costs were higher than other similar programs and were also more demanding of teacher time and emotional investment. There final recommendations were that CKH programs "offer no support for starting implementation at additional schools within the district, yet there appears to be no harm in continuing implementation at current schools" (Rhea & Singh, 2020, p. 25).

Character Education, Personality, and Other Behavioral Approaches

As educators have striven to resolve student behavioral issues in classrooms, several different approaches have been used to explain, mitigate, and prevent student disruptions. Although many approaches have general applicability to all students, as part of their educational development and as prerequisites to becoming contributing adults in society, four specific approaches will be considered here to illustrate some whole classroom or whole school applications that enlarge or augment the context of classroom behavior management and school discipline: (a) character education, (b) personality and learning domains, (c) social-emotional learning (SEL), and (d) dialectical behavior therapy (DBT). These four different approaches illustrate how other theories and disciplines have begun to compete with, encroach upon, or influence classroom behavioral management practices, showing how challenging, complex, and all-encompassing behavioral management programs in schools have become.

Character Education

One benefit of character education is that it can be applied broadly to all students simultaneously, while not primarily focusing on only disruptive students. As such, it is consistent with Bandura's (1971, 1973, 1986, 1997) social theories of observation learning situations in social and cognitive contexts. Like the goals of Capturing Kids' Hearts, character education seeks to enrich classroom environments and improve learner behaviors.

Pattaro (2016) defined character education as a broad range of learning and teaching elements that enhance student personal growth by focusing on broader core abilities valuable in and transferable to many adult work and personal contexts. Key vital elements include (a) prevention of risk-taking behaviors, (b) teaching of life skills, (c)

developing emotional education, and (d) instilling social values. Zurqoni et al. (2018) determined that character education affects school environments by reshaping culture through accepted or agreed-upon group expectations that become or shared values. Although the definitions and constructs for what *character* means or encompasses can be ambiguous or cover ranges of acceptable meanings, directionally character education has broad acceptance across many cultures (Pattaro, 2016). One of the challenges of character education is what to include that truly matter, such as self-control and self-management (Li et al., 2021). Schools should include several measures to ensure that character programs are implemented successfully. First, the educational department stakeholders, including the community, parents, and leaders, should consistently support the classroom teacher. Second, role modeling is an effective strategy for teaching students about acceptable values. Third, the educational stakeholders should ensure continuous monitoring of the character programs (Zurqoni et al., 2018).

Findings from a meta-analysis by Li et al. (2021) identified how the teacher-student relationships to developing meaningful self-control were stronger that when self-control was correlated with structure, suggesting that self-control is more directly tied to personal relationships and interactions that model desired behaviors within social contexts rather than with classroom or learning structures. In addition, even though the goals of character education seem to be well understood and demonstrated in classroom settings, developing sustainable learner habituation among learners is less-well demonstrated with increased times after instruction, implying that character education requires reinforcement and re-education to become more permanently inculcated into student long-term character development (Zurqoni et al., 2018). Findings also suggest that character as an outcome is far more malleable in real life than in the classroom, while

also being somewhat related to dominant personality traits (Ackerman, 2020). Longitudinal studies have shown that behavioral patterns developed during the school years have strong relationships to behaviors later in life (Spengler et al., 2018). Accordingly, even though character education does not in itself guarantee character development or permanence in student behavior changes (Zurqoni et al., 2018), efforts to shape or reshape character and associated behaviors early in life have proven successful for many (Spengler et al., 2018).

Other Behavior and Classroom Management Efforts

Influences of Personality and Learning Domains

Character training activities or structured programs are not new interventions (Perry et al., 1986) and can assist children begin to construct and shape their own emerging identities, while developing individual social skills, factors that can enrich classroom environments and reduce disruptive behaviors (Pattaro, 2016; Perry et al., 1986). Individual student personality was found by Ackerman (2020) to be a major indicator of student character, educational success, and student longitudinal behaviors. This is problematic because of the innate and often immutable nature of personality, defined as the quirks, characteristics, and traits that predict how students perceive themselves, others, and the world, while also influencing how they interact with others and react to situations (Ackerman, 2020). Teacher personalities can also affect classroom behavior management efforts from both how PBIS programs are perceived and implement by teachers and how students perceive teacher management practices (Agler et al., 2020; Maag, 2020).

One of the most used frameworks for understanding personality is the big five personality model (Köseoğlu, 2016) or “OCEAN” that categorizes personality into the

five dimensions of (a) openness, (b) conscientiousness, (c) extraversion, (d) agreeableness, and (e) neuroticism. For instance, according to Ackerman (2020), students with high agreeableness show high sensitivity to others' concerns. On the other hand, those with a low score in agreeableness are associated with sarcastic, ill-tempered, and rude behaviors. Individuals who score high in neuroticism demonstrate low self-worth and increased worry and sadness, something that affects situational perceptions. Personality is a crucial attribute that influences student interpersonal behaviors and academic success in educational settings (Forrester et al., 2016; Komarraju, 2011; Lounsbury et al., 2004). Thus, developing understanding of personality can help teachers in managing the behaviors of students, while character education programs can help teens and children construct their own individualities and shape shared social interaction skills (Bornholt & Spencer, 2014). Although personality variables are essential when dealing with individual students, especially in individual counseling interactions, they are also important variables as contributors to understanding and managing group dynamics (Jeynes, 2019; Lavy 2020).

Another supporting dimension often associated with personality are learning domains that can support effective classroom management skills. According to Hoque (2016), learning includes the combination and interaction among cognitive, psychomotor, and affective domains. Hoque summarized the three domains, where (a) cognition is associated with thinking or mental processes; (b) affective factors define attitudes, emotions, and feelings; and (c) psychomotor or kinesthetic processes encompass movements, reflex actions, and physical functions (Hoque, 2016). Educators should support the child's development skills across the three domains to create a whole learning environment. Although students will likely prefer one domain over the other two, well-

developed and balanced learners must have skills learning through all three domains (Chan et al., 2021; Sousa, 2016).

Social and Emotional Learning (SEL)

Rather than looking at behavior incidents isolated from their corresponding larger real-world contexts, social and emotional learning perspectives (SEL) has added additional insights into mitigating and preventing inappropriate student behaviors. SEL is the environment in which individuals "acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to develop healthy identities, manage emotions and achieve personal and collective goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain supportive relationships, and make responsible and caring decisions" (Collaboration for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning., 2019, para. 1). By combining and leveraging the efforts of family, community, and educational resources, SEL helps students control their emotions and behaviors in more acceptable ways to help them improve their learning and educational outcomes. Although the various influencer factors of SEL can be used individually with students (i.e., individual counseling and mentoring) to make marginal gains; however, students benefit most when parents, teachers, and community resources can be focused jointly as a single effort to mediate conflicts and confusion among learners by creating a consistent and coordinated framework for student interactions (Caldarella et al., 2019). Within this framework, SEL research and applications have focused on shaping student behaviors and learning together by empowering students to take responsibility for how they act and learn at school from better understanding how they relate to others, while learning new skills enabling them to manage their emotions proactively and sustainably (Neth et al., 2020).

Karamer et al. (2014) investigated whether Strong Kids—an SEL program that

teaches children how to understand and develop socioemotional skills—would develop improved prosocial behaviors with fewer internalizing or self-defeating behaviors among both at-risk students and general student groups. The research explored how teachers had implemented the Strong Kids program and if those results were socially rewarding and whether they contributed to meaningful student progress or successful academic outcomes. Training and instruction were identified as being critical to student social and emotional development. At-risk students for behavioral and emotional conditions did improve significantly, while other students maintained or improved acceptable academic and social outcomes. The results showed how most instructors had effectively facilitated behavioral programs school-wide with increased fidelity in classroom execution, while also showing improvements in both behavioral and academic outcomes (Kramer et al., 2014). Bolstering prosocial behaviors, while reducing negative internalizing behaviors using Strong Kids with the context of SEL not only enhanced levels of positive classroom behaviors but also improved overall teaching effectiveness. Similar results were found by Neth et al. (2020), showing that students were able to internalize well their own learned social-emotional knowledge, while having challenges with changing their corresponding external behaviors during the time set for the research (Neth, et al., 2020).

In contrast, Skiba (2017) reported no difference between the Strong Kids group and the control group in a small that short-term applications showed no immediate benefits. However, because generalizable prosocial skill development has a long-term learning curve, larger, longitudinal studies are recommended to validate SEL concepts. Although the overall direction of SEL appears to offer strong potential benefits to students and schools, the findings from current research is neither robust nor validating of SEL program goals (Gueldner et al., 2019). As such, all-encompassing omnibus

programs could be inherently difficult to confirm their value as effective classroom behavior management programs or their intervention adjuncts.

Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT)

Another recent entry into the field of behavioral management or prevention programs comes from the fields of psychology and psychiatry using dialectical behavior therapy (DBT) in larger school settings and contexts. DBT is an extension of cognitive behavior therapies, which were designed for intensive counseling that combined both individual and group sessions to help individuals understand how and why their decisions became problems and for them to take responsibility, accepting accountability, and then resolving the consequences of their own actions (Zapolski & Smith, 2017). As a supplementary treatment program, Zapolski and Smith explained how DBT attempts to deal with emotional impulses to pursue dysfunctional or risk-taking behaviors that have no logical or meaningful benefits. In other words, CBT deals with logical reconditioning individual, developing individual cognitive skills, while DBT deals with the emotional irrationality of the moment where two conflicting actions are vying for selection within the individual (Dexter-Mazza et al., 2020); hence, the dialectical internal dialogue that individual must learn to manage to avoid jumping into poor choices, which they will later regret. DBT is a highly structured program administered by mental health professionals, requiring both extensive and protracted treatment regimes, which if completed have proven highly successful (Dimeff et al., 2020).

Because of DBT's success in mental-health applications (Dexter-Mazza et al., 2020), the potential application to more general school and classroom settings was explored, primarily because of DBT's proven success with adolescents (Kumar et al., 2020). Wayne (2018) specifically investigated in-school applications using mental-health

professionals and found meaningful success in resolving repeated behavioral issues in schools. Mazza et al. actively investigated general population applications of DBT, suggesting that it was better to prevent and work with students before they failed, rather than waiting to recover and reshape broken lives after they experienced a pattern of failures (Mazza et al., 2018). As a result, Mazza et al. developed 60 lesson plans for in-school curriculum to be taught by highly trained professionals to help students develop effective strategies for acquiring needed skills in (a) mindfulness, (b) interpersonal effectiveness, (c) distress tolerance, and (d) emotion regulation. Although early results have suggested positive outcomes, such applications will need broader and more extensive longitudinal studies to ensure and validate DBT general applications in whole-school and classroom settings give more benefit than harm (Mazza et al., 2018; Wayne, 2018).

Culturally Responsive Teaching and Student Behavior

Another context worth consideration for behavioral modification in learning situations is culturally responsive teaching (CRT). Culture denotes the integrated patterns of behavior amongst people from different social, religious, ethnic, and racial groups, relative to their values, beliefs, customs, communication styles, and thoughts (Larson et al., 2018). As such, these background variables can affect how students from differing cultures and subcultures might perceive and react to the same classroom situations or conflicts differently. Muñiz (2019) defined culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in education as a strategy that helps teachers recognize how learners bring a variety of strengths—rather than deficits—into classrooms that can be integrated into relevant learning experiences. Educators adopting CRT often establish demanding goals for their learners and continuously develop channels between what scholars must learn and their

lived dashes of realism and heritage by weaving together relevance and rigor. However, Bonner et al. (2018) found that success was strongly related to teacher CRT competencies and commitment levels, suggesting the need for schools and districts to have long-term commitments to achieve meaningful results (Bonner, et. Al., 2018). One clear benefit is that CRT enables and assists student learners become more effective with sharing their ideas and express more abstract concepts during class time, especially for students where English was a second language. While traditional methods have led to systemic discrimination for underrepresented learners, CRT helps create an inclusive learning environment for more students (Abaciouglu et al., 2020). Furthermore, although comprehensive CRT implementations have demonstrated meaningful results, even minimal CRT awareness training among teachers has shown some improvements by changing how teachers perceive and respond to diverse student populations (Cherfas et al., 2021; Chu & Garcia, 2021). These studies help confirm the complex nature of classroom management for teachers and schools and how adding a cultural lens can make the learning environment more inclusive by narrowing student-teacher communication gaps.

Technology Influences on Student Classroom Behaviors

Technology in classrooms is a two-edged sword because it introduces both opportunities and risks directly affecting student behaviors in and out of classroom situations (Alghamdi et al., 2021; Cong, 2019; Woolverton & Pollastri, 2021; Wu et al., 2018; Yadav et al., 2021). When technologies and electronic devices were used by teachers in highly structured and user-intense learning situations, student learning and involvement can have positive outcomes (Woolverton & Pollastri, 2021). However, without moderation and control by both students and teachers, unbridled technology

device use can create instructional chaos in classes with negative effects upon students educationally, behaviorally, and socially (Alghamdi et al., 2021; Cong, 2019; Yadav et al., 2021). As such, teachers must be proactive in dealing with electronic devices as part of their classroom management strategies (Hagerman, 2021). When strong classroom management programs have been implemented by teachers, various technologies and electronic devices have been used successfully to create a productive learning environment, where students not only survived but thrived in their individual learning, while also creating a positive learning environment among all participating learners (Korest & Carlson, 2021).

Unfortunately, mobile phones, electronic devices, and other emerging technologies in the 21st century have had a significant impact on student behavior (Sahkoor et al., 2021). Mobile dependency among students has been shown to decrease academic outcomes because of technology misuse, abuse, addiction, and pervasiveness of these technologies (Yadav et al., 2021), such that constant use of mobile devices has been linked with sleep deprivation and depression among students, factors that increase stress while deteriorating psychological well-being (Dontre, 2021). Phones and air pods constantly distract learners, deteriorating their concentration in academic environments. Wearable technologies, such as cameras, watches, earbuds, and smartglasses further compound the ubiquitous influences of technology and associated social media upon student lives, directly affecting classroom instruction, testing, supervision, monitoring, and control as growing challenge among teachers (Dontre, 2021; Sahkoor et al., 2021; Yadav et al., 2021). As such, without both (a) institution-imposed guidelines for technology use at school and (b) effective technology self-management and self-regulation skills among students, teachers must deal with classrooms physically filled

with students whose attentions are distracted or even captured elsewhere by cyberworld influences (Dontre, 2021; Wu et al., 2018). Moreover, misuse of electronic devices in classrooms has been identified as a major stress contributor negatively affecting teachers and their wellbeing (Gadušová, & Hašková, 2021). As such, teachers and schools implementing evidence-based programs as an integral part of their classroom management strategies for using and controlling technologies and electronic devices both in and out of school settings have dramatically reduced negative student behaviors and increased positive learning outcomes (Korest & Carlson, 2021).

