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THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTIONS AND SUPPORT,

COUNSELING, AND MENTORING ON THE BEHAVIOR AND ACHIEVEMENT

OF AFRICAN AMERICAN MALES

by

Elesha Jean Buckley

A Dissertation
Submitted to the Graduate School,
the College of Education and Human Sciences
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in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

Approved by:

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ABSTRACT

The extensive gap in educational achievement between African American males and their peers is one of the most detrimental problems facing American society (Burchinal, McCartney, Steinberg, Crosnoe, Friedman, McLoyd, & Picanta, 2011). The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring on disruptive classroom behavior resulting in office referrals. The study also examined the impact of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring on student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Previous literature discussed Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring.

Findings indicated that participation in PBIS was not a significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. The results of this study suggested that participation in counseling was the only significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Results indicated that participation in mentoring was not a significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

Findings from the study indicated that participation in PBIS was not a significant predictor of reading scores received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Also, the results of the study indicated that in participation in counseling was not a significant predictor of reading scores received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Lastly, the findings from this study indicated that

mentoring was the only significant predictor of reading scores. However, the test revealed a negative relationship between mentoring and reading scores.

Recommendations for further research, policy, and practice were made.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

DEDICATION

First, I would like to thank God for blessing me to complete this journey. I give

Him all of the glory, honor, and praise. He inspired me to begin this journey, He helped

me through it, and He helped me to finish it. I thank God for giving me the strength,

knowledge, time, opportunity, determination, and inspiration from others to complete this

task. I dedicate this work to Him first and foremost.

I dedicate this work to my loving father, Elijah Jerome Buckley. You have been

the most influential person in my life and my biggest supporter and encourager. You

have been both mother and father to me. I am truly blessed to have you as a father, and I

am truly thankful for you. You are the God-given inspiration behind this study. It is my

heartfelt desire that every child will have a wonderful father like you. You are a true role

model for what a father, husband, educator, and person should be. It is my desire that

every child will have the blessed life that I have because of a father and role model like

you. I thank God for you, Daddy, and I love you with all of my heart.

I dedicate this work to the memory of my sweet late mother, Marva Jean

Washington Buckley. I am truly thankful for my mother's life, love, legacy as an

educator, and last prayer. I believe that God is still honoring her request as He continues

to bless my life.

I am thankful for my two, sweet fur-babies, Girly and Lucy Buckley for their

understanding and unconditional love while I spent late nights at the library or in front of

the computer. Dogs really are man's best friends.

I also would like to thank my Whole Armor Church of God in Christ family,

especially Pastor and First Lady Clark and the Clark Family. Thank you for your prayers

and support. I am forever grateful to my friends, neighbors, and colleagues for their understanding and words of encouragement. I am so thankful to God for all of my loved ones who encouraged me throughout this journey.

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CHAPTER I - INTRODUCTION

The extensive gap in educational achievement between African American males and their peers is one of the most detrimental problems facing American society (Burchinal, McCartney, Steinberg, Crosnoe, Friedman, McLoyd, & Picanta, 2011). They fall far behind White male peers on standardized tests and behind Black females in math and science (Praeger, 2011). In addition, African American males are more likely to be labeled as having a learning disability and placed in special education than any other student group (Zilanawala, Martin, Noguera, and Mincy, 2018). Nearly half of African American males do not complete high school in most American cities (Praeger, 2011). Bracy and Peguero (2014) asserted that those who do not graduate from high school have poorer health, have a greater probability to be unemployed, more likely to be delinquent and use drugs, and have a higher likelihood to be incarcerated. Praeger (2011) disturbingly observed that schools serve populations of Black boys who have a higher risk of entering prison than entering college.

In addition to the achievement gap between African American males and their counterparts, there is also a discipline gap (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). According to Rudd (2014) and Richard and Hardin (2018), Black males are disciplined more often for disruptive behavior and are suspended and expelled more than White students. More than 70% of the schoolchildren involved in school-associated arrests or referred to law enforcement were Hispanic or African American (Rudd, 2014). The findings of a survey of 72,000 schools revealed that African American students comprised only 18 percent of those enrolled in the schools included in the study (Rudd, 2014). This 18%, however, accounted for 35% of those suspended one time, 46% of

those suspended more than one time, and 39% of those expelled (Rudd, 2014). This is a major concern because student achievement decreases when students disrupt the learning process for others. Their own learning experience is disrupted when they are not present to receive instruction due to suspensions or expulsions.

