

**Teacher Perceptions of Need in the Student Discipline Processes: A Comparison of  
Behavior Intervention Models**

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Submitted to the Graduate Department and Faculty of the School of Education of  
Baker University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of  
Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

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Date Defended: December 13, 2016

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## **Abstract**

The purpose of this research study was to investigate teacher perceptions of student discipline within the school setting. The research focused on three questions: (1) How have teacher perspectives of discipline problems changed since they began their career? (2) How do teachers perceive problematic student behavior in terms of disrupting the learning environment? and (3) What are teacher perceptions of addressing problematic student behavior and the amount of time this takes in a school day? The research design for this study was qualitative in nature with a sample size of ten interviews of certified teachers who were employed in an elementary school located in a suburban school district in Missouri. The interviews occurred during the 2016-2017 school year.

Results from this study included three major findings, which included teachers sharing their thoughts on student discipline. Several themes emerged that teachers felt made a significant impact on student discipline in the classroom setting. Teachers identified a positive relationship with students and creating a positive classroom climate as important in overall classroom management. Teachers felt that problematic student behavior was on the rise and they identified home environment and missing skills as two major reasons for the rise in discipline issues. Examples of behavior teachers have encountered within the classroom setting and estimated times of lost instruction due to student interruption were also given.

## **Dedication**

I dedicate this work to my family, past and present, who have inspired me to continue through some of the most difficult times in my life. I want to give a tremendous thank you to my deceased husband, Dennis P. Davis, Sr., who continued to support me through thick and thin. The words in our vows, “till death do we part” were true up to the last minute with my beloved husband. I wish to also thank the new love in my life, Dr. Lewis M. Lurie, who continues to give support and unconditional love in my life. My two children, Natalie K. Thomas and Micheal C. Thomas will always be forever in my heart no matter where the wind will take our family. I wish to thank my sister, Donna F. George, who without her, I would not be where I am today. Further, I must give both my deceased parents, Clyde R. Thomas and Myrna J. Thomas, credit for my life journey and ultimately leading me to this point in my life. My two deceased sisters, Victoria J. Culture and Karen M. Culter, helped take care of the “little sister” who at times drove them crazy.

Life is but a part of who we are as people. It is how we choose to live our life that defines us as humans in this world and on the other side of this world as we know it.

## **Acknowledgements**

Words of gratitude cannot adequately express my sincere appreciation for those who helped me achieve one of my life goals. My advisor, Dr. Harold Frye, one of the gentlest souls I've been proud to know, provided me with unconditional support throughout this process and most importantly provided me the guiding light to the end. Even during one of the most difficult parts of my life, he was always there providing support, yet providing high expectations at all times. My sincere appreciation to Dr. Harold Frye cannot be expressed enough.

Dr. Philip Messner was also instrumental in the success of developing this study. His expertise was invaluable during this process. His input into the process of this qualitative research has taught me how to extrapolate information from a variety of research methods. Also, I would like to extend my sincere appreciation to Dr. James Robins and Dr. Robert Fisher for their time and willingness to serve on my dissertation committee. Thank you all for your support and encouragement!

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## **Chapter One**

### **Introduction**

Student discipline has been a concern of Americans since the 1700s. Research has shown that unsafe, inappropriate, and problematic student behavior is on the rise in public education (Irving, Horner, Ingram, Todd, Sugai, Sampson & Boland 2006). The federal government has enacted laws and regulations, which dictate specific requirements regarding how educators must implement student instruction. The effect of these new legal mandates was to cause educational leaders to respond by evaluating and analyzing the process by which students learn and how discipline issues impact learning. Due to the work of researchers, educational leaders, and teachers, there are now a number of evidence based pedagogical strategies and methodologies for instruction and behavioral modification. Many researchers contend that there is a relationship between academic achievement and social behavior (Algozzine, Wang, & Violette, 2011; Johnson, McGue & Iacono, 2005; McIntosh, Horner, Chard, Dickey, & Braun, 2008; Ray & Elliott, 2006; Sadler & Sugai, 2009; Sailor, Zuna, Choi, Thomas, McCart, & Roger, 2006). McIntosh, et al. (2008) expressed that “This relationship appears to start as early as school entry: Kindergarten academic variables have been shown to predict problem behavior at the end of elementary school” (p. 131). Likewise, the problematic behavior often intensifies in middle and high school settings if early interventions are lacking. Thus, educators must address not only academic skills, but also social and behavioral skills for all students. Regardless of the debates as to whether student behavior is caused by low academic achievement or low academic achievement encourages students to misbehavior, successful student discipline is needed to improve school climate and to increase

academic success for all students. As society has become more concerned with safety and discipline within the classroom, the federal government has continued to issue legal mandates over the years.

### **Background**

Public education continues to face multiple challenges as expectations for student success in the classroom setting become greater. Educators have the obligation to ensure that every student is successful and acquire the skills necessary for life. DuFour and Marzano (2012) outline what all educators need to ask themselves. The authors outlined four basic questions: what do students need to learn; how will we know when the students have learned the information; what will we do for those students that struggle; and, how will we enhance the curriculum for those that excel with the information (p.3)? These questions, the authors claim, bring focus back to student success.

Since the beginning of school systems, disruptive behavior has existed within the classroom setting. Educators often struggle with how to help all students succeed while dealing with problematic student behavior. As Miles & Stipek (2006) explained, “Children’s social behavior can promote or undermine their learning, and their academic performance may have implications for their behavior as well as their opportunities to develop social relationships and skills” (p. 103). Disruptive behavior has been characterized in a variety of ways and educators address problematic behavior in a multitude of ways, often relying on experiences and other colleagues (Miles and Stipek, 2006).

**Statement of the Problem**

Research has shown that there is an association between student problematic behavior in the classroom and academic achievement of students (Algozzine, et al., 2011, Johnson, McGue & Iacono, 2005; McIntosh, Horner, et al., 2008, Ray & Elliott, 2006, Sadler & Sugai, 2009, Sailor, Zuna, et al., 2006). In the past, educational leaders often responded to student disciplinary concerns with reactive, punitive consequences. There continues to be differences in philosophy of managing students in the educational setting.

This researcher studied teachers' perceptions of student behavior with regard to the impact the problematic behavior had on other students' learning. With various theories of how to best approach behavior, this researcher wanted to study teachers' perceptions of disruptive behavior. With a deeper understanding of teachers perceptions of the impact the problematic behavior has on other students' learning; educators can make necessary improvement in classroom management. For example, Kalan, Gheen, and Midgley (2005) described problematic behavior as blurting out, disrespecting others, failure to follow directions, and teasing other students.

**Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the perceptions educators have regarding the management of student behavior to maintain compliance within the classroom. This study also identified the various behaviors the educators face in the classroom. By gaining an understanding of teacher perceptions of problematic behavior, this study will highlight types of problematic behavior educators are handling in the classroom and how much learning time is being lost due to student disruption.

## **Significance of the Study**

Research indicates a link between disruptive behavior in the school setting and academic achievement of students (Johnson, McGue & Iacono, 2005). This research study will provide additional, more recent findings on the links between disruptive behavior and academic achievement. The study will also indicate how teachers are dealing with disruptive students and what each teacher believes is considered to be disruptive behavior and how it affects other children in their personal learning. The study was conducted in an elementary school and will provide more insight into elementary teachers' perceptions of problematic behavior in the classroom setting.

## **Delimitations**

Lunenburg and Irby (2008) describe the delimitations of a study as "...self-imposed boundaries set by the researcher on the purpose and scope of the study" (p 134). The interviews were conducted during August 2016 at an elementary school located within the Midwest. The participants were recruited based upon their willingness to participate in the study. All participants had teaching certificates in the state of Missouri to teach in an elementary school. Interviews were audio recorded, transcribed then uploaded into a software program called Dedoose (2015). The participants who were interviewed in person were asked the same questions in the same order for continuity purposes.

## **Assumptions**

For the purpose of this study, the following assumptions include:

1. All teachers interviewed were fully certified educators in the State of Missouri.

2. The teacher participants gave as true, accurate and without reservation perceptual answers as possible while participating of their own free will.
3. All professional faculty members were fully certified for the position they were holding.
4. All participants were considered to be highly qualified educators to meet the No Child Left Behind qualification.
5. All participants were currently teaching in the same elementary school.

### **Research Questions**

This study addresses three research questions that deal with student discipline within the classroom setting. The research questions used for this study were as follows:

**RQ1.** How have teacher perspectives of discipline problems changed since they began their career?

**RQ2.** How do teachers perceive problematic student behavior in terms of disrupting the learning environment?

**RQ3.** What are teacher perceptions of addressing problematic student behavior and the amount of time this takes in a school day?

Table 1 indicates the interview questions asked during the interview that supported the actual research question. Each research question required at least three interview questions in order to elicit responses to answer the actual research question for this study.

*Table 1. Interview questions that support each research question.*

RQ number	Follow up question	Follow up question	Follow up question	Follow up question
RQ 1	1	2	4	
RQ 2	5	6	8	10
RQ 3	3	7	9	

The interview questions used are located in Appendix E.

### **Definition of Terms**

**Behavior.** Appropriate and inappropriate actions of an individual, which serves some function in the environment of the individual (Sugai & Horner, 2006).

**Corporal Punishment.** Corporal punishment is considered to be physical punishment, "...as distinguished from pecuniary punishment or a fine, any kind of punishment inflicted upon the body" (np). The contexts in which corporal punishment occur is as a method of discipline within the school setting or as a punishment for a crime. This type of punishment in the school setting was practiced in schools from the American Revolution era to around the 1970s when it was challenged in the Supreme Court in *Ingraham v. Wright* (The Free Dictionary by Farlex, 2016).

**Discipline.** The method educators use to encourage a student to display certain behaviors, which includes a consequence that follows a disruptive, problematic behavior, such as suspension, and or expulsion (IDEA, 2004).

**Ferule.** According to Merriam-Webster Dictionary this instrument is described as an instrument, such as a flat piece of wood such as a ruler that is used to punish misbehaving children often used in school discipline (Merriam-Webster Dictionary, 2016).