Summary

Elements of academic success based on the role of self-efficacy are explored in this study, specifically as they influence classroom behavior and management. For this reason, Bandura's (1970) work is critical because of its emphasis on the frameworks of social-cognitive learning and personality theories. Self-efficacy is one's belief in themselves, for both teachers and students. Teachers must believe in themselves and believe in their own individual competencies of academic subjects and their individual skills in classroom management. Students often adopt what their teachers model, eventually embracing this observed model as their own. As an aspect of Bandura's (1986) social-cognitive learning theory, self-efficacy in the classroom revolves around student conditioning behaviors. Adjusting to personal challenges is tied to an individual's self-conditioning, which are influenced by successive iterations of self-observation, self-evaluation, and self-regulation.

In the past, the approach to behavior modification revolved around student discipline in classrooms, which were based on theories associated with classical and operant conditioning. Both theoretical approaches focused on the influence of

environmental factors on individual responses and varying levels of feedback to reinforce desired behaviors or discourage problem behaviors. Operant conditioning established a system of rewards and consequences associated with specific behaviors, establishing clear cause and effect. This included negative as well positive reinforcement in the past. One major challenge of this approach on its own is that it allowed for negative response based on negative behavior, such as corporal punishment. While these antiquated techniques were used in the past, they did not serve as part of positive interventions to reduce or counsel disruptive classroom behaviors.

Modern approaches to positive reinforcement are embodied in PBIS programs, in which students are rewarded for positive behavior as an intervention for positive classroom instruction. Short-term benefits regarding negative or aversive behavior could result in long-term intensification or escalation of negative behaviors (Sugai & Horne, 2002), resulting in an increased supervision and more effective responses to surrounding school violence and student victimization (Hall et al., 2017).

Disruptive student behaviors have broad consequences to the quality and effectiveness of schools (Zoromski et al., 2021). More specifically, they affect student grades, test scores, and persistence rates among students, while also creating teaching gaps, contributing to teacher dissatisfaction and departures (p. 199). Zoromski et al. acknowledged that many classroom behavior management programs were effective in reversing and reduction the negative effects of disruptive student behaviors, they also found that because of wide disparities with how well and how frequently teachers implemented strategies for classroom behavior management programs that less-than-optimal results were achieved or even sought. The implications were that although many teachers knew what to do, they were not applying tools and strategies known to be

effective. Unfortunately, the findings by Zoromski et al. were like those by Osher et al. (2010) over a decade earlier. Even more surprising was how research by Owens et al. (2018) found that teachers often stopped trying to improve student behaviors in classrooms once they perceived their classes had improved enough, so that they could tolerate some arbitrarily set level of student disruption even though they knew they could do so (Owens et al, 2018). Disruptive student behaviors were being dealt with differently with how schools handle the same student disruptions, varying from student detentions to student expulsions, something that only adds to confusion and inconsistencies among how programs are applied to different students, classrooms, schools, and districts (Chitiyo & May, 2018; Gregory & Skiba, 2019; Zoromski et al., 2021).

Positive reinforcements prompted the implementation of strategies that encourage students to adopt positive behavior. For instance, schools implemented constructive student-teacher relationships to promote positive deeds through SWPBIS, which has reduced disturbing behavior in the classroom, as well as across campus, thereby increasing instructional time and creating a more conducive climate (Chitiyo & May, 2018). Social and emotional learning (SEL) has potential for developing prosocial skills similar to other educational interventions, such as character education, bullying prevention, and conflict resolution, (Rhea & Singh, 2020). This approach increased the interaction time between students and teachers, allowing the latter to employ methods such as rewards to encourage positive behaviors. The benefits also included better cognitive outcomes and improved academic performance. Some schools adopted exclusionary punishments, including expulsion and suspensions. Although such implementations prompted harsh educational policies, they have failed to work due to negative perceptions. Expulsions and suspensions are considered punitive measures that

criminalize learners or demean them as troublemakers. Therefore, positive reinforcement strategies prove effective in modifying student behavior and generates spillover effects typified by improved academic performance. Rhea & Singh (2020) reported at that time that the goals and expected outcomes rom Capturing Kids' Hearts had not yet been consistently implemented or achieved.

It is estimated that with the adoption and proper usage of PBIS, and MTSS has grown from over 20,000 schools to nearly 30,000 school across the nation in less than five years (Chitiyo & May, 2018; Lloyd et al., 2021). The adoption stems from student misbehavior interfering with classroom learning. Many professionals praise MTSS for helping to assist with improving their schools' climate and student safety (Lloyd et al., 2021). While many PBIS programs employ consequences imposed by the teacher or administrator, an increasing number of modern interventions, such as Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) redirect disciplinary expectations through a structure of self-managing student groups (A. Joffrion, written communication, July 2, 2021). The primary distinction for novel programs being that students reinforce classroom expectations rather than being arbitrarily imposed by adults.

Although many different forms of PBIS have been implemented across the nation's schools, the results are often difficult to evaluate and assess for effectiveness and to determine needed changes when considered as a whole. It is also important that individual schools and districts examine the effectiveness of different PBIS programs for improving their student behaviors, while also assessing potential improvements in student learning and achievement.

Research Questions

One Central Research Question and five supporting sub-questions guided this

study. The questions were examined in this bounded qualitative case study at a single institution. This study specifically explored two classroom management programs implemented sequentially from the perspectives of participating teachers. Research was based upon teacher's experiences with students in their classroom while implementing both programs, where the second classroom management program combination of Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) and Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) replaced the first program of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS).

Central Research Question

The Central Research Question for this study was, "What are teachers' perspectives of their experiences with students in their classrooms while using each implementation of the two classroom management programs?"

Sub-questions

Five sub-questions helped answer the Central Research Question by exploring detailed factors and issues affecting each teacher's classroom management experience with students using both programs. The sub-questions specifically examined how both programs were implemented and how they affected the quality and effectiveness of the classroom learning environment, student behaviors, and student learning outcomes.

Sub-question 1. Based upon teacher experiences, what are the benefits and detriments of using classroom management programs with their teaching lessons and with their interactions with students?

Sub-question 2. What are the experiences of teachers in implementing both classroom management programs and with how each program influenced student behaviors and attendance?

Sub-question 3. What are the experiences of teachers in implementing both

classroom management programs and with how each program influenced student learning and learning outcomes?

Sub-question 4. How do teacher perceptions of how the two classroom management program implementations affected student trends for attendance, disciplinary incidents, and measures of student learning throughout the years covering each classroom management program's implementation when compared with district reports of the same measures for the same periods?

Sub-question 5. Based upon their own experiences, what changes or recommendations would teachers make that might improve classroom management programs to improve classroom learning experiences and student learning outcomes?

Chapter 3: Methodology

Aim of the Study

This qualitative case study explored teacher perceptions of how well two different classroom behavioral management programs affected the frequency and severity of disruptive student behaviors and whether such behaviors influenced student attendance, learning, and measures of academic achievement by all students in the classroom. Because classroom management programs and their associated behavioral remediation activities are lived experiences involving teachers, this qualitative review examined how well two different programs (implemented independently yet sequentially) were in achieving desired student outcomes as perceived by teachers who participated in both programs.

Teachers typically experience classroom behavioral management issues through daily interactions at the micro level with specific students and situations involved, while administrators and program managers usually work on a macro level through aggregated data from multiple teachers and students. The study focus sought to understand the accumulated learning and perceptions of teachers in describing each program's effectiveness in improving classroom behaviors and student learning and how those insights compared to student measures (i.e., attendance, disciplinary events and actions, and academic performance).

Qualitative Research Approach

When both quantitative and qualitative information are available to researchers, choosing the best research approach for gathering and analyzing the data and personal insights must be tied to selecting the most appropriate methods for answering the research questions. Although quantitative measures can provide statistical descriptions

and comparisons among different groups or comparing variables, qualitative data provide important insights that explain or add context to what quantitative measures might mean or what might have influenced numerical measures (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Qualitative assessments (Creswell & Poth, 2017) are designed to give more subjective and holistic understandings to program effectiveness, issues surrounding program implementations, and how well students responded to each program's defined activities than using quantitative data alone. Creswell and Creswell (2018) explained that "qualitative research is an approach for exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or group ascribe to a social or human problem" (p. 4).

The research approach selected determines not only how information is obtained but also the quality and type of information obtained (Creswell & Poth, 2017). The research approach selected must align with research objectives, sources, and ways for gathering available information, and how best to address the research problem (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). When the phenomena or issues being researched are not fully understood, more subjective approaches are appropriate to help explore the issues the information available. Qualitative research is best conducted when there is a need of exploration of a particular topic, phenomenon, or issue (Creswell, 2013; Creswell & Creswell, 2018). Augmenting qualitative research information with quantitative measures can also provide objective measures for comparison, interpretation, and validation, such that subjective contexts can provide broader understandings to quantitative measures within real-world situations (Bowen et al., 2017).

A bounded qualitative case study was selected for this study because this research examined a single institution over several years with a focus on qualitative information from participating teachers, while comparing those perspectives with ex post factor

reported quantitative measures from District reports student attendance, behavioral incident reports, and standardized student achievement measure. This approach allowed the inclusion of selected quantitative data for interpretation by participating teachers and the researcher to assess program effectiveness (Creswell & Poth, 2017), while allowing comparisons between two different behavioral programs of classroom management (Creswell & Cresswell, 2018).

The methodology of the study was a qualitative case study research design that examined two different student behavior programs used at the same study site and by the same participating teachers, making it a bounded case study (Watson et al., 2017). The case study design permitted investigating teacher perceptions about how both student behavior programs influenced students and their classroom behaviors, attendance, and academic achievement. This approach helped discover meaning as well as gain a comprehensive understanding of the issues involved in the bounded system. According to Blank and Shavit (2016), case study is a versatile approach to explore the perceived interactions between qualitative and quantitative data. Because two different but sequentially implemented programs were examined, the study might also be described as a sequential explanatory case study (Blank & Shavit, 2016, see also Bakla, 2018).

For this case study, ex post facto quantitative data was gathered and analyzed by the researcher describing each behavioral management program reported outcomes for aggregated student attendance, the number of behavior incidents, and student aggregated academic measures by academic year for both programs. These data were then standardized by the researcher and organized into figures to show to teachers during their interviews as a way of triangulating teacher perceptions of student attendance, behavior, and achievement against actual reported data for the same periods.

Interviews of teachers who used both programs in their classroom to gather qualitative data exploring teacher perceptions about each behavior management program's effectiveness, using both unaided questions without the quantitative data before asking questions after teachers have been given quantitative measurers for their review, reaction, and comparison (Bowen et al., 2017). Interviews aided in assessing the implementation of the intervention effectiveness on disruptive student behaviors and student learning. Interview data offered a comprehensive understanding of each program by examining the perceptions of teachers regarding the challenges and successes encountered during each program's implementation. The specific strategy of inquiry used was a case study design. The case study is a suitable research design in this case because it is problem-based research (Blazar & Kraft, 2017). The case study approach helps to discover meaning as well as gain a comprehensive understanding of the issue through the bounded system using primarily qualitative data with some supportive quantitative data. Data analysis compared qualitative and qualitative information gathered, noting similarities and differences with participant explanations for differences and similarities of perceived outcomes versus measured outcomes.

Participants

The researcher obtained approval from the study site school district to contact teachers who had taught at the study site school. Once the researcher obtained IRB approval from Nova Southeastern University, the researcher solicited study participants. Participants were selected from current or former teachers who had taught for 4 or more years at the study site, having taught for at least 2 full years using *both* student behavioral programs used during between 2012 and 2020. A total of 24 current or former teachers currently met this requirement. All qualifying teachers were approached to participate in

the study with a goal of getting at least six but no more than 12 would be selected for interview. While 10 of the potential teachers choose to participate in the study, only eight eventually participated in and completed the interviews. According to Creswell and Creswell (2018), five to 10 participants are appropriate for in-depth qualitative research samples. By seeking at least six but no more than 12 participants, the researcher was able to meet the desired range between five and 10 participants with the final eight who were interviewed.

Other than having 4 or more years of teaching at the study site with a minimum of 2 years teaching with each of the two behavioral management programs, no other exclusion criteria will prevent willing participants other than the upper limit of 12 scheduled teachers. Had the number of scheduled teachers who completed the interviews been fewer than five, the researcher would have attempted to schedule any willing teachers who were not previously scheduled, until the desired minimum of five completed interviews was reached.

Setting of the Study

The school district selected for this study has a population of approximately 40,000 residents. During the 2015–2019 school years, the Southern U.S. school district encompassing this study enrolled approximately 3,100 students in preschool through grade 12. Of these students, 88% were eligible for free or reduced lunch. The school's attendance rate is 93.7%. The graduation rate has ranged between 74%–100%, and the dropout rate consistently falls below 4%. All professional staff members are fully certified by the State Department of Elementary and Secondary Education with over 99% of classes being taught by highly qualified teachers. Every school has a full-time, non-teaching principal. For the specific school selected for this study the ratio of students to

teachers is 32:1. Staff members have an average of 12.7 years of teaching experience. The study explores a pre-K–12 school setting with approximately 331 students (172 male and 159 female), 34 certified teachers, and five paraprofessionals.

The study site district and school has not had any significant economic, cultural, demographic, or population changes in the community or school for several decades. As such, both school and community have remained relatively isolated from external factors or influences moving into or affecting the teaching environment other than those of normal or organic updates of teacher turnover and replacement or school district maturation. Accordingly, potential variables affecting students and faculty have remained relatively stable, thereby avoiding many possible external confounding factors affecting schools in other locations having more dynamic or fluctuating circumstances. It is possible, however, that the apparent stability of the area might unintentionally influence or discourage change because of a status quo culture resistant to modification because of accepted processes and traditions.

Researcher's Role

The researcher previously served within the study site school as the Assistant Principal and was not directly involved in classroom instruction or classroom management. The researcher was involved in district committees and community task forces surrounding external and internal factors that contributed to in-school classroom disruptions. Although the researcher was involved in an administrative role in regular school and district meetings where behavioral programs were discussed and various performance measures were presented, the researcher's supervisory role had no direct involvement with implementing and managing these behavioral programs. The researcher worked directly with the District Office to gather the quantitative data needed to create

the attendance, behavior, and achievement data summaries needed to prepare the figures shown to participant teachers during the interviews.

Data Collection and Instruments

Data gathering for case study approach was drawn from multiple sources to better understand the phenomenon of interest (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; see also Branney & Priego-Hernández, 2018), specifically from available ex post facto district documents and records for the study site. Gathering both quantitative and qualitative information allowed for triangulation of the perceived student outcomes with the measured student outcomes, thereby adding credibility to the study (Lin, 2018). As such, previously compiled data was first gathered and organized for comparative purposes, after which in-depth qualitative interviews were conducted to explore the same phenomenon from the perspectives of teachers who implemented and managed the activities from which the ex post facto data were accumulated (Elman et al., 2016).

Data for this study came from to different sources. In a sequential technique, quantitative information is gathered initially followed by qualitative ones (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Lin, 2018). First, ex post facto data from 2012 to 2020 available to the researcher were gathered from generalized school reports and database files for attendance, reported behavioral incidents, and student achievement (Elman et al., 2016). Second, the researcher conducted semi-structured in-depth interviews with teachers meeting the including criteria (Glense, 2018) of having taught at the school for 4 or more years at the school, having taught for at least 2 full years using *both* student behavioral programs used during between 2012 and 2020. As indicated in the research design and approach section, the case interviews adopted a participant-selection variant of the sequential explanatory design. The variant will then be used due to the increased focus on

qualitatively exploring the phenomenon (Bowen et al., 2017).