To close the gaps in achievement and discipline of African American males and their peers, educational interventions are necessary (Davis, 2003). According to Cook, Duong, McIntosh, Fiat, Larson, Pullmann, and McGinnis (2018), longstanding discipline disparities for African American male students are related to unfortunate outcomes and require practical and effective school-based solutions. Noguera (2012) suggested implementing educational interventions for African American and Latino boys early when warning signs, such as failure to meet academic expectations and grade retention, are present. Bell (2010) agreed that intervening at younger ages is associated with more positive outcomes for students. Bradshaw (2013) reported that Positive Behavior Intervention Support programs have been shown to reduce behavior problems. Johnson and Hannon (2014) asserted that services provided by school counselors are instrumental in students overcoming behavior and academic challenges. Grant and Dieker (2011) recommended mentoring as an effective intervention for Black males. Dyce (2013) concluded that providing educational interventions for Black males would increase their chances of obtaining academic success. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring on disruptive classroom behavior resulting in office referrals and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

Statement of Problem

Ford and Moore (2013) reported that African American males are "disproportionately experiencing negative school outcomes" (p. 399). Ford and Moore (2013) stated that African American males experience low graduation rates, low test scores, low grades, and high rates of academic failure and dropout. Praeger (2011) reported that only 12% of fourth grade Black males are proficient in reading in comparison to 38% of White males in fourth grade. Although extremely underrepresented in gifted programs and advanced classes, Black males, along with Hispanic males, constitute nearly 80 percent of youth in special education programs (Ford & Moore, 2013; NEA, 2011; Zilanawala, et. al, 2018). National Education Association (NEA) (2011) statistics revealed that black males make up only nine percent of the student population in the United States but make up 20% of all students classified as mentally retarded. NEA (2011) data revealed that less than 50% of African American male students graduate from high school on time.

Losen, Hodson, Keith, Morrison, and Belway (2015) suggested that closing the achievement gap will be impossible if the discipline gap is ignored. Gregory and Weinstein (2008) conducted a study at an American urban high school. The researchers reported the enrollment was 30% African American, 37% White, 8% Asian, 12% Latino, 11% mixed, and 1% Filipino, Alaska Native, American Indian, Pacific Islander, or Native Hawaiian. After completing a study, Gregory and Weinstein (2008) found that African Americans made up only 30% of the total enrollment but constituted 58% of students receiving office referrals for defiance related infractions. In contrast, their White counterparts produced only 5% of defiance related referrals while making up

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approximately 37% of the student population (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008). According to the National Education Association, African American males were three times more likely to receive a suspension or an expulsion from school than their White male counterparts, leading to loss of valuable instructional time in the classroom (NEA, 2011). Lewis, Bonner, Butler, and Joubert (2010) purported that more disruption results in classroom exclusion and, subsequently, low achievement. When students disrupt the learning process for others, student achievement decreases. When they are not present due to suspensions or expulsions, these students disrupt their own learning experience and hinder their own opportunities for academic success.

Davis (2003) stated that educational interventions are necessary to close the gaps in achievement and discipline of African American males and their peers. Riddick (2010) claimed that improving early childhood education for African American males would result in a higher academic success rate and possibly decrease the incarceration rate for African American males. Bradshaw (2013) reported that Positive Behavior Intervention Support programs have reduced behavior problems. Noltemeyer, Harper, and James (2018) maintained PBIS improved positive social behavior, school climate, and academic achievement, while also reducing discipline referrals, disruptive behavior, and school exclusionary practices. Lewis et. al (2010) asserted that African American male students should be assigned to the school guidance counselor and meet regularly to reduce the odds of continuing the disruptive behavior and to increase the probability of improving academic achievement. Grant and Dieker (2011) recommended mentoring as an effective intervention for black males.

Dyce (2013) concluded that providing educational interventions for Black males would increase their chances of obtaining academic success. Therefore, determining the effect of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring interventions on patterns in disruptive classroom behavior and student achievement African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grades may allow educators to assist this population of students to overcome the barriers to their personal, social, and academic success.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The purpose of this study was to investigate if a Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring impact patterns in disruptive classroom behavior and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. The independent variables were student participation in PBIS, counseling, and mentoring. The dependent variables were teacher reports of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals and student achievement in reading. A quantitative research design was used to determine the impact of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring on disruptive classroom behavior and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. The sample included teachers from school districts from northern and southern Mississippi. As pertaining to PBIS, the researcher contacted school districts regardless of whether there was a formal PBIS plan in place.

In order to investigate the variables identified in this study, the following research questions were examined:

1. Among Pre-K through fifth grade African American males, do PBIS, counseling, and mentoring have an impact on disciplinary referrals?

2. Among Pre-K through fifth grade African American males, do PBIS, counseling, and mentoring have an impact on reading scores?

The following hypotheses related to the research questions were addressed in the study:

H_1 There is an inverse relationship between the participation in PBIS and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

H_2 There is an inverse relationship between the participation in counseling and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

H_3There is an inverse relationship between the participation in mentoring and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

H_4 There is a positive relationship between the participation in PBIS and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

H_5 There is a positive relationship between the participation in counseling and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

Participants for this study were limited to teachers of grades Pre-K through fifth grade who work in public schools in the state of Mississippi. Student achievement was limited to Reading scores of African American male students of grades Pre-K through fifth grade in Mississippi public schools.

Assumptions

It was assumed that all participants would be honest while completing the questionnaire. It was also be assumed that participants would complete the questionnaire without fear of adverse consequences for their responses.

Definition of Terms

The following terms were be used extensively in this study and were defined chiefly for the framework of this research.