## **Overview of the Methodology**

This study employed a qualitative research design using responsive interviewing. All participants were certified teachers in the state of Missouri and were employed at the elementary building where the information was gathered. All subjects volunteered the time for the personal interview and agreed to be audio taped for the duration of the interview. The transcriptions of the interviews were coded by themes using qualitative coding software. Comparisons were made among coding results and the participants responses in order to analyze the research for the study. Coding results were developed into themes and these themes provided organization for the findings in chapter four.

## **Organization of the Study**

Chapter one outlined the purpose and significance of this study, limitations, the research questions of this study and an overview of the methodology used. Next, chapter two included a review of the historical development of student discipline, current literature on student discipline, a review of relevant research on several school discipline models and a descriptive historical overview of School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (SWPBIS), current research findings and information about the relation of SWPBIS to academic achievement. Chapter three included the methodology of the study, specific procedures of data collection, and data analysis. Chapter four focused data collection and analysis of the research findings to the research questions. The summary of findings, conclusions and further implication for research are presented in chapter five.



## **Chapter Two**

### **Review of Literature**

Ask educators for a definition of classroom management and it will become clear that educators have their own professional definition of managing a classroom. One important component of any classroom management tool is how to maintain student discipline throughout the day. A disciplined class is a classroom in which students feel safe, secure and have a clear understanding of the boundaries within the classroom setting, as well as knowing that the consequences are consistent. As Charles (1985) explained, an orderly classroom is a classroom with warm, positive regard for each student as an individual and fosters relationships among peers and adults. A positive classroom environment also helps facilitate learning and a sense of ownership within the bigger community.

This literature review examined the history of student discipline throughout America's history dating back to the mid to late 1700s and up to present day interventions to attain discipline and academic achievement for students. Over the centuries, effective discipline has been a common concern within public education. As the government became more involved in education, legal mandates began to be enacted to address concerns in both academic and student discipline matters. One of the newer legal mandates, the Individuals Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), requires schools to have a form of positive discipline within their school structure (Individuals Disabilities Education Act, 2004). The literature review examined the organized school wide discipline program known as School Wide Positive Behavior Interventions Support (SWPBIS), as a viable choice for districts.

## **History of School Discipline in the U.S.**

Corporal punishment was a common consequence used in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and was often considered a valued part of the process (Middleton, 2008). Middleton (2008) explained that the purpose of punishment was to "...aim at helping the youngster to do willingly what he ought to do" (p. 253). This widely accepted practice dominated the teaching institution as masters and school board inspectors readily accepted this practice because it was believed to solve behavior issues quickly. Middleton (2008) proposed that the anecdotal records of Steel's "The Principles and Practice of Teaching and Classroom Management" defined discipline as a way to get children to conform to the expectations of school. Corporal punishment was considered to be fair and reasonable. As cited in Kafka (2011) William Bagley, a professor of education during the early twentieth century, contended that the concept or definition of disciplining within the school setting may change with time, depending on the era of the time frame. His definition of discipline was the lack of needing to discipline a student. "[It]...is conspicuous by its absence. If an intelligent observer, honestly reported a visit to a school, makes no reference to its discipline, one may be fairly confident that the school is well-disciplined" (p. 17). Bagley continued his thoughts on defining discipline by describing the fluidness of discipline. He explained that what may seem as unacceptable in one timeframe might be acceptable in another timeframe depending upon the operational definition of school discipline at that time. Kafka (2011) postulated that "discipline is value laden and in the context of schooling it is inherently tied to one's understanding of the larger purpose of education" (p. 17). As educators, parents,

lawmakers and students worked to define the purpose of education, two related arguments continued to surface for debate (Kafka, 2011).

### **Early Types of Punishment and its Role in Moral Development**

Early educators believed that punishment was a necessary component of the school experience to develop not only academic skills, but instill a sense of moral discipline as well. “Master”, as the teacher was referred to during this era, was expected to have professional judgment when deciding how to handle inappropriate behavior. School punishment was the action that a master took to ensure that students demonstrated appropriate behavior while in a school setting. The behavior of the child could be either conducive to the learning environment or disruptive to other students. The master of the classroom had an obligation to maintain a learning environment at all times. Charles (1985) argued that some misbehavior is clearly unacceptable, such as stealing, lying and hurting others; whereas, talking out in class is inappropriate but not as severe as other behaviors. American educators and lawmakers were convinced that developing a moral consciousness was a significant part of the duty of the masters.

Additionally, the second concern focused on the correct person to administer the discipline of the student, as well as, decide the extent of the punishment as compared to the infraction the student committed (Kafka, 2011). While the early advocates of education continued to push the sense of morality, the early lawmakers became involved, mainly because of concerns of trying to educate the masses.

Kafka (2011) explained further that Thomas Jefferson, one of America’s founding forefathers, was an early advocate of public education and believed that academic skills were important. However, his true focus was improving students’ sense of morality and

acceptable social relations in order to maintain civil obedience in the newly found republic of America. He believed that the virtuous side of men was more important to society as a whole than an individual's skills and abilities. This early advocate of education envisioned a system that would ultimately become the cornerstone of America's democratic society, a right to a free public education.

Thomas Jefferson argued for state sponsored schools in the Preamble for the 1779 bill for free schools in the state of Virginia (Kastle, 1983). Jefferson strongly maintained that the government needed men who were vigilant at watching the government and understood the needs of the new American government and its citizens. This would require educated men, men who knew not only how to advocate for the country and to be honest and wise in order to protect the new found liberty of America and its citizens. In order to choose the best men for this important role, all male citizens, Jefferson argued, as cited by Kastle (1983) should have the opportunity to become educated regardless of their societal standing, poor or otherwise. During Jefferson's argument for free schools, he stated that "...American curriculum would help unify the language and culture of the new nation and wean America away from corrupt Europe" (np). Thus, Jefferson argued that all people should share the cost of education so that all educated men had an equal chance to represent the people's wishes through the government.

In order to achieve such a goal, Jefferson recommended a three-tiered system. The elementary level would be free to all, while the next level would be tuition free for selected boys to attend. Then the last tier would be support at William and Mary College for the 10 best and most needy graduate students (Kastle, 1983). Unfortunately, Jefferson was unable to get the idea to take root, mainly because of the taxation required to create a

free school system. The debate over a proposed state supported school system continued with concerns about the quality of the masters, and the proper consequences of students continued. The idea of proper management of student discipline came into question by advocates as the debate over Jefferson's idea continued.

As Charles (1985) explained, inappropriate behavior can mean different things to different people, thus what consequences were appropriate were left up to the masters in charge of the classroom. When he closely examined infractions by the students, he concluded that there were three common elements with misbehavior. The first common element was the students that were concentrating on the given assignment without disrupting others, had less time to think about misbehaving. This behavior is often referred to as being on task. The on task student typically did not disrupt others while learning. The second important element is that students with that inner desire to demonstrate responsibility for self tended to behave even when the master was not looking. These students displayed a sense of self-control and were conscious of their actions. These students tended to be respectful of others and understood they are part of a bigger group. Charles' (1985) third element of student discipline implied that students have a deep sense of connectedness to others and continued to display quality human relationships with peers and masters. These students were typically the helpers in the classroom.

Kafka (2011) explained that the second argument in early American education had been about the students' moral code and the role masters took in the development of such. This argument is further enhanced by the doctrine of "loco parentis." This doctrine

demands that educators have the right and duty of development of the students' moral code. According to Taylor (1903):

In like manner, the social ideal of education will express itself in a particular school discipline. The emphasis in this case is not upon the child as an individual but as a member of a community. He is to develop all his power not for mere personal advantage, but in order that he may be a more useful member of society. In order thus to prepare a pupil for social living he is to be trained in approved ways of thinking, feeling, and doing. This gives him 'social insight and power.' The aim is not to emphasize individual preferences, but to subordinate self for the good of the whole. (p.10)

Post-colonial American educational leaders and lawmakers believed that discipline in public schooling would drive moral development of the country (Kafka, 2011).

However, much disagreement ensued as to the best approach to achieve this goal. Many reformers began to question the effect of an authoritative approach to student discipline. Kafka (2011) explained that by the 1830s the monitorial school philosophy was being highly criticized by educational reformers who argued that education should be enjoyable and engaging for the students.

### **New England Pedagogy: Mid 1800s to World War II**

These supporters of the monitorial system were losing their arguments on the work of John Locke and Jonathan Pestalozzi. Kafka (2011) explained that these men postulated that education of the individual should encourage a passion for learning by providing a stimulating environment to create the motivation to learn by passion and genuine curiosity, not by punishment, force and fear. Kafka (2011) stated "Instead of

using peer competition or fear of punishment as a means of motivating students to learn...teachers should seek to pique students' genuine interest in the subject matter, and guide their behavior through affection and moral reasoning" (p.26). This idea of learning without fear but with passion sparked the idea of masters building relationships with students that encourage attachments to the adults, thus learning to behave not out of fear, but from a sense of obligation to others. This movement became known as the New England pedagogy. The central ideals of the New England pedagogy were based on the psychological principles that at the time were called mental discipline. The concept of students developing the moral consciousness to choose virtuous behavior required a sense of self-regulation and control, especially within the realm of societal expectations.

During the post war era the doctrine of *in loco parentis* was questioned. The early educational reformers questioned whether this doctrine helped in furthering America's democratic ideals. The reformers argued that this type of authoritarian rule only encouraged the students to resist punishment instead of developing an internal sense of ownership for personal learning. As one room schools became bigger with multiple rooms and multiple masters, now taking on "teachers" instead of masters, the idea of student discipline became more philosophical in nature. As more educators became involved with students and the appropriate form of discipline administered by adults other than classroom teachers, more concern arose about student discipline (Kafka, 2011).

As the post revolution era continued, reformers and lawmakers continued to move forward. Kaestle (1983) discussed that the political theorists and lawmakers were concerned not only with protecting liberty, but how to best educate the population of the

republic. It was believed that education would enlighten the citizens with a sense of morality and knowledge so that the average citizen could make informed decisions on societal aspects. Kaestle (1983) stated “A sound education would prepare men to vote intelligently and prepare women to train their sons properly. Moral training based on the Protestant Bible would produce virtuous, well behavior citizens” (np).