Ex Post Facto Quantitative Data Gathering

The researcher obtained district approval to review existing ex post facto data that included the following: (a) generalized and deindividualized database information for the school that were previously gathered and archived; and (b) deindividualized summary records for school attendance, student academic performance, behavioral incident reports; and other administrative reports and records maintained for the school for the academic years 2012 through 2020. From these available sources, the researcher selected appropriate and relevant data to answer the research questions concerning attendance, student academic performance, and behavioral incidents. This additional step was needed because ex post facto data alone might unintentionally be inaccurate or incomplete (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). For example, measures for attendance might be affected by major storms, widespread contagious or persistent diseases, or local community tragedies or unusual community events.

Information gathered was compiled and organized by available subgroups, such as grade level or subject matter, to supplement total school summary data. The researcher accessed these data as they existed in current and archived reports and datafiles before any data manipulation or analysis. Because these data sources were created, formatted, and maintained independently of each other, data gathering included two steps: Quantitative data was organized using Microsoft Excel as preparation for the data analysis and were standardized to create the appropriate per capita or percentage data that were directly comparable between different with different numbers of students in each year contributing to the measures (Elman et al., 2016). As such, (a) attendance data were generalized as unexcused absences per student per year, (b) behavioral data were

generalized as behavior incidents per 100 students per year, and (c) achievement data were generalized by using weighted measures of percentage for each year based upon numbers of students from each grade level taking standardized tests into comparable overall school percentages for that year. Ex post facto data gathered from the District Office were then prepared as supplements to the Interview Discussion Guide as a series of figures (see Appendix C), which the researcher used as visual aids with several of the last questions in the interview.

Qualitative Interview Discussion Guide

In-depth, semi-structured interviews designed for qualitative investigations (Creswell & Creswell, 2017; Deterding, & Waters, 2021) were conducted with teachers who meet the selection criteria and who were selected from the pool of willing participants. These interview discussions sought to elicit open and honest responses from participants about their lived experiences (Creswell and Poth, 2018) with both schoolwide classroom student behavioral programs implemented separated during the academic years 2012 through 2020. The first part and majority of the discussion guide were unaided, open-ended questions designed to encourage participants to give free and full responses without providing any other stimuli or informational factors, other than the discussion guide questions and follow-up probing inquires. This approach facilitated full participant discussions based solely on their own experiences before introducing ex post facto data for explanation, comparison, and discussion.

Once teachers had shared their individual experiences and insights from managing both programs (without having provided any actual measures of each program to influence their responses), teachers were then be asked to review and respond to aggregated student measures for (a) attendance, (b) behavioral incidents and resulting

disciplinary actions, and (c) measures of overall student academic trends compiled over each program's implementation timeframe. This approach sought to understand areas of agreement or difference between teacher perceptions of both program's success compared with ex post facto contemporaneous data on student behaviors and academic performance.

A discussion guide (Appendix A) for the in-depth interviews of participants was created with the help and suggestions of both formative and summative panels of experts (Appendix B) to help ensure that the questions, order, and format were (a) appropriate, (b) complete, (c) relevant, and (d) valid for conducting the interviews of teachers to gather information most likely to help answer the study research questions. The formative and summative panel members included individuals with expertise in communications, research, question construction, school behavioral programs, and education. Panel members added insights and knowledge from various fields that assisted the researcher in developing and revising the interview discussion guide. Issues and concerns raised included wording, understandability, clarity, question order, suggestions for probing and follow-up questions, and interview length. Through discussions and iterative reviews, these issues were all satisfactorily addressed, resulting in the final discussion guide in Appendix A.

Procedures

After IRB approval from Nova Southeastern University. The researcher followed the following procedures to gather quantitative and qualitative interview data to help answer the research questions. There were eight procedural steps for this research.

Step 1 was the gathering, compiling, and proof checking of ex post facto data from organizational records and databases from the District Office. Specifically gathering

summary information that included data from (a) student behavior incident reports, (b) attendance records, and (c) student achievement data for the academic school years 2012 to 2020. All data gathered was deindividualized, so the researcher did not need to redact or mask any data to hide any identifying information. These data were then entered as raw numbers as originally recorded Excel worksheets, reproducing the data for each measure as formatted in the original reports before being structured, organized, and analyzed by the researcher. Most data were already annualized and combined as a whole-school measure; however, some data required combining grade levels and measures into weighted whole-school data for each academic year.

In Step 2, the researcher completed a formal data analysis for the final report and a data summary series of figures (Appendix C) that were shown to interview participants at the end of the interviews as stimuli to elicit their reactions, comments, and explanations

For Step 3, the researcher sent a solicitation email to all available 26 teachers who met the inclusion criteria, requesting their participation in the study in-depth interviews. Willing participants who responded to the email were invited to participate through a follow-up phone call with an explanation of (a) the study, its objectives, and what was required of participants; (b) how the interviews would be conducted and voice recorded; and (c) how the information would be handled, retained, kept anonymous, and remain confidential for the study and the final report.

In Step 4, the researcher created a potential pool of willing teachers interested in and willing to participate in the study. Each was assigned a random letter from the alphabet, such a “W” and kept in a pool of potential participants until all potential teacher participants were contacted and had either expressed an interested to participate or

declined to participate in the study or respond to the researcher. Each scheduled participant was then emailed a copy of the informed consent form for their review. At the same time each interview was scheduled, the researcher answered any questions from each participant candidate. Based upon each participant's needs and convenience, all interviews were conducted electronically through private Zoom sessions. Interviews were scheduled a minimum of 2 days after participants received the informed consent form, thereby allowing potential participants sufficient time to consider what is expected of them in the study without undue time pressures. Signed participant consent forms were received by the researcher before the scheduled interview began. From the 10 participants contacted teachers who were willing to participate in study, only eight final participants were scheduled for the interview, with all eight completing the interviews.

In Step 5, the researcher conducted scheduled interviews with all selected participants, using the interview discussion guide in Appendix A. During audio-recorded the interviews, the researcher also took quick notes about responses to identify emotions or other areas needing researcher comments or explanations after the interviews. These notes along with the researcher's general reactions were the compiled in the researcher's journal immediately after each interview to document the researcher's reactions and insights elaborating upon or explaining noteworthy elements of the interview deemed important to assist with the subsequent data analysis process. The interviews lasted 90 minutes or less. No additional time was needed for follow-up interviews. All interviews were conducted through private Zoom sessions and were audio recorded securely with the data automatically being transcribed using the Zoom application into a Word document. All transcribed interviews were then checked by the researcher against the original recordings for completeness and accuracy.

Step 6 allowed the researcher to validate the interview transcripts with each participant and prepare the transcripts for data analysis. Once each interview was completed, transcribed, and checked for accuracy with the original recording, the researcher determined that no additional follow-up interviews were needed to obtain additional information essential to clarify or understand better the transcribed responses. When the researcher was satisfied with the proofed transcripts, each participant received a copy for their review as a member-checking step. After those participants resolved any ambiguities, misstatements, or incorrect information, they were thanked for their help in the study and told that no additional information or contacts were needed. For those participants who found the original file sent them to be both accurate and complete, the participants sent an email to the research stating that no changes were needed, and the researcher then thanked for their help in the study and told them that no additional information or contacts were needed. All returned or approved interview transcripts were then saved as Microsoft Word documents identified by the random participant identifier and prepared for researcher review (Verleye, 2019).

Each step of the process was documented in the researchers interview journal notes as an audit trail of each step in the transcription process (Alam, 2021), noting changes made with each transcript version retained in the study files. Because all interviews were completed with one attempt and transcripts were also accurate and complete, no follow-up interviews were needed. The interview transcripts with each version after corrections or changes, audio recordings, and associated researcher journal notes for each participant was downloaded to an external flash storage device to be retained and secured by the researcher for 3 years before they will be destroyed by the researcher.

Step 7 was the data analysis portion of the research of each final interview transcript. In addition, the researcher's contemporaneous interview notes were also consulted as described in the data analysis section.

Step 8 was the final preparation of the data analysis into findings and conclusions that were developed into Chapters 4 and 5 of the final report. To ensure more objectivity and minimize bias of this final report, the researcher sought input and suggestions from appropriate members of the formative and summative panels in evaluating the quality, justification and validity of the preliminary research findings and conclusions based upon the data gathered and analyzed. These interactions helped the researcher justify and confirm the research findings and reported outcomes. All intermediate and final documents or research notes prepared by the researcher throughout each step in the research process and the audit trail were consulted to ensure unintended research biases did not unduly influence the research results, while also justifying that the findings and conclusions made were supported by the data, participant comments, or the researcher's journal entries.

Data Analysis

There were two parts to the data analysis for this case study: (a) a quantitative data descriptive reviews from ex post facto data sources taken from school records and (b) a qualitative analysis of in-depth interview transcripts of participating teachers. These analyses helped the researcher answer the following Central Research Question and supporting five sub-questions for this case study.

Central Research Question. What are teachers' perspectives of their experiences with students in their classrooms while using each implementation of the two classroom management programs?

Sub-question 1. Based upon teacher experiences, what are the benefits and detriments of using classroom management programs with their teaching lessons and with their interactions with students?

Sub-question 2. What are the experiences of teachers in implementing both classroom management programs and with how each program influenced student behaviors and attendance?

Sub-question 3. What are the experiences of teachers in implementing both classroom management programs and with how each program influenced student learning and learning outcomes?

Sub-question 4. How do teacher perceptions of how the two classroom management program implementations affected student trends for attendance, disciplinary incidents, and measures of student learning throughout the years covering each classroom management program's implementation when compared with district reports of the same measures for the same periods?

Sub-question 5. Based upon their own experiences, what changes or recommendations would teachers make that might improve classroom management programs to improve classroom learning experiences and student learning outcomes?

Ex Post Facto Data Analysis

Once all ex post facto data were prepared into consistent annualized formats, they were prepared into time-series trendline figures for analysis and review, enabling the researcher to identify any trends over the 2012–2020 academic years for comparative similarities and differences (Gershenson, 2016). This exploratory data analysis did not assume any statistical hypotheses, but they were used by the researcher as a basis for qualitative review and interpretation (Creswell & Poth, 2018). The researcher-used these

descriptive measures as visual materials shown to the participants during the interviews (Appendix C).

Qualitative Analysis of In-Depth Teacher Interviews

This research focused on the analysis of the in-depth interview transcripts with teachers who taught at the school during both classroom management behavioral program implementations. Using semi-structured interviews allowed researchers to explore and discuss in detail the study phenomenon with participants based upon their lived experiences (Lin, 2018).

The researcher used the VSAIEEDC model for the data analysis of the final interview transcripts. This model was first created by Caelli et al. in 2003 and designed for use with all qualitative research inquiry approaches to add rigor to the analysis, while being simple and easy to use effectively by most researchers. Subsequent review by Kennedy (2016) validated the usefulness of this generic inquiry model for qualitative data analysis. Kennedy found that this model worked well with inductive, deductive, and combined analysis forms. By structuring the analysis with this model, the researcher increases trustworthiness, reduces researcher biases, and adds a rigorous and repeatable structure for reviewing multiple files with the same levels of precision and coding among multiple transcripts (Kennedy, 2016).

The VSAIEEDC model uses seven sequential steps for conducting the data analysis (Kennedy, 2016). The first step examines *variation* among different participants to assess the levels of similarity and difference that exist among all participants. The second step explores the levels of *specificity* among participants. The third step applies the process of *abstraction* to the analysis by assigning labels or coding to terms, phrases, and themes to the qualitative information. Steps four and five add both internal and

external *verification* assessments to the data analysis through "self-journaling throughout the process to ensure that researcher bias does not infer preconceived meanings to emerging patterns, member checking, theoretical and thematic analysis. . . word frequency analysis and co-occurrence analysis between themes" (Kennedy, p. 1375). Step six employs *demonstration* to ensure that the themes and patterns are consistent with current or acceptable ways of applying the information to current practices. The seventh step, *conclusion*, is reached when further abstraction produces no additional insights, patterns, or themes that add value to the synthesis.

The researcher approached the data analysis through multiple interactions of transcript reviews, each examining different patterns and emerging themes for potential meaning and application value (Srivastava & Hopwood, 2009). To facilitate this process, the researcher identified and shaped coding elements emerging from the transcript reviews by cumulating related comments under specific and descriptive codes as products of the data analysis (Alam, 2021; Deterding, & Waters, 2021). This process used included flexible coding (Deterding, & Waters, 2021) that used codes as they were developed, merged, split, or redefined to represent more accurate, robust, or descriptive categorizations of the data. To assist with this process, the researcher used a CAQDAS or "computer-assisted qualitative data analysis software" (Paulus & Lester, 2016, p. 405) to identify common phrases, terms, and themes expressed by interview participants. The cloud-based application selected was Delve (Delve, n.d.), which is an effective qualitative coding analysis tool for document or transcript analysis to derive relevant themes based upon word usage and theme development (Sage Ocean, 2020).

The first iteration series of reviews in the researcher's data analysis began with the final review and preparation of each interview final transcript. Based upon the

researcher's iterative assessment reviews of each transcript's contents, a subjective summary of the key points was prepared and added to the researcher's journal notes. These initial evaluations identified key points and conclusions made after examining the transcript seen at once time and in its entirety. The second analysis iteration series examined the comments by each interview question from all participants but in a random participant order for each question. This allowed the content and context of each interview question to be seen individually and in isolated ways that limit comments and analysis to each specific interview question with its associated probing and follow-up questions. Once both iteration series reviews were completed and the researcher's journal notes reviewed and documented, the researcher then used the Delve software application to explore the transcripts until saturation or data exhaustion was reached. From these analyses themes and issues were developed and prepared, the researcher used the results to answer the Central Research Question by answering each five supporting sub-questions based upon the transcript analysis.

Ethical Considerations

Ethical considerations are vital parts of research to ensure and maintain the integrity of any study (Creswell & Creswell, 2018; Khan, 2016). Protocols of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) will ensure the study conducted by the researcher protect respondent rights throughout all parts of the research process. Participants were recruited without pressure, had the research process and their expectations explained to them in advance, understood any risks involved, and will give their informed and voluntary consent (Klamer et al., 2017). All correspondence and communications with participants were direct, professional, straightforward, and conformed to predetermined IRB guidelines and approved protocols. There was no deceptive data and misleading

portrayal of the discoveries of the essential information. Prior to carrying out the interviews, each participant was provided with a consent form that describes the purpose of the study, describes how the interview will be audiotaped and transcribed, reinforcing how interview transcripts have had identifying information was removed or replaced with generic terms (such as “teacher” or “student”), stating that interviews are is voluntary, and emphasizing that participants can choose to not answer any question asked or can end their participation in the study at any time (Nowell et al., 2017). The researcher ensured respect and dignity for each participant through all stages of their recruitment and participation. The researcher ensured that his prior experiences or beliefs with the research topic was not used to agree with or disagree with participant responses, nor was there any attempt to influence or direct participant responses during any part of the research process (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Trustworthiness

Validity and reliability are concepts used by researchers to remain alert to evaluating the quality, consistency, and rigor of research methods used throughout the study (Glense, 2016). Member checking will be used to validate information gathered from interviews and transcripts before that information is formally evaluated by the researcher (Busetto et al., 2020). This checking process identified when participants might have misspoken and allows participants for adding explanatory information and to correct mistakes or misleading comments (Khan, 2016). Notes were taken during interviews and each stage of the research and data analysis process to record impressions, intentions, researcher thinking, and decision making to document researcher interactions with participants, data, or findings, and to review how observations and insights might have influenced the course of this qualitative study (Baškarada, 2014). Subjecting the

research findings to the scrutiny of other people, such as formative and summative expert panels, will be vital to ensuring higher levels of suitability and validity to study findings and interpretations (Klamer et al., 2017).