1. Achievement gap. The achievement gap in education refers to the discrepancy in academic performance between groups of students. (Ansell, 2011).

2. American School Counselor Association (ASCA). An organization that provides schools with professional development, resources to improve school counseling programs, and effective school counseling strategies. (ASCA, 2016)

3. At-risk. Students at risk of educational failure or otherwise in need of special assistance and support. At-risk students include students who are living in poverty, who are enrolled in high-minority schools, and who are far below grade level. At-risk students also include students who have left school before receiving a regular high school degree, who are at risk of not graduating on time, and who are homeless. Students who

are in foster care, who have been incarcerated, who have disabilities, or who are English learners are also considered at-risk students (USDOE, 2016).

4. Community-based mentoring (CBM). Mentoring program in which youth meet with mentors outside the school setting and each match chooses when and where they meet (Schwartz, et. al, 2012).

5. Counseling. Interventions by an elementary school guidance counselor that include group or individual counseling and classroom guidance lessons that focus on personal and social growth, cooperating with others, and proper academic behavior (Barna and Brott, 2013).

6. Discipline gap. A disproportionate disciplinary response to one race compared to others. (Russ, 2014).

7. Disruptive behavior. Any behavior that disrupts the learning process for students in the classroom (Johnson & Hannon, 2014).

8. Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA). ESSA reauthorized the ESEA by replacing NCLB. ESSA modified provisions of NCLB relating to periodic standardized testing of students (USDOE, 2015).

9. No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The law renewed the authority of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). It focused on accountability, research-based instructional practices, increased parental options, and increased local control (Spelling, 2007).

10. Positive Behavior Intervention Support (PBIS). A set of systemic prevention processes focused on developing positive and appropriate relationships and behaviors to facilitate the social and academic success of students (Tobin & Vincent, 2011).

11. Race to the Top. A competitive grant program for education that provided strategies for turning around low-performing schools and created systems that measured student success (Boser, 2012).

12. School-based mentoring (SBM). Mentoring program in which youth meet with mentors during or after school in the school building (Schwartz, Rhodes, & Herrara, 2012).

13. Youth Mentoring. Defined as "an individualized, supportive relationship between a young person and a non-parental adult that promotes positive development" (Lakind, Atkins, & Eddy, 2015).

Justification

The achievement and discipline gaps between African American males and their counterparts have been researched for many years (Cook, et. al, 2018; Burchinal et. al., 2011). Researchers have sought to explain and alleviate the disparities in achievement and discipline between African American males and their peers (Noguera, 2012). Statistics have continued to reveal that African American males have lower grades and test scores, and lower graduation rates (Schott Foundation, 2010; NEA, 2011; Campaign for Black Men and Boys, 2010; Praeger, 2011; Dyce, 2013). African American males were reported to experience suspension or expulsion from school than their White male peers. While the majority of research on interventions for African American male is for middle and high school students, research is limited on early childhood and elementary interventions (Aratani, Wright, & Cooper, 2011; Grant & Dieker, 2011; Coller & Kuo, 2014; Jackson, Sealey-Ruiz, & Watson, 2014; Watson, et. al, 2015). This study will seek

to add to the research on the effects of early intervention on disruptive behaviors and student achievement in grades Pre-K through fifth grades for Black males.

Summary

Researchers have studied the disparities in achievement and discipline patterns between African American males and their peers for many years. African American males fall far behind White and Asian males on standardized tests and completion of high school. African American males receive more disciplinary referrals more often for disruptive behavior and are suspended and expelled more than White males (Rudd, 2014). Research studies indicate the prevalence of interventions for disruptive behaviors and low academic achievement for black males in middle school and high school. However, this study produced findings that will help educators assist African American males in grades Pre-K through fifth grade to overcome the obstacles to their academic success.

H_6 There is a positive relationship between the participation in mentoring and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

CHAPTER II - REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature review contains the background and policy context in which the study occurred. It addresses initiatives that researchers and others have concluded support the academic achievement and social development of African American males. This section also discusses the theoretical framework for this study. The preliminary review of literature addresses research that pertains to Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports, school counseling, and school-based mentoring. Lastly, this section addresses expert perspectives on disruptive behavior and academic achievement of African Americans.

Background and Policy Context

According to Davis (2003), providing support to schools is critical to increasing the ability of schools to contribute to the social, cognitive, and academic development of African American males. This section of the preliminary review of literature examines the background and policy context surrounding mechanisms that support the academic achievement and social development of students, including African American students.

No Child Left Behind Act of 2001. According to Elpus (2014), the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB) turn out to be the most defining education reform in America. NCLB renewed the authority of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 (ESEA). NCLB had the same guiding principles of ESEA. However, NCLB focused on accountability, research-based instructional practices, increased parental options, and increased local control by schools and districts (Spelling, 2007). Advocates of NCLB expected it to increase the quality of education, raise student achievement, and

reduce the racial, economic, and academic achievement gaps (Noguera, 2009; Krieg, 2011).