Nearly a full generation occurred before the early advocates’ dream of an actual state supported school system began to come into existence. This early school system was known as the “common schools” in the early to mid-nineteenth century. As the idea and implementation of the common schools spread from the North to the Mid-West, the focus remained on the moral development of students. The expectations of nineteenth century students were submission to the authority of the master. Submission to authority was seen as learned obedience and a basic requirement for moral and virtuous development. Schoolmasters were encouraged to demand complete submission and to discipline as necessary in order to obtain submission (Kafka, 2011, Butchart, 1998). The discipline to obtain complete submission included corporal punishment. Kafka (2011) explains that it was not unusual for the schoolmaster to punish a student with a ferule (described as a flat piece of wood like a ruler), hickory stick, or cowhide in order to inflict pain upon the unruly student. Deciding what constituted disobedience was at the sole discretion of the schoolmaster.

As quoted by Kafka (2011), Pierce, a school reformist from Michigan who opposed corporal punishment of students, in 1842 summarized the discipline reports he studied at that time from around the state. He stated the following:



The usual appliances are pinching, cuffing, pulling hair and noses, throwing books, and rulers at the heads of unruly urchins, compelling them to stand until fatigued into submission, locking up in dark places to scare away the evil genius that possesses them, shaming and other varieties of torture. (np)

Pierce continued to voice his concern of corporal punishment and how it may be affecting students, soon, however, others began to express their opinions of corporal punishment as well.

Pierce was not the only educational reformist to oppose this type of punishment. Kafka (2011) and Butchart (1998) explained that Lancaster opposed the use of corporal punishment among students so he created his own form of discipline model in the early 1800s. His disciplinary system was based upon a competitive model among the students. Students would be continuously tested and then publicly ranked within the school as compared to other students. Lancaster's model embraced the notion that moral development occurred from internalizing appropriate behavioral expectations. His belief system maintained that students could understand the basic expectation of appropriate behavior before the student could understand the reasoning for the expectation. Lancaster believed that students would benefit from a sense of competition in order to maintain compliance of the students.

Kafka (2011) explains that Lancaster's model became known as the monitorial schools, which relied upon set rules and expectations. Another reason Lancaster's model became popular was the large volume of students that could be overseen by one school master. Since the schools could contain as many as 400-500 students, older students were used to help monitor, tutor and discipline the younger students. This model quickly

became popular in the first quarter of the nineteenth century with charity and black free schools. The monitored schools became known as “teacher proof” schools because of the highly structured environment and the set curriculum. Students were under constant surveillance, thus it was believed that students adapted quicker to the set behavioral expectations than students in a traditional school setting. However, a new perspective on the responsibility of the schools began to take shape in the nation. Reformers began to help students displaying disruptive behavior with less punitive ways and more strategic interventions. Thus the post war era of education began to take shape (Kafka, 2011).

### **Student Discipline from World War II to the Late 1900s**

As the end of the 1800s approached, American lawmakers became concerned because American citizens were becoming more transient by moving into urban areas to work in the booming industrial revolution that was occurring in America’s economy. Therefore, the American civil leaders and lawmakers began to understand that the central function of the education system was to teach children how to be productive citizens in this new economy by becoming part of the society as a whole. They concluded that education must consist of strict discipline so that the students could become productive working citizens (Kafka, 2011).

As the economy developed into the industrial revolution, as well as a deeper understanding in advancement of psychological theories, it became clearer that the students needed more development of social and emotional skills to create a sense of self-motivation toward the bigger goal of societal needs as a whole. America’s youth were also beginning to deal with historical issues such as the war, displacement of families and

large immigration into the country (Kafka, 2011). School leaders began to develop a more bureaucratic type of school system.

This reform of education was needed for several reasons but primarily for the large amount of immigrants coming into the country and the transient American families coming into the urban cities. Because of the flood of movement within the country, many different types of laws were being enacted by the American government and education was no exception. More educators were hired to oversee the organization of students by age and grade level. Masters, soon to be called teachers, were hired for a grade level and principals were placed to create a centralized authority system.

Discipline was seen as a way to promote social order, but still with the idea of total submission to authority in order to promote future adults who would work under authority without question. As Kafka (2011) stated, "From this perspective, public education was still expected to prepare the nation's youth for the responsibilities of adulthood and American citizenship, but that preparation would vary based upon students' genetic social difference" (p.33). This idea that discipline was the cornerstone of social control continued to be popular until the 1920s when critics began to argue that students needed an opportunity to be involved in their education.

Critics still maintained that discipline was the central drive of the educational process. The idea of the moral discipline was giving way to the concept of social responsibility in order to develop children who display inventive, reliable and unfailing ability to reason intelligently. Therefore, more specialized teachers were needed in the school setting. These specialized jobs were to address the mental hygiene of students. At

this point, counselors, social workers, psychologist and psychiatrists were becoming involved in the educational system (Butchart, 1998)

The discipline of psychology was a natural union with educational practices. Various psychologists had studied human behavior and from these theories educators and psychologists developed methods to help address the dilemmas that teachers were facing with students. Charles (1985) described William Glasser's model for classroom discipline. According to Charles (1985), Glasser theorized that reality therapy provided individuals the opportunity to focus on present reality and not on long past events that caused current behavior. Glasser's work began to extend into the schools when he became known for working with juvenile offenders. Glasser believed that students are rational human beings and can control their behavior. Controlling behavior means the student has a clear understanding of the consequences of good choices verses bad choices. One of the teacher's main responsibilities was to help students make good choices by providing clear rules and consequences. All students can make good choices, thus the social and economic status background doesn't matter. Other models of classroom discipline continued to be developed and implemented in classrooms.

Around the late 1960s Rudolf Dreikurs, a psychiatrist, became known in the field of education for his theories of human motivation (Charles, 1985). According to Charles (1985), Dreikurs believed that students misbehaved because of four mistaken goals; 1. Attention getting, 2. Power seeking, 3. Revenge, and 4. Displaying inadequacy. Classroom discipline includes teachers' identifying students' reason, or mistaken goals for acting out, then taking steps to help students receive the support needed. Providing support to students with their mistaken goals will help students develop their inner

control. Teachers would identify the mistaken goal, put a plan in place to address students' needs, then through guidance, firm limits, and kindness with appropriate consequences, students would be able to display appropriate behavior. Glasser suggests that the teacher must always maintain self-control, such as the Assertive Discipline model.

Canter (2010) discussed the classroom discipline model Assertive Discipline which he developed in 1976. Canter theorized that when teachers are assertively calm in words and actions, then students will respond more positively to redirection, which creates a compliant environment. The Assertive Discipline model has several basic key ideas include that all teachers and students have educational rights within the classroom setting, building and maintaining strong relationships, identifying clear expectations, use positive language and expect compliance and immediate follow through with consequences. Canter (2010) explains the power of a teacher in the classroom.

Teachers' knowledge of best practices in classroom management is obviously a necessary first step in enabling them to create a safe, orderly classroom environment. The reality is though, that there are more steps needed to ensure teachers have the supports needed to maximize their ability to help students learn to behave appropriately in the classroom. (p. 131)

Charles (1985) explained that Canter's model helped teachers take control in the classroom by interacting with students in a calm yet firm manner and provided students a sense of classroom discipline consistency. As cited in Charles (1985), Canter and Canter believed that "no child should be allowed to engage in behavior that is self-destructive or violates the rights of others" (p.107). Educational leaders and lawmakers began to take

notice that discipline needed to be addressed, therefore, this concept of discipline in the school setting began to take shape within the legal system.

### **ABA and SWPBIS**

The Individual Disability Education Act (IDEA) of 1997 requires districts to identify, implement and monitor student academic achievement as well as student behavior. Although this act specifically governs the education of students with disabilities, the implications have affected the entire education of all students. Turnbull, Wilcox, Turnbull, Sailor and Wickham (2001) explained that IDEA specifically addressed problematic student behavior by requiring schools to implement a defined process of “utilization of a relatively new behavioral intervention technique, “positive behavioral interventions, supports, and strategies” (p. 446). School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (SWPBIS) is considered an evidence-based systematic approach for establishing an environment and school culture on proactive interventions for all students, while providing individualized behavioral support for struggling students.

SWPBIS theoretical framework originated in the psychological principles from Applied Behavioral Analysis often known as ABA (Dunlap, 2006; Sugai & Horner, 2006). The ABA theorists suggested that human behavior was manipulated by providing positive reinforcement, clearly defined expectations and proactive interventions. When an individual struggled with pro-social skills, a functional behavioral assessment (FBA) was conducted to provide specific strategies to modified modify individual’s behavior. Upon completion of the FBA, proactive strategies are used to modify behavior to meet acceptable social expectations. “SWPBIS is firmly rooted in an applied behavior analytic tradition and in a solid body of research in which the focus is on the behavior of the

individual and the contexts of environments in which the individual's behaviors are observed" (Sugai & Horner, 2006, p.246). In the past, ABA was often used to address concerns related to students with severe disabilities.

Applied Behavioral Analysis (ABA), was based upon Skinner's operant conditioning work in the 1950s and was used extensively with individuals who had severe cognitive impairment (Sailor, Sugai, Dunlap, & Horner, Eds. 2009). In the 1960s, ABA emerged as a systematic process in which to handle severe behaviors of individuals with disabilities (Dunlap, 2006; Anderson & Freeman, 2005; Carr & Sidener, 2002; Carr, Dunlap, Horner, Koegel, Turnbull, et al., 2002). According to Carr, Dunlap, Horner, Koegel, Turnbull, et al. (2002) that without the past 35 plus years of research dedicated to ABA "...PBS could not have come into existence" (p 5). Clearly, ABA provided the foundational research, conceptual framework and applied assessments and interventions for student behavior. The term "applied" explains that the concepts of ABA are truly functional and were considered useful for generating meaningful behavioral changes that impacted the life span of an individual.

When one follows an individual over many years in changing life circumstances, deficient environments and deficient adaptive skills will almost certainly continue to emerge and be identified. Yet, as noted, in a truly comprehensive PBS approach, intervention never ends and follow-up is measured in decades, not months. (p. 7)

The premises of ABA theory were based on the observation of behavior and understanding the antecedents of the behavior as well as the consequences of the individual's behavior. This theory postulates that all behavior occurs because of

the outcome of the behavior based on the environment around the individual and not based on psychological principals. Singer and Wang (2009) state that "...the environment of concern is that social environment made up of micro social interactions between the person whose behavior must change and the change agents." (p 19) Thus ABA has been an extremely successful intervention for individuals with special needs. Through ABA intervention, children with autism have experienced life changing moments. Most of the time, it is not uncommon for children with special needs to be in attendance at public schools where as just not more than 35 years ago, this would not have been possible (Anderson & Kincaid, 2005). As the ABA movement continued, concern grew over some of the eccentric interventions used with individuals who were disabled and not able to advocate for themselves.