Potential Research Bias

The researcher has a professional history of working with students in various school settings, something that might influence research design and results interpretations. For this reason, formative and summative panels was created to help with interview question formulation and validation (Appendix B). These individuals will also be used as resources to improve the quality of research interpretation made after research results are gathered. Another potential research bias is confirmation bias, which occurs when a belief or hypothesis is formed by a researcher's previously held beliefs (Klamer et al., 2017) or by avoiding contradictory information (Khan, 2016). This bias can be mitigated by using a structured process for reviewing and compiling data gathered that breaks the information gathered down into smaller elements that can be more objectively assessed and interpreted while using a validated method of data analysis and inspection (Kennedy, 2018).

Limitations

Several limitations, restrictions, or constraints may affect outcomes from this study. Because ex post facto data were controlled, gathered, and prepared by others, the researcher without other contemporaneous information to the contrary must consider the data to be accurate and a reflection actual behaviors, academic performance, or results for which the measures were intended and that such measures were consistently gathered and recorded (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Goodman-Scott et al., 2021). Given that this is a bounded case study, the information available is limited to those participants involved during the

academic years chosen and their availability and willingness to participate in the study (Creswell & Poth, 2017; Gregory, 2020). Time constraints are always a limitation factor because of inevitable conflicts between researcher and participant schedules and availability (Khan, 2016; Klamer et al., 2017). Lived-experience recall can be influenced by unintentional confirmation biases or memory issues, especially when dealing with longer time periods required for the interviews (Mechera-Ostrovsky & Gluth, 2018). The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced several known and unknown challenges, including the following areas: Whether the effects of isolation, schedule changes, and remote course delivery during the pandemic could potentially influence teacher perceptions of the programs being studied and student behaviors measured. The pandemic might also have affected timely data reporting within the school system and influence whether otherwise qualified teachers choose to participate study interviews.

Chapter 4: Findings

Introduction

This section of the research analyzes and codifies qualitative data to distinguish the impact of school-based programs on pre-defined measures comprising attendance, behavioral events, and academic performance based upon participating teacher's perceptions of how the programs worked. In this vein, this thematic analysis was based on interviews conducted with experienced educators analyzed how effective different school-based programs—Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) when applied alone and Capturing Kids' Hearts (CKH) and Multi-Tiered System of Supports (MTSS) when applied jointly—were on influencing attendance, student behavior, and learning outcomes among all students collectively. It answered a broad set of research questions that assessed (a) how aggregated measures for students compared across classroom management programs; (b) what experiences teachers had with student behaviors in each program; (c) what teachers' experiences were regarding school-based programs' impact on student learning; and (d) what additional considerations might have affected student academic, behavior, and academic measures.

Participants and Perspectives

Eight teachers at the K-12 school study site participated in the in-depth interviews. As background information, the following participant information is given as context for both individual and overall teacher experiences and program perspectives.

Participant B has more than five years of teaching experience. This teacher earned Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees and has taught all elementary school subjects at several elementary grade levels. This teacher felt that classroom management and behavioral programs were essential to effective teaching and was enthusiastic about

how both CKH and MTSS programs and believed that every school could benefit by applying program principles in every class.

Participant D has more than 10 years of teaching experience, has earned a Bachelor of Arts degree with and emphasis in Physical Education, and has taught Physical Education courses in all middle school and high school grades. This teacher felt that there was no perfect classroom management or behavioral management program. However, when applied consistently, these programs could benefit both teachers and students in all classroom situations. Yet, these programs should not be seen as an end in themselves, but they are only tools that teachers can use to help them manage their individual classes better.

Participant F has more than 25 years of experience teaching various English Language Arts courses at middle school and high school grade levels. This teacher earned Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Science degrees. This teacher believed that classroom management or behavioral programs were “just another thing added to my plate,” and “as teachers, we should know how important our jobs are and not be told how to control our classes.”

Participant H has more than 25 of teaching experience, has both Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degree, and has taught Mathematics in several middle school and high school grade levels. When considering classroom management or behavioral programs, this teacher felt that MTSS was better than PBIS, but CKH should be combined with any classroom management or behavioral programs as an essential supplement.

Participant J has more than 10 years and of teaching experience, has earned both Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees, and has taught several different English

Language Arts courses at middle school and high school grade levels. When summarizing the benefits of classroom management or behavioral programs, this teacher believed teachers needed ongoing training in how to manage courses better and said, "MTSS and CKH are a no brainer for me."

Participant L has more than five years of teaching experience, has earned both Bachelor of Arts and Master of Science degrees, and has taught Mathematics in several elementary and middle school grades. This teacher saw the benefits of using any classroom management or behavioral program but felt that going back to using PBIS alone would be a mistake.

Participant N has more than 25 years of teaching experience, has earned both Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Science degrees, and has taught a wide variety of courses across several content areas in middle school and high school grades. This teacher believed that classroom management or behavioral programs worked best when they included parents of all students in the process, which was why this participant felt that MTSS and CKH joint implementation worked better than the PBIS-alone implementation because it included parents.

Participant P had more than 25 years of teaching experience, has earned Bachelor of Arts, Master of Science, and Doctor of Education degrees, and has taught Mathematics at the high school level. This teacher saw classroom management or behavioral programs as a progressive long-term process, such that that PBIS was a foundational resource upon which to build, while other programs and resources were created based upon previous program deficiencies.

Thematic Analysis

As a thematic analysis, this study engaged qualitative data collection methods.

The data collection method placed experienced (certified) educators in the participant case study group and then applied one-on-one interview sessions that gradually approached the open-ended interview discussion questions, while collecting attitudes, opinions, and reviews from the participant's responses to questions. The study designed question sets that assessed these individuals' views regarding three school-based programs implemented sequentially: the PBIS program implemented alone first with both MTSS and CKH programs implemented jointly and replacing PBIS. This review explored teacher's lived experiences of their using these programs in their classrooms, examining the practical effectiveness of each program and each teacher's perspectives of the strengths and weaknesses of each program and how the programs affected student attendance, behaviors, and learning experiences.

This section identifies the major themes developed based upon frequency used and commonality among participant question responses. Through thematic analysis three major themes were identified or from analysis of the collected data through interviews and discussions: (a) student discipline issues and (b) program effectiveness and implementation issues.

Theme 1: Students Discipline Issues

Trending Discipline Issues. Discipline issues are ubiquitous and persistent among all teacher participants and seem to begin anew among every new group of students when classes begin each year or reemerge again with new semesters. Several participants suggested a repeating cycle, where even though students might be different the same student misbehaviors always seemed to reappear each year. Although there was general agreement among participants of what inappropriate behaviors were, it was evident that which behaviors affected teachers most varied widely, such that the same

student behaviors might be ignored by some teachers, while other teachers reacted immediately to every observed misbehavior even if it did not create disruptions in the learning activities. The generally agreed-upon categories of inappropriate behaviors were clearly defined areas, often considered as major incidents, such as (a) fighting, (b) bullying, (c) disrespecting others, (d) arguing with teachers or students, (e) using threatening or offensive language to provoke others, (f) violating the rights of others, or (g) being disrespectful to or damaging school property and materials or the personal property of others. However, less minor incidents—such as (a) eye-rolling or other reactive facial expressions, (b) not paying attention or becoming distracted, (c) making jokes or wisecracks, or (d) eating in class—were often perceived and handled differently among participants. A feeling more than one teacher noted is best summarized by this comment, "Teachers cannot be expected to keep a list of and react to everything that students must or should not do. We'd never get any teaching done."

For example, Participant B identified the top disciplinary issue as, "Cell phones! The use of cell phones is uncontrollable. Students don't want to be separated from their cell phones." Mobile phone and electronic device use in class was identified as the most frequently encountered problems teachers dealt with in classes. One in which teachers felt was out of control because no single school policy seemed to make a difference. Although parents were identified as having a major role in preventing device use and misuse by students, teachers suggested than may parents had no idea what devices their child had, brought to school, or kept at school. Other hot-button issues teachers raised were how students dressed, noting how the school's dress code and uniform policies still needed work. Participant D gave a list of four issues: "simple disrespect… profanity… tardies… vandalization, doing trash on the campus, not relating your school with your

community, because that's all related." As such, most teachers saw that many classroom behaviors and incidents were symptomatic of larger neighborhood and community issues that manifested themselves in classes but had other origins and motivations, thereby creating nearly impossible challenges for teachers.

Among the more serious discipline issues was that of disrespect. Disrespect was not only directed at students, but too often directed at teachers. This issue concerned all teachers who had experienced it directly, who had observed it directed against other teachers, or feared that it might happen to them. Most of teacher responses with disrespect identified the issue as having a full range of disrespectful behaviors from one of annoyance to one of the most stinging and serious problems at school. Although some disrespectful behaviors are less threatening and often seen as passive-aggressive behaviors, teachers agreed that less-threatening behaviors often can over time become more serious incidents. Some examples of less-threatening teacher disrespect reported was by Participant L, where student would come to class and "before settling down they want to go to the restroom." Were this a one-time or occasional need, it might not be an issue, but when it becomes an escape strategy repeatedly to avoid part of class, then it becomes a behaviors issue requiring quick yet kind intervention; otherwise, can create a scene as a power struggle with the teacher, as Participant F observed, "Defying any of your rules, your regulations is just total defiance. They don't want to listen." Most teachers felt that challenges to authority were warning signs of larger issues and required immediate consultation will school administrators, while a few teachers felt that it was caused primarily by a lack of student motivation but still needed immediate attention.

Student disrespect was an issue that some teachers reported was the reasons many of their colleagues left the teaching profession and must not be ignored to avoid future

consequences. Participant D said that “blatant disrespect to teacher’s authority” created the most serious issues in classrooms because teachers had to respond immediately, something that interrupted teaching, especially when the disruption included, “cursing the teacher… [or] threatening the teacher.” However, Participant P added that it was not just swearing because teachers could be disrespected “from a child using common language.” Disrespect for teachers also easily escalated into instances of willful disobedience where teachers reported challenging classroom disruptions in classrooms from students refusing to follow teacher instructions, something teachers saw as a direct threat to teacher leadership authority. One reason why this issue is more serious is that it can easily escalate because it is extremely difficult for teachers to remain emotionally neutral when being directly and personally challenged or threatened. Once consequence of teachers being disobeyed, threatened, or disrespected is how other students in the class also feel with such disruptions because their classroom learning environment is no longer safe. Fortunately, teachers reported that these situations, although serious, and have become less frequent or less intense since the most recent classroom management programs (MTSS and CKH) have been implemented because they focused more on prevention, rather than focusing only on the disruptive student.

Time Investment by Teachers. Teachers reported that maintaining discipline in the class was an uphill task, something which seems to require more time, energy, motivation, and willpower to bring into control. Teachers interviewed who had more than 10 years teaching experience suggested that maintaining discipline in their classes had been more challenging before District interventions of PBIS and the combination of MTSS and CKH. As noted earlier, teachers felt the repeating annual cycles with new student often seem

counterproductive because once they had learned how to deal with the prior year's students, they now had to begin again. Teachers having more than 25 years teaching experience felt that students today were more disruptive now than when they began their teaching, noting how media influences had modeled disruptive behaviors because of cultural shifts that often sensationalized or glamorized defiance as a badge of power.

Teachers highlighted their concern that there was no specific time duration for solving discipline issues and the long shadow of disruptive incidents often stretched much longer than they wished. Many teachers felt that having a disruption in an earlier class period could ruin the whole day by draining teacher enthusiasm for teaching that day. All teachers reported that losing control in a class was a demotivator, taking its toll on affected teachers. Some of the teachers reported being able to control the disruptive issues within few minutes, while others reported taking weeks for adjustment. As such, many teachers felt than they needed help with developing greater resilience to what they perceived as classroom failures, often taking these conflicts personally.

In contrast, some teachers noted that they chose to refer problems to designated school administrators as a way of offloading the issue to others to impose rules and regulations by implementing school disciplinary remediations, so they could get back to teaching. Although this approach gave those teachers more immediate relief, it often removed them from finding effective solutions for the students involved. Some teachers reported using preemptive strategies, such as changing class seating arrangements when they saw an uptick in minor incidents (reported or not) in a specific class, while other teachers used seating

arrangements only after major disruptive events as a reactive remedy to signal a change and a fresh start. This approach seemed to help both groups of teachers change the learning environment by splitting up students who were creating or contributing to behavioral incidents, thereby helping teachers restore a more productive learning environment. Teachers having more than 10 years teaching experience expressed appreciation for having schoolwide classroom management or behavioral programs because these initiatives helped create opportunities for teachers to share ways to solve recurring problems. Teachers also reported that having a schoolwide program helped them work with other teachers who shared disruptive students to find common solutions. As many teachers reported, just knowing that other teachers were dealing with similar issues or the same students helped increase the speed of finding solutions, while also reducing teacher stress and recovery times after behavioral incidents.

Effects of Having No Disruptions on Learning. When participants considered what might happen if there were no classroom disruptions, reactions varied from "That will never happen" to expressions like, "That would be perfect… an awesome setup for effective learning and teaching," or "It would be a great thing if there were no issues, no discipline problems." Both ends of teacher responses suggested that a class without disruptions although desirable was unlikely or even desirable, as being too utopian or even totalitarian. As Participant H responded, "That's a loaded question because sometimes when there aren't any disruptions or anything like that, you wonder if the complexity of the learning is really going on." Some teachers thought that school environment without class disruptions might be possible at private schools where the rules were stricter and where parents paid hefty sums for their children to attend,

automatically motivating parents to take more responsibility for how their children acted in school. All teachers felt that disruptive-free classes were not possible in public schools, they lamented that perceived fact. As Participant P explored the possibility and responded, “If everybody came to learn, I think… you could just really teach and focus on what the student were learning.” All teachers agreed that learning increases when there are no disruptions in a class and hoped that they could have more days without behavioral incidents disrupting their classes. Teachers gave examples of how classes with fewer disruptions were more effective in generating better student learning experiences and outcomes, and most felt that schoolwide behavioral management and classroom management programs had made a difference. However, Participant T explained that disruption-free classes alone would probably not have meaningful results without also having improved teacher effectiveness and increased student involvement, but then agreed that the possibility of better teaching and higher levels of student involvement were much less likely to happen in classes having more behavioral incidents. Participant B said, “I mean a lot of learning would happen. You could get a lot more weekly out of your children,” while Participant L believed that student “learning and their achievement levels would improve if there were no disruptions and no discipline problems.”