Krieg (2011) reported that NCLB held school districts and individual schools responsible for student achievement on standardized tests, penalized failing schools, and provided prolonged academic opportunities for students enrolled in those schools. The No Child Left Behind Act (2001) mandated that every state tested students in reading and math yearly in third through eighth grades and once in grades 10-12. Science was to be tested at set times in grades 3-12. Schools, districts, and states were required to report the test results to the public. At the time of its implementation, NCLB required states, districts, and schools to guarantee that all students were proficient in math and reading by 2014 (Paige, 2004). Krieg (2011) wrote that NCLB mandated that each school test five specific ethnic groups: American Indian, Asian/Pacific Islander, Black, Hispanic, and White. Each school was also mandated to test three categories of students: low-income, bilingual, and special education (Krieg, 2011).

The U.S. Department of Education permitted each state to define grade-level performance (Paige, 2004). In order for a school to achieve adequate yearly progress (AYP), the school must achieve its self-identified targets for student reading and math proficiency every year (Paige, 2004). According to Krieg (2011), the percentage of students in each group proficient on the state standardized test had to meet or exceed the state determined pass rate. According to Krieg (2011), school leaders received monetary incentives, provided by NCLB, to use for resources on certain subcategories of pupils. The expectation was to achieve Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) (Krieg, 2011).

Consequently, schools and districts that did not make AYP were subject to severe sanctions (Krieg, 2011).

According to the U.S. Department of Education (2013), Title IV of NCLB provided funding for programs that fostered a safe and drug-free environment. These programs included drug, violence, and suicide prevention; family involvement; and professional development and training. In addition to these programs, Title IV also offered funding for creating school security plans; community service and character education programs; conflict resolution activities; emergency intervention services; counseling; and mentoring (USDOE, 2013).

As a result of NCLB's mandate to increase student achievement and close gaps in achievement, the rise of mentoring, a widely regarded intervention for black males, emerged as a strategy to improve academic outcomes (Wheeler, Keller, & DuBois, 2010; Grant & Dieker, 2011). NCLB provided financial support for school-based mentoring by authorizing the Student Mentoring Program. Funding for the program grew from $17 million in 2001 to nearly $50 million by 2004. Showing this growth, between 1999 and 2006 the number of youth helped through mentoring in the school-based Big Brothers/Big Sisters program increased from 27,000 to 126,000 (Wheeler, et al., 2010). The United States Department of Education (USDOE) not only mandated initiatives to improve academic achievement for all students but also offered financial support to implement programs, such as mentoring, to improve academic outcomes for all students.

No Child Left Behind Act Waiver (USDOE, 2013). Johnson (2012) reported that, during the Obama administration, many states opted for alternative measures of progress and applied for waivers from mandated NCLB accountability. According to the USDOE

(2013), U.S. Education Secretary Arne Duncan declared that the obsolete Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), known as NCLB, constrained state and district efforts for innovation and reform. Duncan added that the best solution is through a reauthorization of ESEA law (USDOE, 2013). The USDOE (2013) reported that the federal government worked with states to develop waiver agreements that would give local leaders free rein to pursue positive change, guarantee equity, protect at-risk students, and encourage competitive educational standards (USDOE, 2013).

McNeil (2012) reported that the USDOE allowed states that received waivers to set different goals for different groups of students. These groups included members of racial and ethnic minorities, and the states were required to cut the achievement gap in half at the very least (McNeil, 2012). The USDOE required states to update lists of low-performing schools to guarantee the implementation of interventions, which include PBIS, counseling, and mentoring (Resmovits, 2014; Evans, 2012).

Race to the Top. Race to the Top, known as RttT, was a segment included in the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) (Lohman, 2010). Smarick (2011) reported that RttT was the largest competitive educational grant program in American History. Boser (2012) explained that this initiative sought to provide strategies for turning around low-performing schools and to create systems that measure student success. The $4.35 billion program reformed education in four areas (Smarick, 2011). The areas consisted of data, standards and assessments, failing schools, and teacher quality (Boser, 2012).

Atkenson and Will (2014) expounded on the components of individualized learning for students. RttT sought to provide opportunities for economically

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disadvantaged students to experience critical thinking and problem solving skills (Boser, 2012). According to Boser (2012), the federal government promised to help school districts across the nation close achievement gaps and help more students enter college through this program. The purpose of this initiative was to improve student achievement and provide learning for individual students (Boser, 2012).

According to the USDOE (2015), RttT provided funding for services in addition to closing achievement gaps and to helping more students enter college. RttT funds allowed districts to improve school climate and safety and to create and implement impartial and appropriate discipline policies. Competitive RttT grants funded programs that offered mental, physical, social, and emotional support systems. Furthermore, RttT funds helped districts pinpoint and implement strategies that help dismantle and eliminate the effects of concentrated poverty.