### **School Discipline from 1950s to Present**

Anderson and Freeman (2000) explained that since the 1950s Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) theoretical concepts were successfully implemented to provide people with developmental and behavioral challenges a better quality of life through social behavior development. "For example, until the 1950s a widely held assumption was that people with severe and profound intellectual deficits were unable to benefit from teaching opportunities; that is, they were unable to learn" (p. 85). At that time, people with severe disabilities were institutionalized and received only minimal custodial care.

However, Singer and Wang (2009) explain that some of ABA interventions were unconventional at best and considered immoral from many researchers and practitioners. This caused some researchers and practitioners to break away for the philosophy of ABA



for individuals with disabilities, thus the concept of Positive Behavior Support (PBS) emerged. At this time societal pressure was building to more appropriately address people with intellectual disabilities of all levels in an appropriate, humane way with an emphasis on educating them with social skills and life skills in order to integrate back into society. As Singer and Wang (2009) stated;

The theory of normalization provided a rationale for bringing people out of large segregated institutions and into home communities...based on the idea that individuals with intellectual disabilities who have been devalued in society should be allowed to assume socially valued roles in typical community environments.

(p. 22)

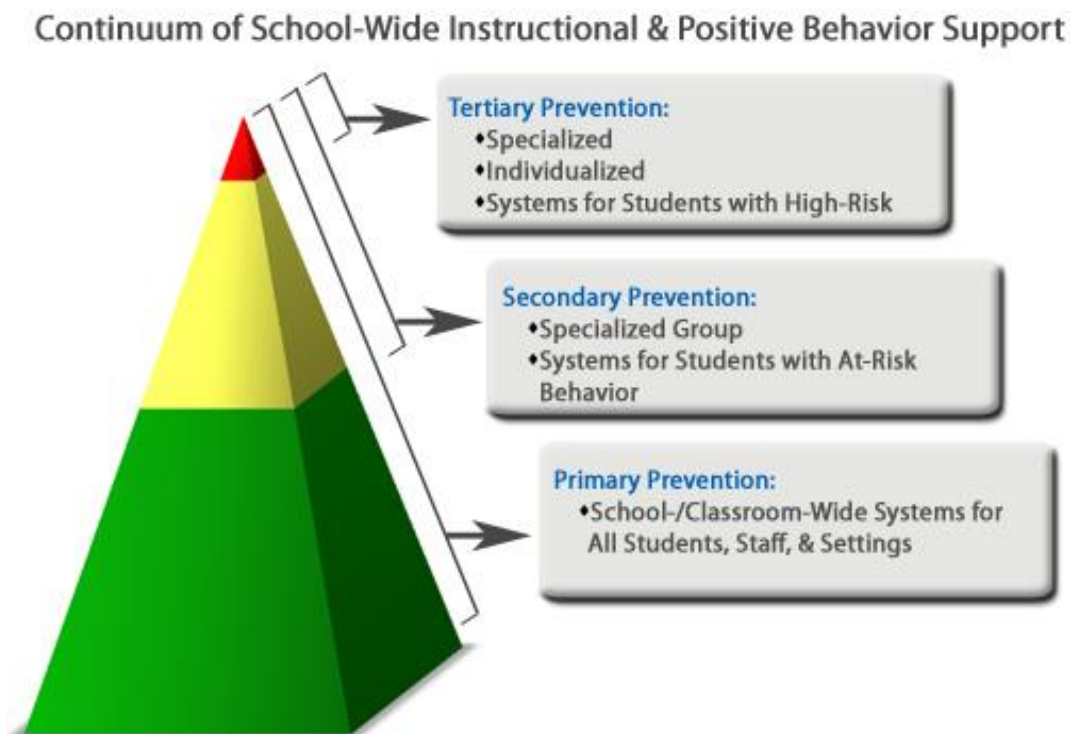
The idea of normalization, as explained by Singer and Wang (2009) not only included adults who were intellectually challenged and provided with support within the communities, but the public school system as well. With ABA's push on developing appropriate micro social skills, public schools were a place that could provide that sense of normalcy for children with challenging intellectual and behavioral concerns. The school provided the practice needed for micro skills on a much larger scale by placing young children into the school setting which would provide a sense of normalcy for the children with special needs with the hope these children could learn basic life skills from others.

Singer and Wang (2009) explained further that many staunch ABA believers did not support the idea of normalization and with this concept came other concerns that need to be addressed; thus there was moral grievance with ABA practitioners, which helped the push toward the creation and use of the PBS movement. Therefore, PBS was

generated by moral concerns and the difficulties of addressing micro skills in a controlled institution.

However, as the field of human behavior emerged, it became clear that this type of treatment was not in the best interest of persons with handicapping conditions. Therefore, a person-centered approach was preferred because services for individuals with significant limitations should be influenced by the needs of the clients within their own environments (Carr & Sidener 2002; Anderson & Freeman, 2000; Anderson & Kincaid, 2005; Lovitt, 2012). Thus began a movement called positive behavior support, eventually named SWPBIS, which created a paradigm shift in the treatment of people with severe handicaps.

SWPBIS is a school wide effort by all staff that interacts with students providing supports and interventions on a daily basis within a proactive system rather than a punitive system. These proactive interventions define behavior expectation in all settings, teach and re-teach all expected behaviors, and provide a systematic positive reward base for all students. The multi-tiered approach allows schools to tailor interventions based upon severity and intensity of problematic behavior using a data collection method that allows for early identification of struggling students (Bradshaw, Reinke, Brown, Bevans & Leaf, 2008; Debnam, Pas, & Bradshaw, 2012; Oswald, Safran, & Johanson, 2005). Figure 1 from the Office of Special Education Programs provides a visual of the multi-tiered approach used as the foundation of SWPBIS system (Sailor, Zuna, et. al. 2006; Horner, Sugai, Todd & Lewis-Palmer, 2005).



*Figure 1. Three-tiered Approach to SWPBIS Interventions (OSEP, 2013).*

Sugai and Horner (2002) explained that there are three levels of support arranged along a continuum of prevention and intervention strategies. As illustrated in Figure 1, the primary prevention tier is the foundation of SWPBIS and is universal in nature; implying that all students received the proactive interventions. The secondary tier specifically targets students who are not responding positively to the universal support provided. These students are first identified by a team through observation and data collection and then are provided with specialized interventions. The tertiary prevention tier focuses exclusively on students who are at high risk for school failure due to extreme behavioral and emotional concerns. Often times, these students require “...specially designed and individualized interventions is [sic] emphasized in order to decrease the duration, intensity, complexity, and/or frequency of the problem behavior or situation”

(Sugai & Horner, 2002, p. 131). With the current federal and state mandates, educational leaders are held accountable for student academic and behavioral success.

To address disciplinary concerns, many districts began implementing SWPBIS, a research based system for reducing problematic behavior within the education setting. Carr, Levin, McConnachie, Carlson, Kemp, et. al., (1999) describe SWPBIS as “One of the distinguishing features of a SWPBIS approach is the development of multicomponent interventions designed to address multiple issues that influence an individual’s behavior as well as his or her overall quality of life” (p. 22). The SWPBIS system typically takes about three to five years to reach a point of full implementation.

SWPBIS is an applied system that focuses on the foundational components of ABA (Anderson & Freeman, 2000; Anderson & Kincaid, 2005; Carr, et al., 2002; & Dunlap, 2006).

These are a) achievement of comprehensive lifestyle change and improvement of quality of life across the life span, b) incorporation of persons-centered values and stakeholders input, c) ecological and social validity of interventions, d) a focus on prevention, e) systems change, f) functional assessment of problem behavior, g) multi component intervention, empirical validation of behavior change.” (p. 59)

Although the majority of SWPBIS theoretical background stems from ABA, the literature explains that SWPBIS has evolved from other theoretical perspectives such as “ecological psychology, environmental psychology and community psychology” (Carr et al., 2002, p. 246).

SWPBIS is a system of change based on the assertion that the way people behave affects their lives and the support they receive based on their personal preferences (Sailor

et al., 2009). SWPBIS is focused on reducing problematic behavior, thus improving quality of life. Bambara and Kern (2005) argue that behavior is based on social interactions within the context of the environment and behavior typically serves a purpose. This system defines the overall concept of SWPBIS as a system that teaches students the skills necessary to change behavior by replacing inappropriate behavior with appropriate ways of behaving.

### **Summary of the Literature Review**

The purpose of chapter two was to provide a broader understanding of the history of school discipline, the reasoning of the concerns about school discipline over the decades, and to illustrate that student behavior intervention is a continuously evolving process. As new research is completed, analyzed and tested, school settings adapt and change over the years to meet the growing needs of students. The newest model of school discipline is SWPBIS. This review explained its beginning and the basic premises of the model. The following chapter three presents the research design, the qualitative interview used by the researcher, data collection, data analysis and a summary.

## **Chapter Three**

### **Methods**

The purpose of this study was to explore teacher perceptions regarding discipline within their classrooms and how problematic behavior might impact student learning overall by use of a qualitative research design. This chapter included the design of the study, description of the study, the population and the sample utilized. An explanation of the instrument used as well as the validation and reliability of the interview questions are outlined in this chapter. A detailed list of the interview questions is provided as well as which research question each one targets. The method in which the data were collected and analyzed is also included in this chapter.