Classroom Discipline: Comparing Past and Present. When comparing student behaviors of the past (i.e., 10 or more years ago) with present student behaviors, teachers had mixed perspectives. Some participants believed past students were more disruptive than were present students. As one participant said, “When I think of my current students versus my past students, I think today’s students have more leeway or more control of things in their lives.” However, when considering cultural or expected standards of behavior, the same participant discussed the issue of respect, “Kids in the past, I think,

had more respect. They had more respect for themselves, other students, their parents, and their teachers." This suggests that in the context of class environment and maintenance of discipline, moral values of the past were perceived to be higher and stricter. For example, minor actions of misbehavior were considered more serious and dealt with more harshly. In contrast, today's values, morals, and norms are weaker, such that goalposts have been moved, making previously unacceptable things now acceptable. This shift in student mindsets as identified by teachers makes it appear to many teachers that past students were more obedient to teachers and school rules when compared to present students. For example, Participant J said, "Behaviors once considered major incidents 10 years ago are now considered as only minor infractions to be handled immediately in the classroom." Participant F: "Today's kids aren't like [kids 10 years ago]. Teachers must go above and beyond just to get that respect from today's students."

Many teachers felt that previous educational systems were also much stricter, such that student misconduct was rarely tolerated and penalties in the form of expulsion and removal from schools were much more commonplace. Most teachers believed that current public school seemed far more accommodating and now emphasize keeping students at all costs rather than removing them. This new approach, most teachers think has changed student perceptions of acceptable conduct because their fear of punishment has been nullified. As one teacher said, "It's more about keeping the kids in school. Ten years ago, you saw more expulsions, more alternative schools, and more kids sent to alternative schools." Policies now favor in class discipline and resolution, and teachers are encouraged to avoid referring students to the office. There was no consensus among participants whether this new approach to classroom-based behavioral solutions was more effective in helping students either behave better or learn better. Many teachers did,

however, think the older pre-PBIS approaches were not effective because it was too easy for a first-time misbehaving student with a minor infraction to be labeled, become a repeat offender, move quickly through the steps of progressive discipline, and then be shown the door.

Theme 2: Program Effectiveness and Implementation Issues

Practicality and Effectiveness. Teachers reported that PBIS was an effective system that created structure, controls, and introduced a common language among teachers, staff, and administrators to monitor and supervise the behaviors of students at the study site school. Teachers explained how PBIS seen as innovative approach as a behavioral management system among misbehaving students. During the initial and formative stages of program implementation, the program created a significant learning curve among those trying to meet program requirements while also meeting other assigned duties as teachers, staff, and administrators. Although the original implementation, as reported by teachers was planned as a 1-year event, the programs was not fully functional until the end of the second academic year. Throughout the initial implementation years, teachers felt that almost all participants and most students believed PBIS be a major improvement over previous behavioral modification programs and an effective system in managing student behaviors. Overall initial reports kept during the first years indicated PBIS seemed to have worked quite well and was effective reducing overall behavioral incident reports. The last 4 years of PBIS implementation were seen as generally good years for the programs because there were no surprises and student behaviors appeared to have sustained levels of lower student behavioral incident reports with fewer expulsions. As Participant D described, “PBIS then worked well,” but noted that people did not like the name because it was too long, while the abbreviation was

often made fun of by students. Participant P felt that "PBIS… was effective because we used something that focused on the problem in the beginning and had rewards." The system seemed workable from the perspectives of all teachers, although the additional work expected by during each class did reduce the time available for instruction, while also creating additional paperwork for teachers. Some participants suggested that other teachers at the school found the extra work required to manage the program difficult to maintain. Three participants told of how several teachers at the school seemed to be going through the motions of program compliance while not trying harder to make PBIS more effective. Some participants felt the program had raised the bar by improving reported behaviors but suggested that incident reports might have been underreported to meet state expectations. One benefit of PBIS was that many new teachers had received instruction about the program in their education and teacher certification process, something that reportedly helped with program compliance.

Although PBIS was the program of the school, the district, and the state, most teachers expected the program would contribute to any future improvements in student behaviors. Most teachers at the school accepted PBIS as the status quo program that had done its job. In 2012, when MTSS and CKH programs replaced PBIS at the school, teachers began seeing major weaknesses in the PBIS program. True, it was an improvement over pre-PBIS behavioral modification programs it only focused on kids having behavioral troubles after the fact, rather than helping all students understand how to use and benefit improved behaviors. Participant J, who saw the benefit of PBIS when introduced, retrospectively felt that "The problem I had with PBIS was it gave more attention to your troubled kids instead of kids that was doing the right things."

Although most teachers reported that they were enthusiastic about moving from

PBIS to classroom management programs that included MTSS and CKH because it focused on all students equally, Participant B readily admitted initially not using the new programs because, "I didn't use it, really. I didn't really see the need because… I thought I had good relationships with my kids already." In comparison to PBIS, most teachers found the combined MTSS and CKH programs a source of relation building with their students in a positive manner. When teachers saw how they could implement the program as part of their normal classroom management and teaching activities, teachers understood how it would benefit them and their students. For example, Participant B said, "Some of the things that they were saying to do, I'm realizing that I'm already doing that. I don't need you to put a label on it because I do it. I think it's about being a human being. Of course, I care about my kids and things like that." Participant F made similar comments, "I think Capturing Kids' Hearts probably was more effective maybe because it's all about making each kid inclusive to their surroundings." Because MTSS and CKH taught *all* kids how to behave under different situations by creating a more positive environment, teachers reported that it seemed to appeal to most students. Teachers also explained how they saw the program creating a common set of values and expectations for class students by emphasizing what students should do, rather than focusing on what students should not do.

Participant F explained how CKH was helpful to students. "Capturing Kids' Hearts means getting into the mind of each kid, making them feel important, and why they are a part of the school…. It's important because of them." Most teachers felt excited about the practical application of CKH As Participant H described, "Capturing Kids' Hearts is the big thing. When you capture their heart, you got them, you won't have any interventions to do once you capture their heart." In terms of getting compatibility

with the program, initially it was believed that replacing PBIS with CKH might negatively affect teachers and students because of its novel approach with all students and that it might be too difficult to both learn and manage. However, teachers reported it was both easier to learn and a much easier program to maintain. Many teachers reported how the program was intuitively organized on key teaching principles, while also compatible with effective teaching methods. All teachers stated how CKH was much easier to learn, understand, and apply than was PBIS. As such, teachers reported becoming proficient with CKH in from as little as 6 weeks to no more than 6 months. Participant B stated that with each passing year how the program became stronger and more integrated into teacher lesson plans and teaching methods. Participant J said, "Coming back the next year, you've got confidence because you know what's going on. You know what to expect." Participant B explained how after learning CKH, then "Next year you should have it mastered and found many things that you're able to do effectively." Teachers reported having success with MTSS and CKH because they were easier to incorporate into their lesson plans for all student, thereby leveraging instructional time together with shaping or patterning appropriate student behaviors. Teachers almost universally stressed that programs be implemented with integrity throughout the campus, so every student will be doing the same thing when it comes to interventions and what have you. It should be fair and consistent."

Comparative Analysis of PBIS and MTSS & CKH. While comparing both old and newly introduced behavioral programs, teachers agreed that MTSS and CKH are more user friendly, while also being more effective and results producing than was PBIS. Participants emphasized that PBIS was only meant for addressing misbehaving students. Whereas MTSS and CKH programs helped develop student interaction skills, coping

skills, and problem-solving skills within classroom and school learning environments. Furthermore, teachers felt that MTSS and CKS built upon skills developed with PBIS but worked far better because the new programs focused on both students and teachers in building trust and cooperation. Although as Participant P found, “PBIS simply addresses behavior, saying there’s positive behavior intervention system,” while as Participant L explained how MTSS and CKH together “focused more on keeping our students in class and learning.”

One of the striking differences noted among participants between PBIS implemented alone and the combined implementation of MTSS and CKH was the effectiveness of teacher training and ongoing professional development. As several teachers commented, PBIS seemed like it was “imposed” upon them without sufficient training and integration into normal school or teaching practices. As Participant P said, “It seemed like too many of us were doing things before we knew how to do it.” Several participants suggested that teacher efforts focused on enforcement of program activities and rules. Even after teachers became more proficient in program mechanics, some felt that the program was running them rather than teachers running the program. Even professional development training and coaching activities seemed mechanical or even “demotivating” because many teachers felt they were unable to measure up to expectations. However, more than one participant described the implementation of MTSS and CKH as “a game changer” because the combined programs created a shared vision that changed how they could reshape their classroom experiences and reach students more effectively. This “shared vision” that teachers felt from initial program training and follow-up professional development sessions were more engaging to teachers and empowered them to want to make a difference with their students because the program

helped them become better teachers. “I felt like this [MTSS and CKH] was my program because it helped me see how all my students could get better,” Participant N said. The new programs made sense and helped them make classroom management part of what they naturally did each day. Most teachers expressed a sense of excitement and collaboration when learning and first implementing MTSS and CKH.

Results by Research Questions

This section answers the Central Research Question, “What are teachers’ perspectives of their experiences with students in their classrooms while using each implementation of the two classroom management programs?” with information learned from participant interviews to answer each of the research sub-questions sequentially. After answering each sub-question, a summary of findings will consolidate information from the study as an overall answer to the Central Research Question.

Sub-question 1. Based upon teacher experiences, what are the benefits and detriments of using classroom management programs with their teaching lessons and with their interactions with students?

All participants shared their experiences and frustrations of having student disruptions and disciplinary issues in their classrooms and understood well the benefits of minimizing or eliminating these behavioral disruptions to improve student learning. If there were no classroom disruptions or discipline problems with students, participants specifically believed they could not only create a safer and more engaging learning environment, but that they would also be able to increase their opportunity facilitate more in-depth interactions with students and make their lessons more interesting and productive. “That would be perfect day,” Participant B said, “because too often just when key concepts are just beginning to be understood by students, a disruption can destroy

everything students learned that day up to that point. Then, it's all back to ground zero to start over again and before the bell rings. Playing catch up is not the way to teach. To most teachers, disruption-free days are miracles, just like "seeing a unicorn."

The goal teachers explained is minimizing "unplanned interruptions" by reshaping how they and students can work together better by setting and agreeing to a set of classroom expectations that limit or prevent minor issues from escalating into larger issues and conflicts. Teachers shared how they have learned how to redirect off-topic questions or comments quickly back to the lesson by acknowledging the student's participation positively, while ignoring or restating the interruption calmly and reinforcing learning objectives. Good classroom management practice, as several teachers shared, was not stopping the learning, doing something different, and then restarting the lesson plan. Instead, as one teacher shared, it was learning how to teach seamlessly by keeping the lesson flowing, like many good parents do with a look, gesture, or preplanned solution. For example, creating or having an appropriate bathroom policy in place that is easily used and approved by teachers can avoid an untimely interruption that distracts from the lesson. As one participant shared, "Bathroom emergencies do come up. But they don't need to make emergencies for everyone else." Avoiding the loud vocal interruptions to the lesson with nonverbal or preapproved actions of a nod or reaching for a hall pass can minimize giving too much attention to a minor situation, while keeping the lesson going for everyone else. "Seems like a minor thing, but it avoids bigger problems, and it's respectful to students and teachers." Participants shared many similar examples of how good classroom management principles and policies changes how teachers and students can change the classroom environment to make it friendlier and more productive. Learning how to keep little things *little* is one

strategy several teachers shared of how they and other teachers have benefited from classroom management programs that focus on teaching students “the right things to do,” rather than overreacting to unplanned events.

Classroom management or behavioral management programs can get in the way of teaching and learning when mechanics are emphasized over students, such as when programs “become the goal,” as one participant observed, rather than as a tool to help teachers and student reach learning goals. Teachers suggested that one difference between a good program and a bad program was whether the program focused on students and what happened in the classroom or whether it focused on administrative reports and meetings. “If it’s about students, it’s good. When it’s about numbers, not so good,” one participant suggested as reasons why CKH and MTSS programs were more effective.

One challenge identified by participants when considering different classroom management programs was how well selected programs could be applied consistently to the entire school, while also being adaptable to individual classrooms, teachers, and academic subjects. “That was the problem we had with some statewide or district-wide mandated programs. Can’t make one size fit all. Never works,” Participant P said. Every school location, grade, and teacher have different students. For this reason, many teachers preferred to teach advanced, specialized, or elective courses because students were less likely to have behavioral issues and more likely to have higher levels of personal involvement because classes had significantly fewer or no major disruptions. Teachers felt that classroom management programs must allow for adjustments and adaptations by teachers to meet the needs of each class and individual students. However, all teachers agreed that programs must apply to the whole school to provide continuity among all

teachers and classes. One weakness of earlier programs and the original PBIS programs was that it only focused on problem student. As one teacher observed, “that gave the disrupters too much power and too much attention.” Without exception, all participants felt the MTSS and CKH program combination had more benefits and fewer issues because these programs involved all students in every class in the school. It was no longer a program for just a few but instead for everyone. “To me, it took the power, the attention away from troublemakers. That’s a good thing,” one teacher said. Another participant told of how having all students involved also increased parental involvement too was an important benefit to programs success. It also reduced the stigma associated with misbehaving students because MTSS interventions for behavioral issues were perceived by students and parents as less threatening, making them feel less like they were being singled out.

Sub-question 2. What are the experiences of teachers in implementing both classroom management programs and with how each program influenced student behaviors and attendance?

Teachers all agreed that implementing both classroom management programs were useful to the school and for students. Although some teachers were slow to use or recognize programs, all believed that things seemed to get better after programs were implemented. MTSS and CKH were seen by teachers as more user-friendly, effective, and results-producing because they involved all students. Participants reported different average times spent in class dealing with behavioral or classroom management issues with most reporting 5-10% and one reporting 25% of class time lost from planned instructional time. The top five discipline issues effecting classroom management based qualitative analysis were (a) willful disobedience, (b) disrespect towards authority, (c)

failure to follow instructions, (d) student use of profanity, and (e) lack of student preparation. For these and other issues, PBIS only addressed student misbehaviors, while MTSS and CKH focused on shaping and reinforcing positive behaviors of all students and included proactive teacher interventions.

Teachers felt that MTSS and CKS worked better because they were also more sustainable and were more easily adapted into lesson plans and teaching styles. Participant N, believed that PBIS marginally helped with disciplining, allowing some kids to stay on target more often. However, even though "students knew what was required, some just didn't care. For those who didn't care, it just didn't work." Participant J, believed that PBIS was not necessarily bad, just that it gave more attention to troubled kids, while ignoring kids who were doing the right things. Half of the teachers said that when using PBIS, negative student behaviors might be addressed, but they were not ever solved and kept reappearing sometimes in different forms. As one participant commented on PBIS, "It felt like the movie, *Groundhog Day*, a different day, maybe in a different way, but with the same result."