The Race to the Top District Competition (RttT-D) required "districts where minority students or students with disabilities are overly-represented in discipline and expulsion rates (according to data submitted through the Civil Rights Data Collection) to undergo a district assessment of the root cause and develop a plan over the grant period to address root causes" (USDOE, 2012, pg. 13). School districts were encouraged to address proactively the disproportionate discipline rates for Black males and problems their school communities encounter (Evans, 2012). Evans (2012) recommended that school districts should create effective plans of action to address racial disparities in discipline and incorporate these plans into the RttT-D application. Interventions, such as PBIS, school counseling programs, and mentoring programs, could be included in the plans of action.

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Every Student Succeeds Act(ESSA). Although signed in 2015, ESSA will take full effect in the fall of 2017 (USDOE, 2015). According to the USDOE (2015), ESSA reauthorized the ESEA while replacing NCLB of 2001. According to Darrow (2016), the requirements mandated by the federal government became increasingly unworkable for schools, educators, and parents. As a result, the Obama administration worked with educators and families to create a better law to prepare students for college and careers (USDOE, 2015). Giving states more flexibility to create plans according to the needs of students, ESSA eliminated the rigid requirements of NCLB. Hence, ESSA minimized the prescriptive and intrusive role of the federal government in the state and local education agencies. (Darrow, 2016; Klein, 2016; USDOE, 2015).

Although though ESSA eliminated the strict requirements of NCLB, it only revised provisions relating to the standardized testing of students. Klein (2016) reported that states are required to test a minimum of 95% of students in math and reading in third through eighth grades and one time in high school. ESSA mandated that the data be reported for entire schools with diverse subcategories of students. Subcategories of pupils included English language learners, recipients of special education services, racial minorities, and pupils in poverty (USDOE, 2016). ESSA allowed districts to substitute SAT or ACT scores high school state assessments with the state's permission. The American Federation of Teachers (2016) reported that ESSA permitted states to create their own accountability plans. However, these plans must be approved by the USDOE and in effect by the fall of 2017. According to the American Federation of Teachers (2016), the plans must include goals for:

- Proficiency in reading and math

- High school graduation rates

- Proficiency in English language

- Student growth or another indicator that is valid, reliable and statewide for elementary and middle schools

- At least one other indicator of school quality or success, such as safety, student engagement or educator engagement. (AFT, 2016)

According to ASCA (2016), ESSA reauthorized Part A into the Student Support and Academic Enrichment program with a $1.6 billion block grant annually through 2020. ASCA (2016) reported that this grant and provisions were made to fund the majority of counseling and mentoring for all students. The Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development (2016), ESSA mandated that states spend 20 percent of those funds on comprehensive educational opportunities, 20 percent on safe and healthy students, and a portion on effectively using technology. Dozens of the programs eliminated by ESSA were merged to include physical education, advanced courses, school counseling, and technology (ASCA, 2016; DOE, 2016).

Table 1 *How the Laws Compare.*

	NCLB	ESSA
Testing	All students tested annually in Grades 3–8 and 11 in math and reading	All students tested annually in Grades 3–8 and 11 in math and reading.
Accountability	Defined progress primarily on test scores; provided the same goal (all students "proficient" by 2014) for all schools and all states	States determine their own definition of progress, using multiple measures. States also determine how much weight to place on each measure, but a majority of the weight must be on academic indicators (test scores, graduation rates, etc.).
School improvement	Schools that did not make progress toward the federal goals were labeled failures; states were instructed to intervene in specific ways to address failing schools.	Does not specifically authorize new money, but allows states and districts to direct a portion of Title 1 dollars for school interventions.
School intervention funding	Provided no additional dollars for school improvement.	Does not specifically authorize new money, but allows states and districts to direct a portion of Title 1 dollars for school interventions.

(Darrow, 2016)

Theoretical Foundation

The social learning theory served as the theoretical basis for this study. The social learning theory of Albert Bandura suggested that individuals learn from others through observation, imitation, and modeling (Bandura, 1971).

Social Learning Theory. There are three main concepts of the social learning theory (SLT) of Albert Bandura. Bandura (1969) wrote that people learn through observing others. The second key concept of SLT is that core psychological condition of a person is important to learning. Thirdly, Bandura (1971) posited that learning does not always result in a change in behavior.

Bandura (1971) theorized that new patterns of behavior are attainable through observing others. Bandura (1971) expounded on the three basic models of learning through observation. Live models involve actual person demonstrating or carrying out a behavior. Verbal instructional models involve descriptions of a behavior. Bandura (1969, 1977) explained that symbolic models involve real and fictional characters displaying behaviors in films, books, and television programs.

Bandura (1969) listed attention as the first component of the modeling process. According to Bandura (1969), exposing a person to models of behavior does not guarantee that the person will pay attention to and select the most appropriate behaviors. Bandura (1971) proposed that a person's attention is necessary for learning to take place. Bandura purported that a person cannot learn by observing the model behavior if he is not paying attention to or recognizing the key features of the modeled behavior (Bandura, 1977). Because people observe various behaviors throughout the day, Bandura (1969) claimed that the value of the displayed behaviors by different models greatly influences which models will be closely observed and which will be ignored. Bandura (1971) posited that models who have interesting qualities are preferred and are attended to more closely. Bandura (1977) believed that a person will not imitate a behavior that is not attended to. In other words, if a behavior is not interesting enough to grasp a person's attention, the person will not imitate the behavior. Bandura (1977) theorized that one must pay attention to learn.