### **Research Design**

An ethnographic qualitative research design was utilized by performing individual structured interviews of certified teachers within a particular Midwestern elementary school. Creswell (2013) describes this type of research as “An ethnography focuses on an entire culture-sharing group...ethnography is a qualitative design in which the researcher describes and interprets the sharing and learning patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group” (p. 90). Typically, an ethnography study includes a philosophical conversation about the individual’s ideas and beliefs of personal experiences he/she has had from life experiences. These ideas are expressed through language and/or behavior within a group setting. This researcher gathered the information through an interview process requiring each interviewee to answer interview questions about the experiences regarding student discipline. As Creswell (2013)

explained, the researcher must remain in the background and provide little interference in the process of gathering the data. The researcher reports the data from an objective perspective reporting on what is heard from the experience of the participants. The ethnographer analyzes the information by compiling the commonalities within the information gathered. When compared with other individuals' experiences, themes will begin to emerge. According to Creswell (2013), these themes can be considered a shared experience among those interviewed. Based on the information gathered, universal commonality between the individuals' experiences emerge which provides a sense of evidence of the shared phenomenon. Thus, shared commonalities or themes among the data create evidence of commonalities among the experiences.

Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) explain that information gathered using open-ended interviews can provide a "deeper understanding of a social setting or acuity as viewed from the perspectives of the research participants" (p. 27). Also, as Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) explained, open ended interviews increase the participants' likelihood to share with the researcher how their personal experiences, thoughts and knowledge have shaped their personal experiences. The interview questions used for this study were open ended questions that encouraged the participant to explain in-depth their personal experiences.

Rubin and Rubin, (2005) stated that the interviewer must be careful to remain unbiased while conducting the interview by not interposing their own perspectives of the subject and interfering with the information the participant is sharing. This researcher was careful to allow participants to give as much information as was comfortable without adding biased ideas while interviewing. The participants were allowed to share their

thoughts without any interruptions from the researcher. Gathering data through personal interviews allowed this researcher to gain a richer understanding of the teacher perspectives of student discipline

The process of analyzing the data, according to Creswell (2013) typically begins with the narrower units of analysis (which are the specific statements made) into the much broader context of the statements, looking for detailed descriptions and then a summary, in essence *the what* and *how* of each individual statements grouped together to create a broader shared theme.

### **Population and Sample**

The population for this study included elementary teachers certified in the state of Missouri. All participants taught in the same elementary building housing kindergarten through fifth grade as well as two special education programs. The approximate number of certified educators working in the elementary school was 44. The sample for this study included 10 certified teachers for the building. All participants volunteered their time to be interviewed for this study.

### **Selection of Participants**

The participants were Missouri state certified teachers who were employed within the district and assigned to teach at a kindergarten through fifth grade elementary school in the Midwestern school district. All 10 participants were volunteers who agreed to be interviewed for this research study. All participants in this study had to meet the following criteria:

1. Be employed by the public school district where the study was taking place.



2. Be a Missouri certified teacher employed by the district and teach at the elementary school.
3. Be willing to provide the required demographic information needed for this study.
4. Be willing to complete the entire interview by answering all demographic information and all interview questions.

### **Qualitative Instrument**

This researcher chose to use an ethnographic qualitative approach. The researcher chose this approach because qualitative research allows the researcher to experience the phenomenon from the perspectives of teachers. In this case, the focus of the interview was on student discipline. Creswell (2013) explains that this type of research is most used when a researcher wants to look for patterns in a group sharing a similar culture. Through the interview process, these shared experiences among the participants become apparent as themes emerge among all of the information gathered. Using an interview format allowed the readers to understand the complexity of managing a classroom on a daily basis. This type of qualitative research is helpful when a desire to understand how experts in their field chose to handle certain phenomenon that occur. Most of this rich understanding would become lost in a quantitative study.

The next step for the researcher, Creswell (2013) explains, is to gather data that will then be used to write a detailed description of the experiences of the participants, also known as a textual description. It is an accepted understanding that the subjects have a story to tell and the researcher captures the essence, which Creswell (2013) explains is "...called the essential invariant structures" (p.82).

## **Data Collection Procedures**

This study used an ethnographic qualitative research methodology for gathering the data needed for this research study. Permission from the school district was granted as well as permission to conduct the study was granted from the Institutional Review Board at Baker University on July 6, 2016 as noted in Appendix B. At the beginning of the school term in August 2016, an email was sent to all staff at the elementary building explaining that there was an opportunity to participate in a research project. The email explained that the researcher was seeking participants who were certified teachers and it would be a face-to-face interview with 10 open-ended questions. It was also made clear that the participants would be given a code and their personal identity would not be disclosed to any person or entity. Each participant who volunteered was given a date and time for the interview process. Before the interview began, the researcher read a disclosure statement aloud to each person. The participant was then asked if there were any questions. Any questions were answered and once the participant felt comfortable, the disclosure statement was signed by the participant using the code that the researcher gave them. After obtaining the signed form, each participant was informed that the digital recorder was started, at which point the interview began. The researcher asked each question and gave the participant time to answer each question. If needed, the researcher asked clarifying open-ended questions to further understand the participant answers.

After the interview, the audio recording was transcribed by the researcher into a Word document on the laptop using only the code given to the participant. Special care was given to be sure that the transcribed Word document matched the audio recording

made during the interview. The Word document was then uploaded from the laptop computer to the software program for analysis. When the researcher was not working on the information obtained, all documents and recordings were secured in a locked cabinet located in the researcher's home. The laptop used to transcribe the interview and save the word document was password protected. Only the participants' code appeared on all documents.

### **Validity**

In order to maintain validity of the interview questions used, three educational professionals were asked to validate the interview questions used. Each was asked to carefully examine the interview questions in relation to the three research questions used for this study. Each person received a copy of the three research questions and the interview questions that were used, the order in which the questions would be presented to the participants, and given the opportunity to make suggestions, revisions, or provide meaningful input. All three professionals were contacted through email asking for their input. All three agreed to provide their expertise regarding the questions. All three educational professionals agreed that the questions clearly matched the research questions. These professionals were from different districts with extensive teaching and administrative experiences.

Expert A began his career as a middle school science teacher for five years. After those five years, he began his career as an administrator. Currently he has been an administrator for approximately nine years in the public school system. Expert B also began her career as a teacher in the elementary level, where she taught for seven years before moving into administration. She is now retired and works as a behavioral

consultant for local school districts. Expert C began her career as a special education teacher, where she taught for eight years before moving into administration. She has been in administration for eleven years in a local public school district.

### **Data Analysis**

The Dedoose Research Analysis software package (Dedoose, 2015) was used to analyze the information obtained from the interviews. The process defined by Rubin and Rubin (2012) was utilized as a foundation to manage the data gathered. Following is a list of the steps this researcher used to analyze and synthesize the information obtained.

1. After each interview was completed, it was carefully transcribed from the audio recording obtained.
2. The transcriptions were uploaded into a password protected online software program called Dedoose.
3. The researcher then enter into the program descriptors and codes relating to the data into the program.
4. Each interview was analyzed carefully by the researcher and excerpts from the data was coded with the themes identified into the software program.
5. After all excerpts from the interviews were coded into the program, an analysis was run by the program.
6. Themes were gathered based upon the analysis of the data.
7. The researcher analyzed the themes to look for patterns within the themes.

### **Researcher's Role**

Creswell (2013) explained that an ethnography research study allows the researcher to learn from others experiences by analyzing data gathered from themes that

emerge. Both researcher and participants have preconceived ideas based upon their personal experiences in the world. As the researcher for this study, it was important to only be there to learn, observe, and listen closely to the interviewee. The researcher must be a guide to the participants without imparting biases into the participants' answers yet obtain the richness of each participant's experiences as related to the questions (Creswell, 2013).

To obtain the data needed for this study, the research questions on student discipline were developed by this researcher, the interview questions carefully constructed to support the research questions. The questions were then validated by the three expert educators. Permission was obtained by the district and the university to conduct the study. Participants were solicited by email, interviews were obtained and data was gathered. Then the data were analyzed and conclusions were drawn.

### **Summary**

Chapter three outlined the research method used for this study. The population and sample size were discussed. The qualitative instrumentation development was also explained. The data collection was discussed as well as the data analysis used. The researcher's role was analyzed as well.

## **Chapter Four**

### **Results**

This chapter provides an overview of the findings of the research study. The purpose of this study was to determine commonalities among elementary teachers' perspectives of student discipline. To examine this question, the researcher used a qualitative study by conducting personal interviews with certified teachers. The personal interviews were conducted with certified teachers in a Midwestern school district. The researcher focused on three research questions from which purposive interviewing was utilized to obtain qualitative data used in this study. To obtain participants, an email was sent to the staff at this elementary school asking for volunteers to answer 10 questions regarding student discipline. From a staff of approximately forty-four certified staff who were employed at this school, ten certified staff volunteered to participate in this study.

#### **Study Summary**

The researcher gathered the information obtained from the interviews with each participant. Following is an analysis of the trends obtained from the interviews.

#### **Trend 1: Challenges with Student Discipline**

The first research question was "How have teacher perspectives of discipline problems changed since they began their career?" All ten teachers agreed that their definition of discipline within the classroom has changed with time. Several common findings became clear during the interviews. Out of the ten teachers, six identified socialization skills as problematic which, many stated, had not been the case several years ago. One teacher felt that was due to "...kids don't get to go outside and play like they used to, not only at home, but at school as well. Recess time has been reduced to

one time a day” (Interviewee A4). It was this teacher’s opinion (Interviewee A4) that lack of social skills not only included playing outside, but also stemmed from several factors such as time spent on video games, parents’ fear of letting kids play outside and lack of family time. Interviewee A5 agreed, commenting that sometimes she stops class to practice socialization skills. She argued that by taking time to practice when necessary, the hope is that less instructional time will be lost later when similar situations arise. While not all interviewees addressed this in the same way, there were statements made by most that lead the researcher to conclude that this is common across teachers.

Responses from interviewees focused on the topic of respect. Nearly all of the ten educators interviewed spoke about the decline of respect among the students. Lack of respect from students was identified for not only adults but for peers as well. All ten educators identified lack of respect during the interviews and all ten identified that it went beyond the classroom. As one teacher (Interviewee A6) stated “Respect is lacking in not only homes, but our society as a whole. These kids absorb what they hear and see in all parts of their life and unfortunately we must deal with it here in school.” Four of the teachers interviewed stated that they will often require students to apologize to the one offended by the lack of respect. However, as pointed out, respect isn’t always being taught at home. Dealing with the change in classroom discipline issues caused teachers to adapt during their career to best manage changing student behavior. All ten teachers agreed that classroom management has changed since beginning their career.