For PBIS, teachers suggested the consequences of misbehaviors were not significant enough to stop inappropriate behaviors. As one teacher reported, "It was stressful for teachers. You knew trouble was there just bubbling away with the attitudes and looks. I was always on guard. You knew things could blow up in your face at any moment." Participant H gave examples of how with PBIS, students mostly learned to lower levels of their disrespect to just under trigger thresholds, where their disrespect for teachers and students continued at a lower level until a student would push the limits to see how far they might go. Often the consequences for frequent offending students did not bother them because they were used to being in trouble, so it didn't matter therefore

the behaviors continued.

Although attendance was something participants dealt with several times a day in their classes teachers had only vague perceptions of attendance trends. As one participant observed, “I look at attendance when I record it and when I grade for it. I only see it by student and in the short term, like when lots of student are sick. Otherwise, I don’t think about it.” When pressed for their thoughts whether attendance under MTSS and CKH was better, worse, or the same than under PBIS, six of eight participants thought it was probably better, but then they added phrases like “marginally” or “but not by much.” The remaining two teachers responded with “about the same.” No teacher suggested attendance was better under PBIS. All teachers did not see attendance as something they could control or something for which they were accountable, other than for when they sent homework home for sick or traveling students, or when they dealt with make-up assignments or tests. Several teachers commented that students who missed class often (whether excused or unexcused) almost always performed worse academically than students with few or no absences. Participant D reveled that truancy and unexcused absences were problems neither program addressed but affected student learning is affected. Depending upon grade level, truancy has an increasing effect on student learning for many students because it sets a pattern of school disengagement preceding dropping out. The example described is that if a kid is not present and learning, then a problem is created regarding student attendance.

When discussing class absences with teachers relating to all forms of suspensions, most teachers remembered having more suspensions under PBIS than they did under MTSS and CKH. However, they did not automatically think of suspensions and attendance in the same way or as being the same issue because suspended students could

not attend class.

Sub-question 3. What are the experiences of teachers in implementing both classroom management programs and with how each program influenced student learning and learning outcomes?

Teachers felt that MTSS and CKH worked better for teachers than did PBIS alone because the joint program also aided teachers in developing their relationships with students, parents, and the community. Participant N shared how several teachers at the school used MTSS and CKH programs to create sets of their classroom procedure, practices, and rules for class orientations each year as class guidelines to review with parents and students. By including parents early in the year helped create a common set of expectation among all students for learning and behavior, thereby creating a shared learning environment among teacher, student, and parent. Teachers explained how MTSS and CKH programs helped improve student learning experiences by identifying acceptable behaviors in class, reducing disruptions, and helping students become more active and responsible learners. One teacher described their guidelines as a form of class citizenship, where students helped each other to ensure that classes were safe, friendly, and respectful areas for learning. Because less time was spent on managing disruption and misbehaviors, teachers were able to spend more time on teaching and working with students. Participants observed a cumulative benefit that came from successive years using the combined MTSS and CKH programs because student program familiarity and experience seemed to build upon the prior year's learning and behavioral gains.

Several participants who taught middle school and high school classes found that student learning also seemed to be improving because of learning and behavioral skills being transferred from one class to the next. One participant shared how both good and

bad behaviors got shared with the next class as good or baggage, thereby affecting later classes with things that occurred in earlier classes that day. As such, having all teachers on the same program provides consistency across the full day's learning experience. Participant J believed, "poor learning happens when there's inconsistency at school." changes. Participant P explained how gaining more time for instruction and engagement because teachers used less time for discipline increases both the quantity and quality of teaching and learning. "You can see it when it happens in class and when you grade student work." The consensus among participants was PBIS was not as effective on either student behavior or student learning as was the combined MTSS and CKH programs.

Sub-question 4. How do teacher perceptions of how the two classroom management program implementations affected student trends for attendance, disciplinary incidents, and measures of student learning throughout the years covering each classroom management program's implementation when compared with district reports of the same measures for the same periods?

Teachers shared their perceptions of how well student did throughout the academic school years from 2012 through 2020 with attendance, behavior incident reports, and academic achievement, specifically discussing teacher perceptions under the first 4 years of PBIS program alone and under the last 4 years while using MTSS and CKH combined programs. These unaided discussions were based solely upon each teacher's perceptions and experiences during the two 4-year periods. Then, teachers were shown district archived data summaries of trendlines from 2012 through 2020 academic years (see Appendix C). Teachers were then asked how their previously stated perceptions compared with the quantitative descriptive measures for the same periods. This thematic analysis of student results under each program implementation using both

unaided and aided responses reviews similarities and differences with any explanatory comments.

Teachers were surprised to see the level of decreases in student incident reports and the increase in academic performance, even though these improvements matched their previously shared perceptions. As one participant shared, “I’m glad the numbers are improving, but that doesn’t mean they shouldn’t be even better.” Attendance measures generally agreed with teacher perceptions, showing only marginal improvements. Although all participants were glad for positive improvements in reduced unexcused absences, one raised a question about whether excused absences should also be measured because excused absences can be easily manipulated by students and parents.

Teachers were surprised by how poorly student measures were for PBIS and how inconsistently they varied over the 4 years shown for attendance, behavioral incident reports, and academic achievement. Participant F references that during the use of PBIS the three respectfully mentioned categories were “not good to look at.”

Although the unexcused absences surprised teachers, because these aggregated annualized numbers were not data teachers normally looked beyond their own classes, teachers eventually agreed that they wanted to review and understand attendance measures for the school in greater depth in the future.

After analyzing the data in terms of MTSS and CKH student measures for attendance, behavioral incidents, and achievement, teachers agreed that in general that their overall perceptions of performance between the two programs implementations was consistent with their perceptions. Having less variation between years for MTSS and CKH than was shown for PBIS created some sense of satisfaction for how directionally well the last 4-years had been. Teachers remembered how PBIS practices removed

students from school without any additional restorative practices, something that was not practiced with MTSS and CKH. These suspensions also caused an increase in absenteeism and a negative reflection not only on the individual grade reporting but in the academic reporting of based off state assessment results.

After analyzing the data regarding MTSS and CKH relevant to student attendance, behavioral incidents, and achievements, all participants agreed that MTSS and CKH helped with classroom management by reducing negative student behaviors. Participant B felt that for new teachers, CKH worked best and gave the best overall results, primarily because of because the training. Overall, the teachers were not surprised but did think the measures would not have been as positive as they were.

Participants were also asked what other factors besides the classroom management programs might have influenced student measures. Participants identified several life-changing events that might have affected student measures: (a) Hurricane Isaac in August, 2012; (b) the Great Flood in August, 2016; and (c) Hurricane Harvey in August, 2017. Although these events cause major community disruptions and canceled school for up to 2 weeks, participants agreed that because they happened early in the school year and lost schooling was made up by year end, they did not see any meaningful differences in their class during those years over other years.

Sub-question 5. Based upon their own experiences, what changes or recommendations would teachers make that might improve classroom management programs to improve classroom learning experiences and student learning outcomes?

Most of the participants favored the MTSS and CKH implementation as an improved, while no teachers saw PBIS in a positive light, seeing it as either outdated or less effective than the current program. Although all agreed that no behavioral or

classroom management program was perfect, all hoped these programs would have improvements or replacements that worked even better, and which addressed more issues, especially increasing learning effectiveness and student classroom experiences. All teachers believed that adding CKH to MTSS was essential and that such augmentation must continue. Participant D felt that parental involvement is critical but should not be overwhelming to parents. All participants felt that classroom management programs need to include other areas, such as understanding student personalities and cultures or providing resources and better communications to parents. Participant D also believed that "Classroom management must be consistent and remain consistent." All participants felt that any new program or changes to existing programs must include adequate and comprehensive teacher training, with one participant emphasizing that "classroom management is not something to look for the cheapest program, Only the best."

Summary of Findings

The following summarizes key research findings to the Central Research Question: "What are teachers' perspectives of their experiences with students in their classrooms while using each implementation of the two classroom management programs?"

1. Classroom management or behavioral management programs were believed as essential to helping teachers successfully manage student behaviors and facilitate student learning.

2. Classroom management programs were seen as being more effective when they included elements beyond behavior only, such as including enhancing and facilitating learning as included in MTSS and using student engagement practices as included in

Capturing Kinds' Hearts (CKH).

3. Teachers found that classroom management programs worked better when they included parental involvement with ongoing communications to leverage and support student learning and behavior.

4. Classroom management programs were seen as better when applied consistently through a whole school, while also allowing for teacher adaptation for specific classes, subjects, or students.

5. Teachers felt they needed adequate initial and ongoing training for any new classroom management program or upgrade to such programs. They also believed that ongoing training for current programs were needed to increase fidelity and keep programs sustainable.

6. Classroom management programs were seen and easier to implement when they could be integrated into teacher instructional formats, lesson plans, and teaching styles. Teachers believed that any behavioral programs should avoid adding administrative burdens for teachers, especially during scheduled instruction time.

7. Teachers felt that classroom management programs could become stale and less effectives with regular updates, improvements, and supplements to remain relevant and address changing learning and student dynamics.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Interpretation of Findings

PBIS was seen as an improvement over pre-PBIS programs before because the last implementation was a schoolwide implementation, meaning that it no longer applied only to Special Education students, when first introduced in the 1990s. Although well intended, PBIS training and implementation efforts had a much longer learning curve than expected and teachers felt confused, unprepared, and overwhelmed.

Teachers also seemed to have been more resistant to the original mandated implementations of PBIS into schools and classrooms. Even though all teachers understood how classroom disruptions affected their student and themselves negatively, much of the initial resistance to PBIS was with how it was imposed upon teachers as "something else they *now* had to do" along with all the other programs and hot-button issues given to them. The PBIS emphasis still seemed focused more on troublemaking students, something that disproportionally increased attention given in class to students who were causing the problems. Almost all teachers felt unprepared to handle PBIS well. As a result, teachers believed their ability to teach and work with other students were being shortchanged, while expectations for student achievement kept going up at the same time. Most teachers felt disconnect from the program emotionally, although most tried to apply the program in their classrooms.

When MTSS and CKH were announced to replace PBIS in 2016, most teachers were skeptical initially until they understood how the two new programs were different. The additional focus MTSS had on student learning seemed more intuitively connected to teaching efforts, while CKH also added tools to make behavior and learning activities more student centered, while developing a set of shared values among students and

teachers. Teachers reported that this new implementation was not without missteps and mistake, but teachers were more enthusiastic about program objectives, interventions, and how programs were more adaptable to their teaching strategies. Although teachers did not directly state that they had more emotional involvement with MTSS and CKH than they did with PBIS, their friendlier attitudes towards the newer programs were observable in their comments, tone, and willingness to apply and adapt programs elements to their classes. Although reported PBIS more difficult to implement, many thought PBIS did help prepare them for MTSS and CKH. Some teachers believed that MTSS delivered more of what PBIS promised while also being less cumbersome to use. Teachers noted how MTSS had practicality, while CKH added more human elements of respect, trust, and collaboration with which teachers and students could identify. Although teachers felt that MTSS and CKH training was better in helping them prepare for and implement the program than was the training for PBIS, it seemed that teachers were also seeking more effective solutions from the programs because they now understood the underlying classroom behaviors and incident better. As such, it may be that some of the measured improvements in student attendance, behavior, and learning might have come because teachers were more willing to understand and apply program elements than they had been with PBIS alone. In this sense, teacher buy in for MTSS and CKH came more easily and had little or no resistance among the school teaching faculty: they seemed to want to make it work.

Teacher perceptions of how MTSS and CKH positively influenced attendance, behaviors, and learning among students were supported by quantitative measures. Although the school still had a long way to go to improve current and future students, there seemed a more optimistic feeling or tone among teachers interviewed that

meaningful change was possible and worth their additional investments in time, energy, and acquiring new classroom management skills. Many of the teachers echoed the recent mantra, “We didn’t come this far to only come this far.” MTSS and CKH not only seemed to “capture kids’ hearts but teachers’ hearts as well.

Perhaps the most meaningful overall finding from the study was how MTSS and CKH programs seemed to bring students, teachers, and parents together more effectively through meaningful and timely communications that empowered students to take more responsibility and accountability for their behaviors, while also facilitating increased learning efforts. As one teacher summarized at the end of the interview, “Where we are going now is a lot better that where were going before.” The researcher found that the interviews were positive experiences for teachers because it gave them the opportunity to talk out their issues surrounding what really happened with PBIS and MTSS-CKH program implementations. Not only had the teachers become more optimistic about the current program and its results, but the researcher also found MTSS and CKH to have been more effective than previously thought. This suggests that current implementations for classroom programs might be benefited from having more feedback sessions to share experiences, approaches, and results to help all teachers benefit from sharing issues, problems, and successes with each other. Students might also benefit from such retrospective discussion sessions about what worked well and did not work well in helping them change their behaviors and improve their learning.

One corroborative observation the researcher found was how well MTSS and CKH seemed to be in applying Bandura’s theories of learning (Bandura, 1988) and self-efficacy (Bandura, 1993) that used learner observations of desired behaviors and knowledge skills to their own development and mirroring of those same behaviors and

skills. These models also applied well to teachers and how their classroom behaviors and classroom management skills improved from seeing successful colleagues around them.

Implications

One key implication from study findings is that improving good behaviors in classrooms leads to better learning outcomes and behaviors because more students are involved in the process. Rather than focusing on a few students, MTSS and CKH program elements foster change among all classroom students. Teachers too seemed to benefit from having fewer disruptions in classrooms and having more engaged student learners. This suggests that the current program should continue with expectations of program improvements and updates to keep the programs fresh and relevant.

Because negative student behaviors can affect students and teachers adversely, minimizing them with a student-centered behavior program is also clearly important to maximizing student learning success. The inclusion of more-participatory parents in these efforts seems to add dept to the multiple tiers of support needed for both MTSS and CKH.

Consistent program training and application among all teachers at a school is essential to provide continuity among all students and across all classes. However, this should not prevent proactive and innovation adaptations by teachers to meet new or unique needs of students and different course requirement. As such, program effectiveness requires adequate and timely teacher training and collaboration among school teaching faculty to ensure program fidelity and teacher proficiency.

How classroom management programs are introduced to teacher and how they are managed at the school directly affects how teachers understanding and apply programs in their classrooms. Findings suggest that when teachers adapt programs and practices

successfully into their daily teaching routines and lessons, classroom behaviors improve, more effective teaching and learning activities result, and academic performance improves among more students. Quality teaching and learning seems to be associated with having fewer classroom disruptions. However, it should be understood from teacher experiences that improvements in student behavior and learning are long-term processes, shaped over months and years from consistent learning and practice with supportive reinforcement of desirable behaviors. As students advance by grade level to new teachers and classroom subjects, acquiree behaviors and learning habits are transferable to successive school years. Programs are only effective as teachers become more effective and students respond accordingly. Programs do not change behaviors or achieve desired results, only students and teachers can change behaviors and increase learning.