Bandura (1969) coined retention of modeled activities as the second major process in observational learning. Bandura (1969) claimed that retention, the ability to store information, is important to observational learning. He explained that if a person

cannot remember a modeled behavior, he cannot imitate the behavior. Bandura (1977) maintained the vitality of forming the memory of a behavior so the observer will be able to perform the modeled behavior at a later time. Bandura believed that the ability to retrieve learned information later and act upon it was imperative to observational learning.

Bandura (1977) defined the motor reproduction processes, the third component of the modeling process, as "converting symbolic representations into appropriate actions" (pg. 27). Bandura purported (1977) that people achieve the new behavior through modeling and improve the new behavior by self-correcting after receiving informative feedback (Bandura, 1977). The feedback is from performance and from focused demonstrations of partially learned segments (Bandura, 1977). Bandura (1977) believed that after one has attended to the model and retained the modeled behavior, a person has to perform the behavior. Furthermore, Bandura (1971) maintained that practice of the learned behavior would lead to mastery.

Bandura listed motivation processes as the final component of the modeling process. Bandura (1969) claimed that learning is hardly ever transformed into the desired level of performance due to "negative sanctions or inadequate positive reinforcement" (pg. 225) even though the person may learn, retain, and possess the ability to reproduce the behavior. He stated that observational learning occurs quickly when favorable incentives are introduced. Furthermore, Bandura purported (1971) that motivation processes can also affect the level of learning by controlling what a person pays attention to, retains, and reproduces. Bandura (1977) asserted that people are more likely to adopt

modeled behavior if it results in favorable outcomes than if it has unsatisfactory or punishing effects.

Bandura (1977) wrote that a person's psychological state and sense of self were instrumental to the learning process and behavior. Bandura (2001) purported that socio-structural factors, though external, operate through internal psychological mechanisms of the self- system to produce behavioral effects. Bandura (2001) explained that the external factors of educational and family structures, socioeconomic status, and economic conditions affect behavior immensely. Bandura (2001) stated that these factors indirectly affect behavior through the impact on people's ambitions, sense of efficacy, personal values, affective states, and other self-regulatory influences.

Bandura (1978) maintained that self-regulated incentives affect behavior mainly through their ability to motivate. According to Bandura (1971, 1978), human behavior is largely regulated through intrinsic reinforcement. Bandura (1971, 1978) explained that intrinsic reinforcement includes satisfaction and dissatisfaction of oneself, self-pride, criticism of oneself, and a sense of accomplishment of one's goals. He explained people motivate themselves to exert the effort needed to attain the desired goals when people make self-satisfaction or tangible accomplishments conditional upon certain accomplishments (Bandura, 1978). Bandura asserted (1978) that the expected fulfilments of desired accomplishments and the disappointments with unsatisfactory ones provide motivations for actions that increase the probability of performance achievements.

Bandura (1977) contended that new patterns of behavior can be learned but not performed. Bandura (1977) wrote that observational learning is "governed by four

component processes" (pg. 24). Bandura (1971) proposed that a person's attention is necessary for learning to take place. Bandura (1969) claimed that retention, the ability to store information, is important to observation learning. Bandura stated that the next step is reproduction of the learned behavior and that practice leads to improvement of the behavior or skill. Bandura (1969) concluded that motivation, whether reinforcement or punishment, causes a person to replicate the modeled behavior.

Bell (2010) recommended social learning theory as a framework for strategies that help African American males develop social skills for the school setting. Ray (2012) suggested that aggressive children who are rejected by peers in the preschool years may not possess the social skills to interact successfully with adults and peers and to regulate their behaviors. According to Ray (2012), young African American children have a higher likelihood than their White counterparts to grow up in long-term poverty and deep poverty; to experience exposure to violence and abuse; and to live in unsafe, impoverished, and racially secluded communities that lack social support systems to address these issues. Ray (2012) further explained that the effects of poverty, violence, and abuse diminish the ability of young children to control emotions and impulses and make dealing with daily classroom interactions difficult. Bell (2010) and Ray (2012) reported that behaviors such as waiting one's turn, expressing feelings appropriately, accepting redirection, managing anger, excessive laughter, joking, and rudeness often disrupt the instructional process. Hence, Bell (2010) concluded in his research that teaching social skills to African American males may positively impact academic achievement and must be taught early in the academic process to prepare them for continuous engagement in school.