The data clearly show that teachers defined two specific areas for effective discipline and management of problematic behavior. The first specific area for managing classrooms effectively was identified as student relationship building. Out of the ten

teachers interviewed, relationships were mentioned by eight teachers. Several interviewees stressed the importance of beginning rapport with each student as early as possible. One teacher (Interviewee A7) stated “You must start building and working on that relationship with each student as quickly as possible. I have several ways I begin the process even before meeting the students for the first time.” The eight teachers that discussed relationships felt that this was a key ingredient in managing a classroom throughout the year. Another teacher (Interviewee A10) stated “It’s also about establishing those relationships with students as well as camaraderie with them.” Eight teachers indicated that trust comes from the relationship with students and when it comes time to use discipline for unacceptable behavior, students know that the teacher will always do what is best for them and the classroom.

The second specific area for effective discipline that teachers identified was the climate of the classroom. Participants worked to create a climate of learning, but creating expectations within the classroom by building trust among the students. The interviewees shared various ways that they created a sense of climate in their classrooms. All ten interviewees considered relationship building as a part of climate while others described climate in the sense of expectations. Teachers agreed that clearly outlining expectations, routines and procedures makes a difference in the climate of the classroom. One teacher (Interviewee A4) stated “Student discipline is creating a classroom atmosphere where learners can reach their highest potential. It’s a set of expectations and routines, partnered with consequences both positive and negative.” Another teacher (Interviewee A2) described how she sets the climate in her classroom by using physical structure as well as using a computerized based tracking system call Dojo:



Lots of structure in my room. Again, I use Dojo a lot and this helps keep things running smoothly. Dojo is positive based and the kids really like being rewarded with a dojo because they add up to some reward. Also, I structure my room physically so there are spots students can move to perhaps to be alone or to get away from something or someone who is troubling them. (Interviewee A2)

Six of ten teachers interviewed mentioned that classroom management required a consistent approach with the expectations set forth in the classroom. The teachers shared how they taught the expectations, but agreed that consistency within the classroom helped set the climate of the room. Variation in the teaching of the expectations included giving students input into the rules of the classroom, providing plenty of role playing and practice, visual and nonverbal reminders and consistently throughout the day of the expectations. Six of the ten teachers agreed that students must be given the opportunity to practice the rules of the room. Nine educators interviewed agreed that having the students become a part of the process of establishing the rules also enriched the climate of their classroom. One teacher (Interviewee A3) described climate as building in procedure for student problematic behavior so it is clear; students understand what will happen.

I try providing support and redirection as well as structure, something that keeps the kids safe and able to access their purpose and goals. Consequences is what you do first, it's a response to a behavior. Consequences can be more like a natural consequence verses unnatural. An example might be, you better tie your shoe little Johnny or you might trip over it. Johnny doesn't listen and then he

trips over it. But discipline is deeper than that. It is about getting to a point when they can have a sense of purpose and goals. (Interviewee A3)

Teachers cited several ways of structuring the classroom to provide for a safe learning environment. The teachers explained that structuring the room meant providing a flow for movement throughout the room, areas designated within the room for a “cooling off” spot, areas for specific subject matter and positioning of seating arrangements, just to name a few. Six of the ten teachers mentioned using instruction as a means of keeping the flow of the learning going as well as planning for engaging activities to promote learning and movement within the classroom. One teacher (Interviewee A2) stated that she keeps the pace of the instruction flowing, even when a disruption occurs. That way others can continue to learn while she handles the student disruption.

Clearly, the teachers interviewed have multiple challenges within the classroom setting. Although discipline has been an issue within the public school setting for decades, it is clear that the challenges faced by today’s educators come in a multitude of ways. The teachers interviewed identified the changes in discipline as socialization skills and lack of respect for others as the main challenges faced daily within the classroom setting.

## **Trend 2: Disruptions to the Learning Environment**

The second research question was, “How do teachers perceive problematic student behavior in terms of disrupting the learning environment?” The qualitative research clearly showed that the majority of the teachers interviewed believed that student behavior impacts the learning environment for all students. Teachers explained

that there are two main areas of concern surrounding discipline that clearly impact the student misbehaving that impact that student's ability to learn.

All ten teachers mentioned during the interview that problematic behavior stems from two specific areas. The first was home environment and the impact it has on student learning and classroom management. All ten teachers mentioned home life as being a deterrent to the success of students. Eight teachers stated that students who do not receive consistency at home often struggle at school. One teacher (Interviewee A1) stated, "Lots of kids don't have structure in their households. Kids should be getting consistency and structure at home. Sometimes it is mass chaos in their homes." Most teachers agreed that when a student's home environment is difficult it can make learning difficult for that student. Another teacher (Interviewee A3) reported:

Sometimes it can be a home situation that disrupts learning. The student lives in constant chaos. Sometimes (sic) severe home environments, like homelessness. For example, if a child needs to sleep then I let them until it becomes too much. Then I use my rapport with the student to process with them to figure out what is happening. (Interviewee A3)

However, another teacher (Interviewee A8) described student home life as family turmoil and attachment issues with students because of missing parents. The majority of teachers stated that it is not unusual for students to enter the room in the morning wanting to tell the teacher about home situations because it is on their mind. It is clear that the relationship the teacher builds with the students creates a safe environment for the students therefore many storied of the troubles that students have are shared with the teachers.

Students missing skills for success was mentioned by all 10 teachers. The missing skills that were referred to included friendship skills, life coping skills, basic classroom skills and managing conflict skills. A teacher (Interviewee A3) stated, “Respect for all, especially for other children is really lacking. I think it comes from what parents feel is acceptable. Kids tend to not be able to cooperate and have a sense of self control like before.” Another teacher (Interviewee A5) stated that the missing skill she notices the most is the skill of impulse control. She stated that “in our world, it’s about impulse control.” She explained further that impulse control can be learned but many are lacking the ability to control themselves in a structured environment. Therefore, time must be taken during the day to consistently teach the replacement behavior for the missing skills. All ten teachers mentioned that to address the missing skills, these skills must be taught throughout the day. Students missing skills, (Interviewee A2), receive practice of that skill through discipline. Her thoughts were that it is through discipline that students are taught the skill that is lacking.

She stated:

The teacher is trying to help the student learn from their mistake and teach a missing skill. When I discipline it is because the student needs to practice a skill. Practicing can include triaging with another adult, role playing, and repeated practice. Sometimes the student’s missing skill needs to be broken down and (sic) under the microscope to figure out what part is not understood and needs more practice. Then moving forward with a plan for that student. (Interviewee A2)

Teachers indicated during the interview that teaching replacement behaviors to students is a vital part of classroom management. Once the student has accomplished the replacement behavior then there is one less interruption during the school day.

According to the research analyzed in this study, it is clear that the educators handle disruption within the school setting. Students are taught the missing skills needed to be successful within the classroom setting. These skills include how to get along with others, following directions, showing respect for others and solving conflicts appropriately. Teachers felt strongly that a chaotic home life can affect the student's success at school.

### **Trend 3: Time Lost from Instruction for Disruptive Behavior**

The third research question was, "What are teacher perceptions of addressing problematic student behavior and the amount of time this takes in a school day?" This particular question received a variety of answers. One teacher (Interviewee A9) made her feelings clear about education. "We start to miss the boat in education when time is taken for misbehavior. It's important for us to be able to address behavior yet not let it impact the learning of the other students, nor take away time from others." Although many teachers described what misbehavior has looked like in their room. All teachers had stories to tell problematic behavior they had to handle in their classroom. Most of the examples were of the extreme behaviors that caused administrative assistance to be called for help. But the impact on others learning was clear. For example, one teacher (Interviewee A5) described the most extreme situations she has to deal with in the following:

Throwing furniture, yelling stuff out like inappropriate comments, depending on level of severity I will remove other students to a nearby classroom. This is to keep others safe, sometimes I will attempt to relocate the upset student in my room and keep teaching. Early intervention is the key, especially to keep it from escalating. Sometimes to keep it small, I will use distractions. Sometimes, students become upset from other students, especially if a student is extra sensitive that day. (Interviewee A5)

When evacuating the room, the teacher estimated that she taught her class in the hallway for at least 45 minutes before she was able to return to the room.

Six teachers described students as completely out of control. When this occurs, these teachers concluded, other students don't feel safe and have trouble concentrating. When a student becomes that disruptive, administrative help is called in to assist. However, the remaining students in the classroom will be moved for safety to allow these students to continue to learn, but as these teachers pointed out, the disruption it causes can last for several hours before other students feel safe and settled enough to begin learning. Teachers shared several stories of extreme behavioral outburst. One teacher (Interviewee A7) shared this:

Students have totally trashed my room, but it is a release for them. They may say they hate me, but I know they are just releasing whatever it is they brought with them from home. Now shutting down completely can also stem from frustration with work but for all the above-mentioned reasons. (Interviewee A7)

This teacher again related some of the outburst to home life. She further explained in the interview that other students are evacuated to another room to continue instruction. She

estimated the time for the other students to be able to return to class can be anywhere from 25 minutes to 1 hour. After the students return to class, there is a transition time where she must calm her class down again in order to get back on task and continue with her instruction. Her story was a common one to hear as other teachers interviewed had similar examples. All ten teachers described the time it took to get back on task and learning to begin after the disruption was from approximately five minutes to 1 hour. The majority of the teachers added that it really depended on how fast the teachers could intervene with the student causing the disruption. If the intervention and processing with the student was successful the amount of instruction time lost was minimal. However, all ten teachers agreed that depending on the severity and longevity of the behavior the impact on loss of instruction, teaching and learning for others was greatly increased.

A teacher (Interviewee A3) described a disruption in her class as follows:

Well, it for sure can inhibit the learning of others. Kindergarteners are easily distractible, especially when it comes to their friends. So, if a friend is upset, it upsets the whole room. It's really hard for them to get their work done without lots of redirects from me and if I'm having to process with one student about behavior, most all others lose time. (Interviewee 3)

One teacher (Interviewee 9) mentioned her concern over lack of empathy from the other students. She wondered if the students experience the misbehavior of other students so much that they lose a sense of empathy for the other student. She then followed that comment up with, perhaps, educators have taught kids how to ignore the acting out behavior. "Well, I think sometimes it can scare the other kids, you want them to know

that an adult will know about it and will take care of it, so that students trust that it is being handled” (Interviewee 9).