Relevance to Practice

Findings from this study confirm those by Rhea and Singh (2020), where their 3-year evaluation of CKH in a county school system found inconsistency among teachers in applying the program created major shortfalls in learning achievement and student involvement. Gage et al. (2018) found that professional development activities were essential in creating both consistency and increasing quality of among teachers when reinforcing desired positive behaviors among students. Furthermore, expanding the MTSS umbrella to include additional program supports from psychologists showed how adding additional professional services can assist teachers with student behaviors and learning (Frank Webb & Michalopoulou, 2021). It was also found by Hines et al. (2021) how allowing adaptation for unique student needs through one implementation of MTSS enabled students to prepare themselves better for post-graduation opportunities by developing needed learning core abilities. As such, MTSS is a structure that teachers and

others can use to help student develop required behavioral competencies needed not only for success at school but also in personal pursuits (Porter, 2022). Succcessful implementation of MTSS has been shown as a successful way to close the achievement gap among poorer performing students by leveraging different tiers of support to improving learning outcomes by changing student behaviors and learning capabilities (Viveiros, 2021). Furthermore, when MTSS and CKH were used jointly, both programs worked well together to develop productive teacher-student relationships that helped students with behavioral problems develop improved learning outcomes (Daws, 2022). As such, MTSS and CKH are compatible programs that have proved successful when adapted to specific student or teacher needs. These findings and the findings of this study suggest that schools that choose more than one classroom management or supplement programs can increase program effectiveness by addressing different students, courses, or circumstances. This shows that no program in and of itself should be thought of as the final solution for any classroom management system.

Key Takeaways

During the years of the use of PBIS, student academic achievement was low and did not improve. The findings suggest that PBIS implementation led to a cyclical of disruptive classroom behaviors and multiplying student behavioral incident reports. However, behaviors may not have been properly addressed, preventing needed intervention to take place. Lack of consistency with PBIS program implementation meant that the program was not as effective as it might have been, even though behavioral results were said to be better than with previous programs.

Teacher Buy In

Teacher buy-in for programs used in the classroom is key to the implementation

of any program. Specifically, one where success depends on whether teachers work together, participate in making vital decisions, and learn from each other. The study findings suggest that the PBIS did not have full teacher buy in. Perhaps because neither teacher nor administrator fully understood PBIS or how schoolwide PBIS implementations might work, few knew how to train for or implement the program properly when it was imposed upon schools in the state as a mandatory program. As such, training for teachers and staff may have been delayed, accelerated, and truncated, as schools struggled to comply to meet deadlines. Teachers suggested that rather than imposing a boilerplate program upon all districts and schools, additional time would have helped by bringing teachers into the change and implementation process earlier to understand better PBIS program elements and options, while also helping to set implementation steps and timelines. Although research-based and evidence driven practices were mandated, few in the school and the district had identified available best practices from which local program solutions might have been selected. The “shotgun start” for PBIS meant that too many schools and teachers were trying to start the program at the same time without having the tools and experience needed for a successful program start.

In contrast, the joint introduction of MTSS and CKH came with earlier teacher involvement, training, and availability of resources. This allowed teachers to tailor their interventions to individual classes, students, and curricula. This additional time, training, and preparation meant teachers could help students understand what appropriate and inappropriate behaviors were and then tie them with their respective consequences both to others and themselves. Although results of the programs were not immediately felt, teacher groups collaborated to identify ways to implement the core tenets of the programs

frameworks. Allowing teacher voices to be heard and included in school implementation helped create a sense of ownership for their own classroom implementations, something that not only improved program quality and fidelity but also built teacher morale that subsequently got translated to students with enthusiasm and positive expectations. As such, how teachers were included seems to have had a major influence on how the programs was perceived and implemented. One area that also helped support MTSS and CKH was that many teacher training and certification programs began training prospective teacher how to use various classroom management programs that included learning how to use PBIS and MTSS more proactively in managing student behaviors and learning. As a result, new teachers joining the faculty came better prepared to integrate these programs into their classroom management strategies.

Including Parents

Using MTSS and CKH, combined with positive parental involvement created a positive and collaborative culture among teachers, students, and parents. Teachers increase parental communications and involvement promoted by MTSS and CKH, something that helped reduce defiant and disruptive behavior in class. Parental helped make behavioral interventions shorter and focused, making the more effective compared to low-intensity and long-term programs used in PBIS. Early collaboration with parents led to more effective interventions for aggressive behaviors that contributed to more positive skill learning among students. As aggressive behaviors were discouraged, while students practice and model more positive behaviors. Such reinforced learning by parents and teachers helped students become more resilient and to make more successful long-term adjustments, something that was consistent with findings reported by Herman et al. (2022). As classroom behaviors improved, teachers reported student achievement also

improved in classroom.

School and Classroom Culture

One of the benefits reported by teachers was what they called the creation of both classroom and school cultures of behavior and learning success. By having a common language of acceptable behaviors and effective learning habits, MTSS and CKH helped teachers create shared learning environment cultures that helped teachers develop and maintain a respectful and collaborative learning environment among more students. Although these classroom cultures varied by teacher and grade level, teachers told of how individual classes combine to help shape an overall school culture with other teachers who used MTSS and CKD effectively. It appears that students who developed these common shared values were able to take them to other classrooms, something that reinforced a larger and more friendly learning environment for more students.

Having multiple check points of communication allowed for the increase in student, parent, and teacher accountability. These are tenets associated with building a culture of success. The combination of CKH and MTSS results indicate that the consistent involvement of parents is a necessity to addressing student behavior, attendance, and academic achievement. Research on family involvement by Egan et al. (2019) and Smith et al. (2019) in the education sector strongly supports the inclusion of families and parents in their children's academic journeys. It appears, prior to the use of CKH and MTSS, parental inclusion in student support was not consistently used or monitored by teachers, school administration and parental involvement.

Recommendations for Future Research

Because finding from this research were based upon an exploratory qualitative approach, it is recommended that future research using more controlled mixed-methods

or quantitative longitudinal studies be done to examine more closely the ties between various classroom management programs have on overall student attendance, student behavior, and academic success. One area of attendance that needs further examination seems to be the effects of excused absences on student learning and behavior. Because behaviors and learning develop over several years during school, research could also examine the cumulative impact of how each year of school experience affects the behaviors and learning outcomes of successive years. Furthermore, it might benefit schools to understand how classroom behaviors in one class might affect student behaviors in other classrooms in middle and high schools, given the anecdotal experiences teachers have reported.

Additional research between public and private school implementations of different classroom management programs might also be useful, especially to explore the realities of such programs results versus teacher's perceptions of other public and private schools. How students perceive classroom management programs would also be something worth exploring, rather than to examine student success based upon the observations of others or on current measures of student behaviors and achievement. One final area of research might be a comparison of online class management programs and strategies, given the ubiquitous nature of online and hybrid instructional course available to student, especially after the COVID-19 pandemic that motivated many new classroom formats on a larger scale.

Conclusion

Overall, there are multiple programs and frameworks chosen by schools to help in reducing defiant behavior amongst children. These initiatives include PBIS, MTSS, and CKH frameworks. These and other programs and supporting add-ons addresses different

emotional and social factors that are assumed to cause aggressive conduct or control it and uses several other intervention approaches, such as therapy or counseling, social skills training, behavioral programs, and other cognitively oriented programs—all designed to reduce or reshape inappropriate student behaviors. Because of the changing dynamics of what is culturally acceptable in school and in society, these programs without changes and added elements will quickly lose their desirability and effectiveness.

For this study, MTSS and CKH were seen as dramatic improvements over PBIS most likely form how both programs were implemented at the study, the acceptance and involvement of teachers in the implementations, and each program's inherent programs strengths and weaknesses. However, the benefits shown from the MTSS-CKH implementation shows that for the study site, this recent implementation shows meaning improvements that could provide sustainable benefits for several years to come. Moreover, teacher and parental involvement in managing both student behaviors and student learning appear essential in any classroom management program implementation.

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Appendix A

Interview Discussion Guide

Interview Discussion Guide

Preliminaries

- Welcome and thanks participant
- Consent form review and signature check
- Audio recording start
- Warm up to transition into interview. -

Introduction

A. In the past several years, you have participated in programs that help the school manage student-teacher relationships and disciplinary measures, such as PBIS, Multi-Tiered Support Systems or MTSS, and Capturing Kids' Hearts or CKH.

B. I'm going to ask you a series of questions to better understand your experience with these programs and explore your thoughts about what worked or didn't work and how well these programs did or did not change student behaviors. In addition, we will explore how student achievement was or was not influenced by these programs. There are no right or wrong answers to these questions. I am interested in your honest and candid thoughts, observations, and suggestions.

C. Please consider these questions as a discussion among colleagues, such that you can ask me to clarify questions or terms, and I will likely ask you follow-up questions to understand more fully your responses.

D. As a reminder, although our interview together will be recorded, your comments will be transcribed into a written document that does not include your name or anything specific about you. Your comments in the final research report will be shown as coming from a participant and a randomized two-digit number, such as "Participant 12." As noted in your consent form, all recordings will be stored in a secured locations and be destroyed after 3 years.

Do you have any questions before we begin?

PART I (Warm-up and General Questions)

1. All teachers experience student disruptions and disciplinary issues in their classrooms during every school year. Based upon your experiences about how much of your classroom time (as a percentage) is spent dealing with student discipline issues rather than teaching?

[To aid with a typical percentage for them, discuss the frequency of incidents, levels of seriousness, or choosing a typical week or month to explore patterns of their discipline experiences and discuss briefly how often or serious they are.]

Explore how these discipline incidents have affected

- their teaching effectiveness
- their own attitudes or feelings
- their ability to teach subsequent lesson elements or classes that day
- their interactions with students the next few teaching days [such as recovery time needed or ways to deal with any stress created]

Explore how these discipline incidents affect

- the student or students directly involved in the incident
- the other students in the classroom.

2. From your own experiences and what you know of other teachers' experiences, what are some the top four or five discipline issues facing teachers in their classrooms?

Explore why these issues are so difficult or hard to handle.

3. Suppose there were no classroom disruptions or discipline problems with your students, how much better do you think students in your class could learn and achieve?

a. How often do you have days or weeks without classroom issues?

b. How much control do you think you have preventing discipline issues from happening?

4. As you think about classroom discipline incidents now versus up to 10 years ago, what things have changed?

a. What things might have affected any changes you've observed?

b. What things are better?

c. What things are worse?

5. What do you think would happen in your classroom with both you and students if there were no structured or schoolwide programs, such as PBIS, MTSS, or CKH?

Write down and briefly explore each issue or consequence raised. *[Look for both positive and negative issues surrounding using these programs in their classrooms.]*

Explore how much extra classroom time is typically needed to implement these programs. *[Try to agree on the percentage of time needed in a typical class or teaching module.]*

Discuss how the teachers approach these programs, such as whether program activities and applications are "in addition to" their teaching plans and strategies, or whether teachers have blended program elements into their

teaching approach. *[Is it something where they must "stop teaching" and then "start the program steps" before returning to teaching, or have the program elements become a more natural way of their thinking and actions, allowing them to seamlessly apply the concepts and immediately continue with the lesson?]*

6. Please share your thoughts on whether other teachers at your school think these behavioral programs are worth the time and effort required to implement and manage them in your classrooms.

Encourage teachers to explore both the good and bad perceptions and consequences of these required programs. *[Probe for understanding and to get complete answers. Discern between personal feelings and "party-line responses."]*

Discuss whether teachers they know really believe in these programs or if they are just "going through the motions."

7. Based on your overall experiences with these programs in general, if you were writing in your personal journal or diary, what might be some of your thoughts and feelings about the time you and others have invested in these behavioral programs?

[Probe for understanding. Be especially sensitive to participant emotions and feelings, while using long pauses, head nodding, and "tell me more" responses to encourage more complete, honest, and open feedback.]

PART II (Program Questions)

Thank you. I really appreciate what you have shared so far. Your comments are most helpful and insightful. Now let's take a few minutes to discuss these different programs individually and more specifically.

First, we will look at the original PBIS program implemented before the 2016–2017 academic year. Then we'll come back and discuss the most recent school implementation that combined MTSS and CKH programs that are currently being used.

8. Thinking back several years ago to the original PBIS program that was first implemented at the school and district, please share your thoughts about how well that specific behavioral program worked in your classroom.

a. Tell me about some of your successes? *[Probe for understanding]*

b. What things didn't work so well? *[Probe for understanding]*

c. If you were to go back and do it again, what might you do differently? *[Probe for understanding]*

d. Let's talk about how the program affected student attendance. What patterns or changes in student attendance do you remember because of implementing the PBIS program in your classes? *[Probe for understanding]* ***What were the attendance differences between student directly involved in the discipline incidents and the other students who just observed it?*** *[Probe for understanding]*

e. What are your perceptions of how well the PBIS program worked in changing student behaviors? What worked? What didn't work? *[Probe for understanding]*

f. How did the PBIS program affect your teaching effectiveness in class? *[Explore both positive and negative experiences] [Probe for details and understanding]*

g. How did the PBIS program affect student learning outcomes of all students in your classes? *[Explore both positive and negative experiences] [Probe for details and understanding]*

9. Thinking now about the MTSS and CKH programs that replaced the PBIS program in the 2016-2017 academic year at the school and district, please share your thoughts about how well these combined behavioral programs worked in your classroom.

a. Tell me about some of your successes? *[Probe for understanding]*

b. What things didn't work so well? *[Probe for understanding]*

c. If you were to go back and do it again, what might you do differently? *[Probe for understanding]*

d. Let's talk about how these combined programs affected student attendance. What patterns or changes in student attendance do you remember because of implementing both programs in your classes? *[Probe for understanding]* ***What were the attendance differences between student directly involved in the discipline incidents and the other students who just observed it?*** *[Probe for understanding]*

e. What are your perceptions of how well the MTSS and CKH programs worked in changing student behaviors? What worked? What didn't work? *[Probe for understanding]*

f. How have MTSS and CKH programs affect your teaching effectiveness in class? *[Explore both positive and negative experiences] [Probe for details and understanding]*

g. How have MTSS and CKH programs affect student learning outcomes of all students in your classes? *[Explore both positive and negative experiences] [Probe for details and understanding]*

h. How well did MTSS and CKH programs work together? Describe and duplication, conflicts, or perceived benefits of combining the two programs. *[Probe for details and understanding]*

10. How long does it take for a teacher to become effective in using a new behavioral program in their managing their classrooms?

a. Tell me about any differences between the time teachers need to become effective and what administrators or program managers expect.

b. How well do you think you and other teachers were trained and prepared for implementing new behavioral programs?

c. How effective were professional development in helping teachers become competent and proficient with using behavioral programs in their classrooms?

11. How long does it take for students to adjust to schoolwide behavioral programs in classrooms?

a. What might be done to improve student adjustments and compliance to behavioral management programs?

b. How consistent are student experiences with behavioral programs among different teachers, courses, and grades at the same school?