Pertinent Research and Professional Perspectives

This section of the literature review addresses research and expert perspectives on Positive Behavior Interventions Support (PBIS), school counseling, and mentoring. It also includes research and expert perspectives on disruptive behavior and academic achievement of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

Positive Behavior Interventions Support (PBIS). According to Cressey, Whitcomb, Rivet, Morrison, and Reynolds (2014), PBIS is a preventative framework focused on creating safe and healthy environments that reflect socially competent school climates. Fallon, O'Keeffe, and Sugai (2012) reported that the consistent teaching, recognizing, and rewarding of positive student behavior is the center of PBIS and will reduce unnecessary discipline and promote a highly productive, safe, and learning climate. Bradshaw, Waasdorp, and Leaf (2011) proffered that PBIS changes school climate through enhanced systems, data-driven decision making, and implementation of evidenced based strategies and practices.

Sugai and Simonsen (2012) described PBIS as a Response to Intervention model (RtI) consisting of three-tiers of support and a process to solve problems that hinder schools from effectively educating all students. The first level intervention tier, Tier 1, includes supports for all students through teaching, modeling, and positively reinforcing expectations (Cressey, et al., 2014). Fairbanks, Sugai, Guardino, and Lathrop (2007) stated that more interventions are used at the secondary intervention level, Tier 2, to produce positive outcomes for a small group of students when those students do not respond to the Tier 1 interventions. Fairbanks, et al. (2007) explained that the tertiary intervention level, Tier 3, emphasizes individualized and specialized interventions for

students who are nonresponsive to Tier 1 and Tier 2 interventions. Tier 3 intervention

efforts include planning for function-based behavior interventions, implementing social

skills lessons, monitoring intensive individualized behavior plans, constant data-driven

decision-making, planning team, and school-community based mental health support

services (Cressey, et al., 2014). Banks and Obiakor (2015) concluded that PBIS

improves school safety and climate by enhancing positive behavior for students through

the implementation of the three-tiered process.

Lassen, Steele, and Sailor (2006) reported that PBIS was originally designed to

reduce problem behavior in individuals with developmental disabilities but was expanded

to general school populations. Horner, Sugai, and Anderson (2010) informed that over

13,000 schools in the United States implement PBIS by using disciplinary data and

behavior analysis to design interventions that enhance school climate for all students.

The USDOE (2015) reported that schools that implement PBIS show up to 50%

reduction in office referral rates each year. Schools also demonstrate improvements in

attendance rates, academic achievement, and staff morale (USDOE, 2015).

According to Blake, Darensbourg, and Blake (2010), PBIS is a worthwhile

alternative to existing disciplinary practices in eliminating the overrepresentation of

African American males in exclusionary discipline. Blake, et. al (2010) agreed that PBIS

provides a more comprehensive approach to reducing disruptive behaviors through the

use of proactive alternatives rather than the punitive measures of suspension and

expulsion. Tobin and Vincent (2011) asserted that PBIS strategies, such as praise and

positive reinforcement, were associated with reductions in disproportionate suspensions

and expulsions of African American students. Rudd (2014) asserted that schools that

effectively implement PBIS have productive teaching and learning environments that are more engaging, responsive, and preventive for African American students. Rudd (2014) recommended the use of PBIS as a strategy to reduce racial disparities in school disciplinary practices.

Counseling. Professional school counselors play an instrumental role in the development of students (Washington, 2010). According to the American School Counseling Association (ASCA), school counselors encourage the academic, career, personal, and social development of children (ASCA, 2015). Burnham, Jones, and Jackson (2000) described the school counselor as an advocate for students and a leader for school and community involvement. School counselors serve students by identifying student issues, assessing needs, effectively using data, and initiating solutions for all students. Barna and Brott (2013) wrote that school counselors develop, implement, and evaluate comprehensive programs to assist students to achieve successful academic, social, and career development. Barna and Brott (2013) suggested that school counselors begin preparing students in elementary school through increased school engagement, improved student transitions, and equal opportunities for all students.

Rose and Steen (2014) suggested that school-based counseling programs have great potential of reaching large numbers of students. Johnson and Hannon (2014) asserted that school counselors investigate behavior and academic challenges for at-risk student populations.   School counselors seek to eliminate obstacles to student success by investigating the causes of counseling referrals for disciplinary infractions for disruptive behaviors. Barna and Brott (2013) claimed interventions, especially at the elementary

level, include group counseling and classroom guidance lessons that focus on personal and social growth, cooperating with others, and proper academic behavior.

School counselors play a very important role in reducing racial disparities in academics and discipline (Washington, 2010; Bryan, et. al, 2012). According to Washington (2010), professional school counselors have been working proactively to deal with the academic concerns of African American male students for quite some time. According to Owens, Simmons, Bryant, and Henfield (2011), school counselors can help resolve the obstacles African American males encounter by implementing a school counseling program that support academic and personal development. With respect to counselor referrals for disruptive behavior, Bryan et. al (2012) stated that school counselors provide support for African American students that is meaningful and aligned with the established professional roles of school counselors outlined by the ASCA. Washington (2010) stated that school counselors must remain attentive to yield the changes that would improve the academic performance of African American males.