Another teacher (Interviewee 7) agreed:

Biggest thing is desensitized to behaviors. Kids are starting to become where they don't notice it or care about the acting out. They may move away from that student, but don't seem to react much to it. They know that an adult will handle it. It absolutely affects the actual learning of the other students. (Interviewee 7)

All ten teachers in this study described the behaviors they deal with consistently, but not necessarily daily, in their classrooms were cussing, pulling staff hair, threatening staff with school objects, threatening other students, property destruction, lack of respect to others, defiance, and disrespectful behavior toward staff.

Disruptive behavior has existed since public education began. It is clear that all ten educators in this study agreed that disruptive behavior interrupts the learning of students. These teachers interviewed gave an estimate of instructional time lost from 5 minutes to approximately 1 hour. This supports the necessity of strong classroom management within the school setting.

## **Summary**

Chapter four included a synthesis and analysis of the qualitative data gathered from the interviews with ten certified teachers regarding student discipline. There were several findings from the data that allowed the reader a glimpse into the world of the classroom. These findings were discussed in detail in this chapter.

Chapter five includes a discussion of the study summary, overview of the problem, purpose statement and research questions. It includes a review of the



methodology used for this study, major findings and findings related to the literature review as well, as implications for future research.

## Chapter Five

### Interpretation and Recommendations

Chapter five includes a summary of the study, a review of the methodology used and a summary of the major findings. Recommendations are given for further research and concluding remarks are given.

#### Study Summary

This qualitative study examined the teacher perceptions of managing student behavior in the classroom setting. Today's educators must manage multiple aspects of a classroom. Ultimately, the teacher is responsible for the student learning the information taught by the teacher. This study looked at how teachers view discipline in the classroom and the amount of time student misbehavior may interfere with learning. As well as teacher perceptions on defining discipline, what may cause disruptions and how misbehavior is handled in the classroom setting were addressed.

**Overview of the problem.** An extensive literature review was conducted to investigate the history of student discipline from the beginning of the early 1700s to present day, examining various student discipline models in order to gain an understanding of how the school system arrived at how discipline is now being managed within the classroom. However, it proved difficult to find resources that outlined in depth the considerations of discipline and punishment in the beginning of the 1700s to the late 1900s. Since the late 1900s, there have been a significant variety of programs that provided information for teachers on how to handle students in a classroom setting so that learning could occur for all students.

**Purpose statement and research questions.** The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions of student discipline and how discipline is managed within the school setting. The study was guided by three interview question:

**RQ 1.** How have teacher perspectives of discipline problems changed since they began their career?

**RQ 2.** How do teachers perceive problematic student behavior in terms of disrupting the learning environment and affecting student learning?

**RQ 3.** What are teacher perceptions of addressing problematic student behavior and the amount of time this takes in a school day?

**Review of the methodology.** This researcher used a qualitative purposive interview of a sampling at an elementary school located in a Midwestern suburban school district. This approach allowed the researcher the opportunity to be present during the interview and to be a part of the process, but not an active participant. This allowed the researcher to experience the richness of the participants' answers, as well as, to help keep the interview process on track with the interview question. The participants that volunteered for this study were provided with a disclosure statement before the interviewing began.

**Major trends.** There were several trends from the data that allowed the reader a glimpse into the world of the classroom. The first finding indicated that teachers viewed relationship building with students as a key to overall management of the classroom and an important component of effective student discipline. The other important component identified during the interviews was the climate of the classroom. The teachers

interviewed clearly identified that as an important part of management. Providing a safe, caring environment where student redirection occurred when necessary as well as engaging instruction to maintain a flow about the classroom were identified as management techniques.

The second trend showed teachers' perceptions related to changes in student discipline and where the teachers felt the biggest changes in classroom management occurred. It was clear that the teachers identified changes in home environment and students lacking or missing the skills necessary to be successful in the classroom environment. Although teachers knew that little could be done about the home situations that students deal with, they continued to provide training with the lack of missing skills with students.

The third major trend in this study was the type of student misbehavior that occurs in the classroom and the amount of instruction time lost due to handling student outburst of behavior. Most teachers indicated that they had built in incentives for students who make good choices by using praise, dojo, and engaging instruction to help with cutting back on student misbehavior. However, students do misbehave and the problematic behavior must be addressed. The teachers interviewed gave insight into what type of behavior occurs in their classrooms and how they handle the behavior. For the extreme behavior, administration was called to handle the behavior. However, most teachers indicated that they chose to provide early interventions before the behavior escalates.

### **Findings Related to the Literature**

Prior to the completion of this study on student discipline, an extensive review of current literature reviewing the concerns of student misbehavior in the school setting was

completed. This review covered the concepts of this topic back to the 1700s which required the acceptance of few resources that covered the first few centuries of the education system in America. However, as the literature review moved forward, additional research became available. As the research continued through time, researchers from several respected fields became interested in studying this topic. Therefore, more information based on research became available.

The most informative research began to surface around 1950. Various researchers conducted studies that were based on psychological theories, many claiming to be the best answer for student misbehavior; a one size fits all mentality for educators to use in the classroom. The concept of discipline in the schools usually maintained close ties to current societal beliefs, from politicians, psychologists and school administrators, trying to create a usable approach that was easily implemented and one that would fit all students and teachers. For example, Kafka (2011) explained that school discipline was seen as necessary for conformity as a sense of morality with the social control agenda in order to prepare youth for an industrialized nation.

As time passed and the discipline of psychology was becoming more widely accepted, a natural union was formed between psychology and educational theories. According to Charles (1985), psychologist Glasser became convinced that student discipline could be maintained by understanding the consequences of good choices versus bad choices and students could be taught the difference between the two. The concept was that students were consciously making bad choices and if taught that the good choices outweighed the bad choices then the student would naturally choose the better one of the two.

As the theory of motivation by Dreikurs became well known it was believed that students misbehaved because of four basic mistaken goals. These four mistaken goals were; 1. Attention getting, 2. Power seeking, 3. Revenge, and 4. Displaying inadequacy. It was the teachers' job to figure out which motivation the student was acting on and the misbehavior could be fixed by implementing various interventions for that mistaken goal. It became common for school personnel to develop a plan for the student with misbehavior based upon the mistaken goal.

However, Canter (2010) became known for Assertive Discipline which became a popular management technique. This theory postulated that teachers had control and needed to establish clear expectations within the classroom. Canter (2010) believed strongly that teachers must first build a relationship with the student preferably before teachers had to discipline the student.

Today, one of the more popular adopted discipline plans is a systematic wide program called SWPBIS, which has its roots in ABA. As stated in the literature review, ABA had its start when researchers began looking at adults who were severely disabled and how best to help these adults learn to function in society.

This researcher discovered that out of all the teachers interviewed, there was an eclectic approach to discipline based upon the models listed in the literature review. Several of the teachers indicated that their form of discipline and management came from their years of experience in the classroom. Based upon the various models outlined in the literature review, clearly one-size-fits-all mentality toward student discipline doesn't work for all students.

## **Conclusions**

Classroom management is crucial to the academic success of students. Schools must strive to maintain a calm, productive, active and engaging environment for student learning. Disruptions by student misbehavior can impact learning of others, as perceived by teachers in this study. Various management techniques as outlined in chapter two may be useful for managing the classroom. This qualitative study implies that as perceived by teachers, student disruptions may occur for a variety of reasons. As suggested, misbehavior can significantly impact the learning of students.

**Implications for action.** The implications from this study have implications for all school districts who struggle with problematic student behavior in the classroom setting. The implications of this study also suggest that educators still struggle with how to handle discipline within the classroom setting. It is clear that the teachers interviewed face multiple situations for student misbehavior and teachers overall felt that problematic student behavior is on the rise. Teachers would benefit from professional development in integrating social skill training within the classroom setting. Students need consistent reinforcement of proper behavior and socialization with peers and adults. It would be wise for districts to provide resources, training and alternative interventions for struggling students. Educators trained in student development should become involved with educating all staff on how to handle student disruption in the classroom and how to support all students with life skills. Student behavior is impacting instruction and learning for other students. The degree to which the disruptions impact learning was not addressed in this study.

## **Recommendations for Future Research**

Recommendations for future studies that could build upon this research study include:

1. A qualitative research study that examines teachers' perceptions of student discipline could be conducted at the middle school level or at a high school level as these levels could potentially add to this study. This could add to the richness of this study by examining the behaviors at older grade levels.
2. A qualitative research study examining perceptions of student discipline could be conducted with administrators instead of strictly teachers. Doing so could add to a clearer understanding of how to handle misbehavior and reduce the impact of the misbehavior on student learning.
3. A quantitative study could be conducted using input from teachers and/or administrators. Doing so may offer clarity using statistical data of student discipline.
4. A qualitative or quantitative study could be conducted including more districts, perhaps looking at statewide participation instead of at one elementary school located in one district. This type of study would provide a broader sample of data.
5. A qualitative research study could also be one that analyzes specific demographic information to gain a deeper understanding of student discipline by analyzing teachers' length of time teaching, gender, age and specialty of teaching.



**Concluding remarks.** Throughout history student discipline has been a concern and after years of research conducted on this topic, the conclusion from this study continues to support that history. This researcher interviewed ten educators, whom the district classified as highly qualified by the state of Missouri regulations, to gain a deeper understanding of the teachers' perceptions of student discipline. All ten interviewees shared their thoughts, beliefs and practices of handling students in the classroom. The teachers shared what they believed was the estimated time of lost instruction in their classroom from problematic student behavior. It is the hope of this researcher that further research will be conducted in order to address the significant student issues teachers are dealing with during the course of a school day.