12. Based upon your experiences with both the original PBIS program and the combined use of the current MTSS and CKH programs, how do the two student behavioral programs compare? *[Explore areas or issues raised in the comparison and probe for understanding]*

a. Which of the two programs do you think worked better for teachers: the original or the current? *[Probe for understanding of causes or perceptions]*

b. Which of the two programs do you think worked better for students: the original or the current? *[Probe for understanding of causes or perceptions]*

13. Based upon your experiences with both the original PBIS program and the combined use of the current MTSS and CKH programs, what recommendations do you have for making either program better for <u>teachers?</u> *[Create a short list for review. Explore suggestions and probe for understanding]*

14. Based upon your experiences with both the original PBIS program and the combined use of the current MTSS and CKH programs, what recommendations

do you have for making either program better for <u>students?</u> *[Create a short list for review. Explore suggestions and probe for understanding]*

a. Which of the two programs do you think worked better for teachers: the original or the current? *[Probe for understanding of causes or perceptions]*

Part III (Discussion of Data Exhibits)

Thank you for your comments so far. We are almost finished. I now am going to show you some data for overall school attendance, behavioral incidents, and student achievement for the last 5 years of the PBIS program and for the first 5 years of the MTSS and CKH programs. Please review these graphs and data with me to see how these data compare with your perceptions of what really happened. Feel free to ask any questions to ensure that you understand what the graphs and numbers are showing.

[Share charts with participant]

15. How do these data compare with your perceptions of student <u>attendance</u> while the PBIS was used?

a. Are there any surprises?

b. What might account for any differences between what you remember and what these data show?

16. How do these data compare with your perceptions of student <u>behavioral incidents</u> while the PBIS was used?

a. Are there any surprises?

b. What might account for any differences between what you remember and what these data show?

17. How do these data compare with your perceptions of student <u>achievement</u> while the PBIS was used?

a. Are there any surprises?

b. What might account for any differences between what you remember and what these data show?

18. How do these data compare with your perceptions of student <u>attendance</u> while both MTSS and CKH were used?

a. Are there any surprises?

b. What might account for any differences between what you remember and what these data show?

19. How do these data compare with your perceptions of student <u>behavioral incidents</u> while both MTSS and CKH were used?

a. Are there any surprises?

b. What might account for any differences between what you remember and what these data show?

20. How do these data compare with your perceptions of student <u>achievement</u> while both MTSS and CKH were used?

a. Are there any surprises?

b. What might account for any differences between what you remember and what these data show?

21. What other factors than the classroom management programs we have discussed might have influenced student measures, such as attendance, disciplinary events and actions, and academic performance?

[Write down specific areas raised before probing each area. Probe for understanding and to expand answers by asking how that area might have influenced the student measures.]

22. I have one final question for you before we finish up. If you could create a new student behavior program to help you manage your classes, please describe how it might work.

[Probe for understanding. Engage to show sincere interest in what they are sharing.]

CLOSE AND THANK YOU

Thank you for your help with these questions. I appreciate your time and your thoughtful responses. Once I have transcribed our discussion today, I will provide you with a copy to review to ensure that your responses were what you intended to say. I might also need to ask you to clarify what you said should I have questions or need clarification of what you said.

As noted earlier, your responses will be confidential in my report. As a result, if you shared any information that might identify you, I will either remove the information or

make it generic, such as changing the name of a student or other persons, such as “Mary” to a bracketed generic term such as [student] or [other teacher].

Do you have any questions?

Thank you again for your help with my research for my dissertation. Please feel free to contact me if any other questions might come up.

Appendix B

Formative and Summative Panels

Formative and Summative Panels

Formative and summative panels were organized to assist the researcher develop and validate the interview discussion guide used in this study. Four people, who were subject matter experts were chosen for the formative panel, while three individuals with broader and more education experience were selected for the summative panel. Communication with panel members included personal interactions, phone calls, individual video conferencing, and emails. Various steps in the research process, the development and validation of both research questions and the interview discussion guide led interactions with panel members. Feedback and suggestions shared were considered by the researcher until all substantive and meaningful insights, suggestions, and feedback were considered and resolved where appropriate. Panel members will also be consulted to assist the researcher confirm and revise when needed the research findings and interpretations to limit bias, include broader interpretations, and to increase the quality, validity, and completeness of final findings, interpretations, and conclusions.

Formative Panel

Formative panel members had technical experience and expertise in one of two areas: (a) supervising and training for behavioral management programs in schools, or (b) marketing and research experience in creating documents and research data-gathering instruments (surveys and interview discussion guides). Panel members helped guide the researcher with developing and structuring content, wording, and understandability of the interview discussion guide. Formative panel experts had the following qualifications:

- Panel Member 1 had over 15 years of experience in marketing, mass communications, and customer communications, and had worked with educational professionals at the primary and secondary levels.

- Panel Member 2 has a Master of Business Administration degree and had more than 25 years of qualitative research experience in both educational and consumer products areas.
- Panel Member 3 has both masters and doctorate degrees in education and adult learning with more than 30 years of experience in both quantitative and qualitative research.
- Panel Member 4 earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership and has over 15 years of teaching and school administrative experience and currently serves in supervisory role in a school district.

Summative Panel

Summative panel members reviewed the interview discussion guide to ensure it was valid, complete, and appropriate to meet the research objectives of the study. Their extensive experience helped the researcher assess the larger contexts of the study and the ability of the data-gathering instrument to provide meaningful information for review and analysis.

- Panel Member 1 is an educator with bachelors and master's degrees in education with more than 20 years of experience as a teacher in Health and Physical Education and is currently a school principal.
- Panel Member 2 has degrees in education and educational leadership with more than 20 years of educational experience, first as a science teacher and now as a school principal.
- Panel Member 3 earned a doctorate in Educational Leadership and has over 35 years of educational experience as a teacher and has served as a school

disciplinarian and on several school district panels and committees dealing with school discipline and student behavior programs.

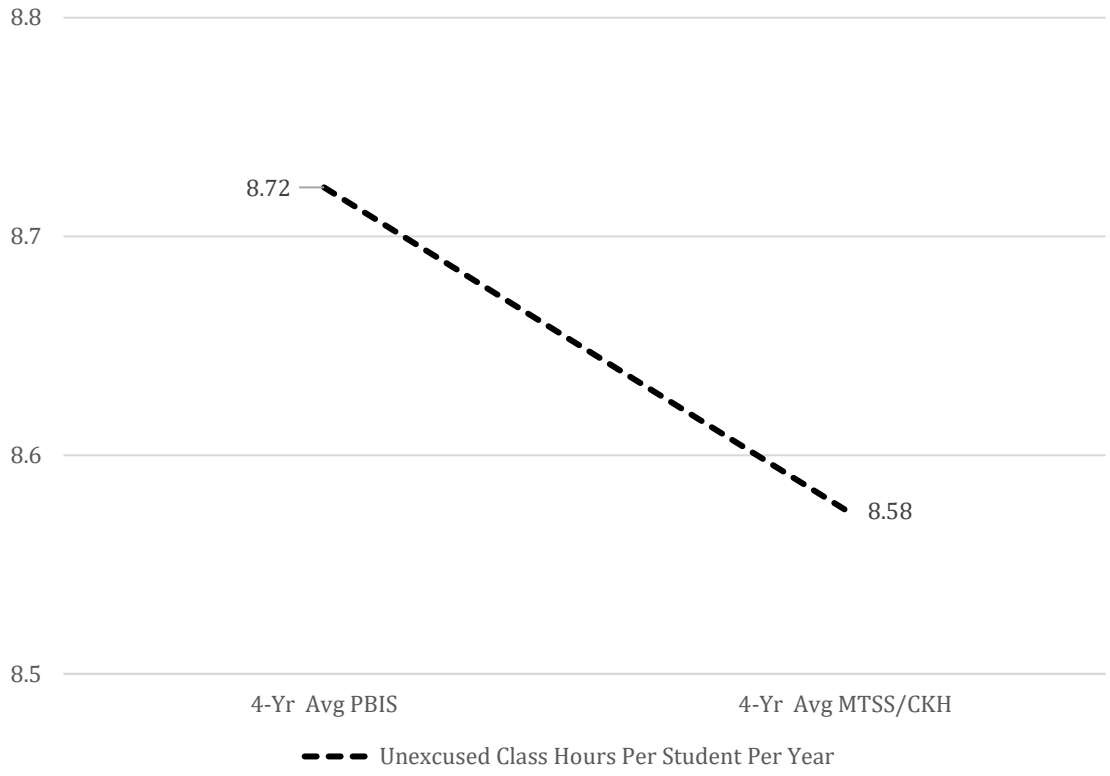
Appendix C

Interview Figures: Student Data

Attendance: Unexcused Absence Comparison

Figure 1

Unexcused Absences: Class Hours Per Student Per Year

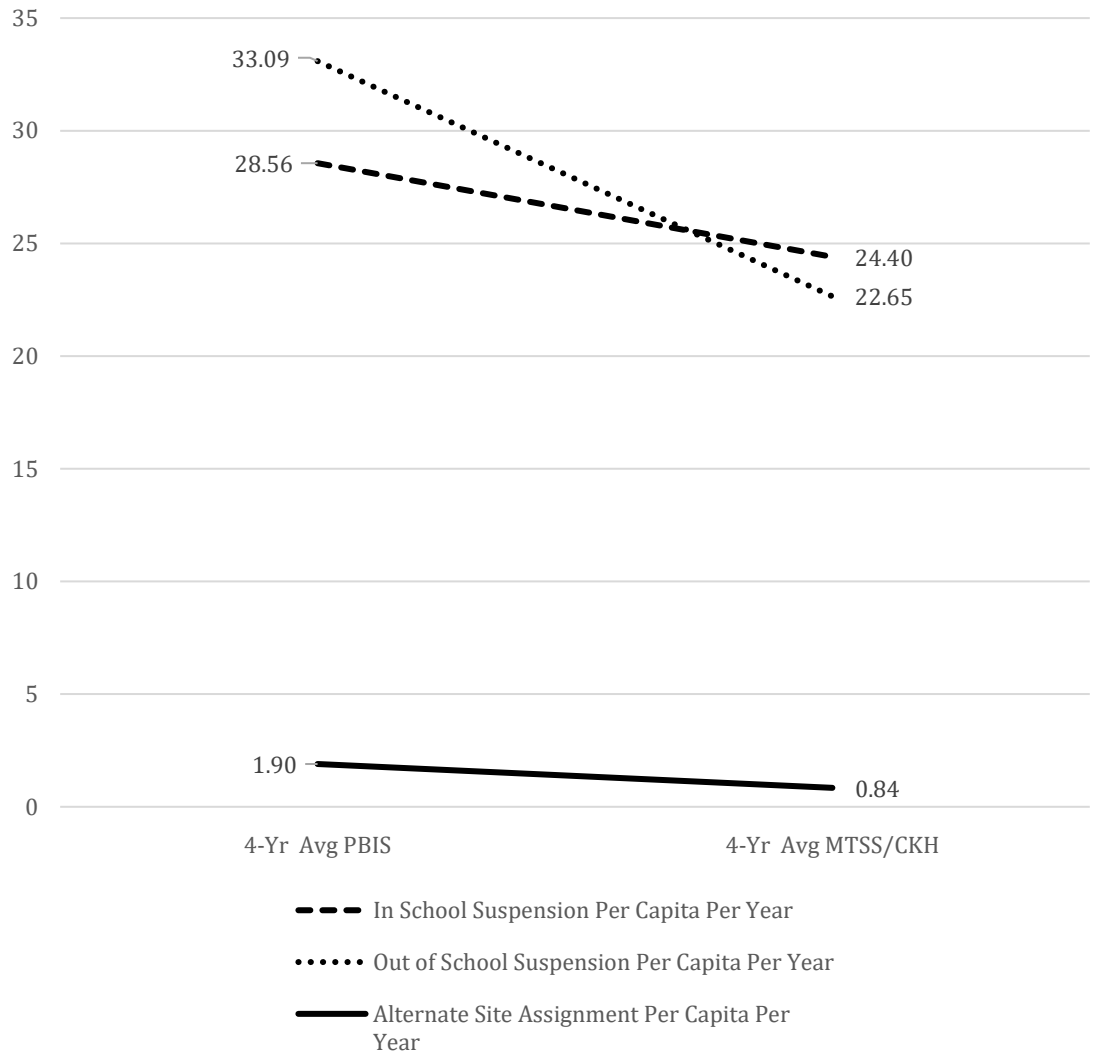


Note. Note. Data are show with 4-year weighted averages: The first measure is the 4-year weighted average using PBIS program alone and the second measure is the 4-year weighted average using both MTSS and CKH programs. Results show a 1.7% decrease for the newer programs over the previous program.

Student Reported Behavioral Action Comparisons

Figure 2

Per Capita Annual Student Behavioral Actions Reported

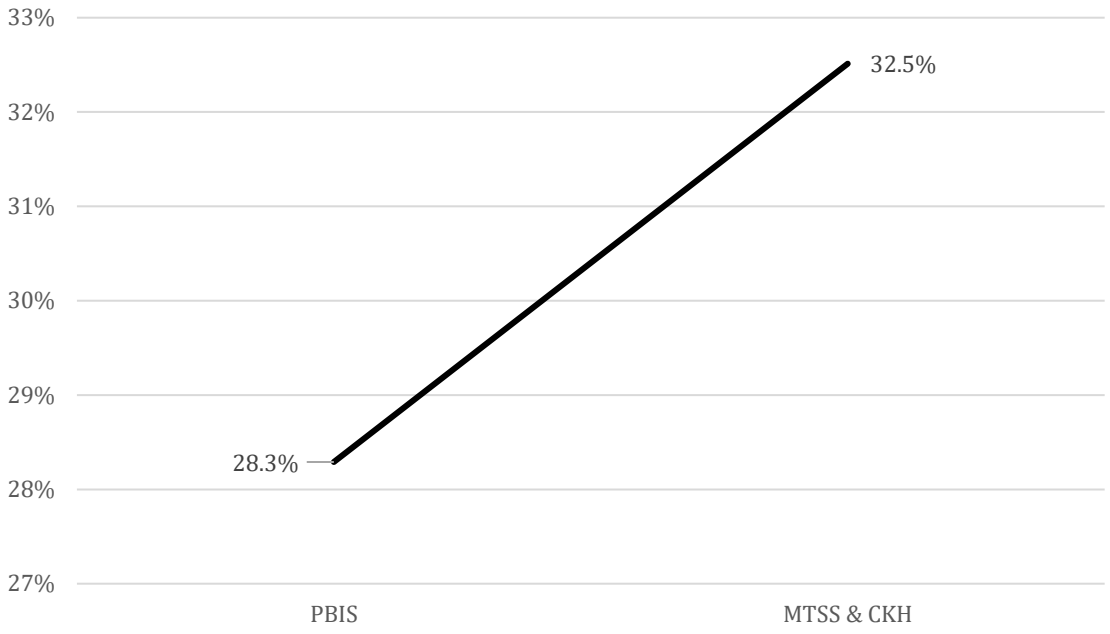


Note. Data are show with 4-year weighted averages: The first measure is the 4-year weighted average using PBIS program alone and the second measure is the 4-year weighted average using both MTSS and CKH programs. Results show a 1,7% decrease for the newer programs over the previous program.

Student Achievement Test Summary Trends

Figure 3

Standardized Test Data Summary of Percent of Students in Top Three Proficiency Levels



Note. Data are show with 4-year weighted percent averages: The first measure is the 4-year weighted percent average using PBIS program alone and the second measure is the 4-year weighted percent average using both MTSS and CKH programs. Results show a 4.3% increase among students the top three proficiency levels for the newer programs over students in the previous program.