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U.S. Department of Education ([www.idea.ed.gov](http://www.idea.ed.gov))

## Appendices

## **Appendix A: Analysis of Research Data**



Code Application\_Dedoose Chart

	Definition of discipline	Relationship building	climate of classroom	purpose of discipline	modify and change behavior	student behavior over time	connection to world	home env.	missing skills	type of problematic behavior	student disruption	educational impact on learning	severity of behavior-	teacher handled	time of lost in learning	Totals
A9.docx	1	4	2	1				1	2			2	1	1	1	16
A8.docx			1	1	1		1	1	2			2	1	1	1	12
A7.docx	1						1	1				2	1	1	2	9
A6.docx	1			2			2		1			1	2	3	2	14
A5.docx	1	3							1	1	1				2	13
A4.docx		3	1	2					2	2			2	2	2	18
A3.docx		2							1	2			1	1	3	12
A2.docx			2	1	1				1		1				2	12
A10.docx			1	1				2	1				2	1	2	11
A1.docx	1	1	1	1				1	2				3	2	3	16
Totals	10	13	10	4			4	11	13	2		19	11	20	16	

**Appendix B: IRB Form**



SCHOOL OF EDUCATION  
GRADUATE DEPARTMENT

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
IRB PROTOCOL NUMBER \_\_\_\_\_  
(IRB USE ONLY)

**IRB REQUEST**  
**Proposal for Research**  
**Submitted to the Baker University Institutional Review Board**

**I. Research Investigator(s) Dr. Harold Frye and Ms. Sarah K. Thomas-Davis**

**Department(s) School of Education Graduate Department**

Name:

Signature

- |                     |       |                             |
|---------------------|-------|-----------------------------|
| 1. Dr. Harold Frye  | _____ | Major Advisor               |
| 2. Dr. Phil Messner | _____ | Research Analyst            |
| 3. Dr. Jim Robins   |       | University Committee Member |
| 4. Dr. Rob Fisher   |       | External Committee Member   |

Principal Investigator: Sarah K. Thomas Davis

Phone: 816-590-2732

Email: skdavis@student.\_\_\_\_\_

Mailing address: 9815 N.E. 98<sup>th</sup> St.

Kansas City, MO. 64157

Faculty sponsor: Dr. Harold Frye

Phone: 913-522-7773

Email:

Expected Category of Review: \_\_\_Exempt   X   Expedited \_\_\_Full

## **Application to Conduct Research in [REDACTED] Public Schools**

### **Title of proposed research study:**

**Teacher Perceptions of Needs in the Student Discipline Processes: A comparison of Behavior Intervention Models.**

### **Purpose of the Study:**

Current research has shown a correlation between student behavior and academic performance. This study will be to conduct a qualitative study located within the Liberty Public School District in the Spring of 2016. The purpose of this study is to gather data concerning student discipline and how educators currently deal with the disruption of students who may be interfering with other students' learning. The study will be in a person to person interview with Ridgeview Elementary certified teachers who volunteer for the study.

### **Timeline of the Study:**

The timeline of this study will be from February to April of 2016. This will ensure enough time to gather volunteers and analyze the data.

### **Benefits to the [REDACTED] Public Schools:**

The benefits overall to the field of education will be that [REDACTED] Public Schools (anonymously) helped further the understanding of the link between student discipline and academic achievement. The district may directly benefit from how student discipline is perceived by educators in the [REDACTED] Public Schools.

### **Assurance of anonymity of [REDACTED] Public Schools students and staff:**

No aspect of the data will be made part of any permanent record that can be identified with the subject. All interview responses will be anonymous in nature. The participating district ([REDACTED] Public School District) as well as the name of the elementary school ([REDACTED]) will be given a pseudo name to ensure they are given anonymity in the study as well. All demographic information obtained for this study will come from public information for the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education website. All participants will receive a code but will not be identified in any way. Within the study either a code will be used or a fake name will be provided if direct quotes are used.

### **Risks of the research:**

- **Will the subjects encounter the risk of psychological, social, physical, or legal risk? If so, please describe the nature of the risk and any measures designed to mitigate that risk.**
  - No, the subjects will not be subjected to any risk of psychological, social, physical or legal risk.
- **Will any stress to subjects be involved? If so, please describe.**
  - No stress to any subjects will be involved in this study.
- **Will the subjects be deceived or misled in any way? If so, include an outline or script of the debriefing.**
  - No, the subjects will not be deceived or misled in any way.
- **Will the subjects be presented with materials, which might be considered to be offensive, threatening, or degrading? If so, please describe.**
  - No materials, which might be considered to be offensive, threatening or degrading will be presented to the subjects participating in the study.
- **Approximately how much time will be demanded of each subject?**
  - The interview will last approximately 20-30 minutes for each participant. Length may depend upon the length of the subject's responses.

### **District involvement:**

The subjects will include certified teachers (classroom, course content, and special education) grades K-5 from the [REDACTED] School District during the 2016-2017 school year. Participants will be solicited via email contact beginning in the spring semester and ending in April 2016, upon completion of the data gathering process. To ensure that each subject's participation is voluntary, an email will be sent to all teachers (classroom, course content, and special education) in [REDACTED] Elementary which is located in the [REDACTED] Public School District inviting them to participate in the interview. Subjects will give their voluntary consent for participation by choosing to respond to and completing the interview with the researcher either in person or over the phone.

### **Funding Sources:**

This study is part of my doctoral program. There will not be any funding necessary for this study.

**IRB Approval:**

Baker University's policy requires that the district where the research will be conducted must give permission before the IRB will be approved through the university. The IRB for this study has been submitted to my advisor, Dr. Harold Frye.

**Appendix C: IRB Consent Letter**



*Baker University Institutional Review Board*

7/6/2016

Dear Sarah Davis and Dr. Frye,

The Baker University IRB has reviewed your research project application and approved this project under Expedited Status Review. As described, the project complies with all the requirements and policies established by the University for protection of human subjects in research. Unless renewed, approval lapses one year after approval date.

Please be aware of the following:

1. Any significant change in the research protocol as described should be reviewed by this Committee prior to altering the project.
2. Notify the IRB about any new investigators not named in original application.
3. When signed consent documents are required, the primary investigator must retain the signed consent documents of the research activity.
4. If this is a funded project, keep a copy of this approval letter with your proposal/grant file.
5. If the results of the research are used to prepare papers for publication or oral presentation at professional



conferences, manuscripts or abstracts are requested for IRB as part of the project record.

Please inform this Committee or myself when this project is terminated or completed. As noted above, you must also provide IRB with an annual status report and receive approval for maintaining your status. If you have any questions, please contact me at CTodden@BakerU.edu or 785.594.8440.

Sincerely,

*Chris Todden EdD*

Chair, Baker University IRB

Baker University IRB Committee Verneda Edwards EdD

Sara Crump PhD Erin Morris PhD Scott Crenshaw

**Appendix D: Consent to Participate Form**

**FULL DISCLOSURE FOR BAKER UNIVERSITY STUDY BY SARAH K.  
DAVIS-LURIE**

First, thank you so much for agreeing to meet with me for this interview. This interview is on student discipline. I am interested to hear your experiences with student discipline, how it impacts you, your classroom, others learning and how you think it impacts other students' learning and your teaching.

**FULL DISCLOSURE:** This interview has no trick questions, does not ask for identifying information, and is not being deceptive to you in any way. You will not be hurt or jeopardized in any way. You may choose to discontinue or pass on any question without consequence. The following questions I will be asking you are for a study I am doing for my dissertation through Baker University. Please know that I **will be audio taping and taking notes as we talk.** I will transcribe the tape to be sure my notes, memory and any quotes used are accurate. The tape and transcript will be properly destroyed upon completion. In the meantime the audio recording and notes taken will be kept in a secured cabinet located in my home that only I have access to. In the actual study, a code name or number/letter will be assigned to each teacher that participates so your confidentiality is assured. Your answers here will not be communicated to anyone in the public school district nor outside of the district and will be used under an anonymous code within the study. ■ district will also be blind in the study. No identifying information will be used in the study of yourself, your answer or any student name that may come up on the course of the interview.

Please sign your code name below stating that you understand this is being recorded and transcribed, but all information will be confidential and a code name will be assigned and used during the study.

---

Participant (sign code given to you)

Date

**Appendix E: Interview Questions Used for the Study**

## INTERVIEW QUESTIONS USED FOR THE STUDY

RQ 1. How have teacher perspectives of discipline problems changed since they began their career?

- a. What is student discipline and how would you define it?
- b. Do you feel that your perspective of student discipline has changed since you began your career? Why or Why not?
- c. How do you classify behavior you handle where you must call for assistance to help with that behavior?

RQ 2. How do teachers perceive problematic student behavior in terms of disrupting the learning environment and affecting student learning?

- a. When a disruption occurs approximately how long do you feel it takes you to get your students back on task and settled to learn?
- b. How often do you respond to appropriate and inappropriate student behavior?
- c. What is your estimate of learning time lost daily from inappropriate student behavior?
- d. What are the educational impact of student discipline to other students?

RQ 3. What are teacher perceptions of addressing problematic student behavior and the amount of time this takes in a school day?

- d. What are the most common types of inappropriate behavior that happens in your room? Uncommon behaviors?

- e. What, if any, do you do to limit the occurrence of misbehavior and to help students continue to behave properly?
- f. From your perspective, what type of student is more likely to act out?

**Appendix F: Teacher Perceptions of Need in the Student Discipline Processes  
Interview**

**Teacher Perceptions of Need in the Student Discipline Processes: A Comparison of  
Behavior Intervention Models**

INTERVIEW FORM FOR CERTIFIED TEACHERS

DIRECTIONS: Please answer each question as honestly, clearly and thoroughly as possible. Do you have any questions before we begin?

TEACHER CODE \_\_\_\_\_

- 1 What is student discipline and how would you define it? (RQ 1)
2. Do you feel that your perspective of student discipline has changed since you began your career? Why or why not? (RQ 1)
3. What are the most common types of inappropriate behavior that happens in your classroom? This can include from mild to severe. (RQ 3)



4. How do you classify behavior you handle where you must call for assistance to help with that particular student/behavior? (RQ 1)
  
5. When a disruption occurs, approximately how long do you feel it takes you to get everyone back on task and settled to learn? (RQ 2)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. How often do you respond to appropriate and inappropriate student behavior? (RQ 2)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
7. From your perspective, what type of student is more likely to act out? (RQ 3)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
8. What is your estimate of learning time lost daily from inappropriate student behavior? (RQ 2)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
9. What, if any do you do to limit the occurrence of misbehavior and to help students continue to behavior properly? (RQ 3)

10. What are the educational impact of student discipline to other students learning?  
(RQ2)