Mentoring. According to Keller and Pryce (2010), the word "mentor" originated from Greek mythology. When Odysseus, King of Ithaca, left to fight in the Trojan War, he gave the responsibility of guiding and protecting his son Telemachus to a wise old man named Mentor (Holmes, Hodgson, Simari, & Nishsimura, 2010). After the war ended, Odysseus was sentenced to wander aimlessly for ten years in his endeavor to return home. By this time, Telemachus was an adult and set out to search for his father. Athena, the Goddess of War, disguised herself as Mentor and accompanied Telemachus on his expedition (Ragins & Kram, 2007). Thus, the word "mentor" took on the meaning of trusted guide, friend, teacher, and counselor (Holmes et. al, 2010).

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As defined by Ragins and Kram (2007), the traditional meaning of mentoring is a relationship between an older, more experienced mentor and younger, less experienced individual for the purpose of helping and developing the individual's career. According to Tindall (2009), mentoring is an essential element of human development in which and individual invests time, energy and personal knowledge in supporting the growth and ability of another person. Trepanier-Street (2004) added that mentoring involves the careful and deliberate coupling of a more skilled person with a less skilled person. Although definitions may vary, the common theme is the one to one relationship between a mentor and mentee for the mentee's profit (Tolan, Henry, Schoeny, Lovegrove, & Nichols, 2014).

Lakind, Atkins, and Eddy (2015) described the mentoring of youth as a one-on-one relationship between a young person and a non-parent adult that encourages positive development. According to Chan, Rhodes, Howard, Love, Schwartz, and Herrera (2012), mentoring relationships have long been documented as promoting improved behavior, social, emotional, and academic outcomes for youth. Coller and Kuo (2013) explained that mentoring relationships improved self-esteem and decreased behaviors such as alcohol and tobacco use and violence.

Grant and Dieker (2011) asserted that at-risk youth tend to benefit the most from mentoring relationships. According to Coller and Kuo (2013), mentoring programs in communities of color are favorable and are acutely significant. More specifically, Grant and Dieker (2011) stated that mentoring is a widely regarded intervention for black males. Watson, Washington, and Watson (2015) believed that mentoring programs have the ability of successfully reducing violence among African American male youth.

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The two most common forms of mentoring are community-based (CBM) and school-based mentoring (SBM). Lakind, Atkins, and Eddy (2015) proposed that CBM mentoring offers a unique opportunity for members of the community to connect with families. Schwartz, Love, and Rhodes (2012) explained that community-based mentoring involves matching volunteer mentors with youth. Mentors and mentees usually meet on a weekly basis for at least one year, with the mentors and mentees deciding the location and time of the meetings (Jucovy & Garringer, 2007). According to the National Institute of Justice (2011), mentees in CBM programs spend more time with mentors than in school-based mentoring programs. Mentors may spend approximately 4 hours per week, 3 times per month, for at least 1 year with their mentees (NIJ, 2011).

Herrara, Grossman, Kauh, and McMaken (2011) characterized community-based mentoring "traditional" since it has been around longer than any other type of mentoring. Since CBM focuses more on social activities between the mentor and mentee, Herrera, Sipe, McClanahan, Arbreton, and Pepper (2000) posited that CBM is more effective in producing positive social outcomes for the mentee. Mentors tend to have more contact with the child's parent or caregiver. The authors added that CBM programs attract mentors between the ages of 22-49, attract more Caucasian mentors, and use more full-time staff.

Large national organizations, such as Big Brothers/Big Sisters (BBBS), and local programs funded by local businesses and community organizations provide mentoring for youth in communities (Schwartz, et al., 2012). According to Pederson, Woolum, Gagne, and Coleman (2009), the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program is cited as the largest and model program for youth community-based programs. The National Institute of Justice

(NIJ) (2011) reported that the goal of the BBBS CBM program is to address the need of positive adult contact for youth to aid in their development. As a result, risk factors for negative behavior would be reduced and protective factors for positive behavior would be enhanced (NIJ, 2011). The NIJ (2011) reported that the program targets youth who often come from single-parent homes, who may live in low-income neighborhoods, or who have parents who are incarcerated.

Jucovy and Garringer (2007) wrote that school-based mentoring (SBM) is the fastest growing type of mentoring in the United States. Schwartz, et. al (2012) asserted that the upsurge in SBM programs stems partly from the expectation that mentoring can improve academic outcomes for students. Gordon, Downey, and Bangert (2013) defined school-based mentoring as a mentoring program located in a school setting. According to Simoes and Alarcao (2014), SBM is an "educational process in which an adult mentor assists one or more students to fulfill academic and nonacademic goals" (pg. 212). Grant and Dieker (2011) explained that the mentor provides guidance, support, attention, and caring to the child over an extended period of time. Gordon et. al (2013) acknowledged that mentors not only provide emotional support, guidance, and companionship, but they also provide academic support.

Wilson and Wood (2012) reported that SBM programs are often organized and administered by schools, social workers, and established mentoring charities, such as Big Brothers Big Sisters. Schwartz, et. al (2012) explained that these agencies recruit, screen, and match community volunteers with young people. The authors added that teachers, school officials, and older youth are also recruited as mentors. According to Jucovy and

Garringer (2007), mentors meet with youth during or after school in the school building specified by school officials.

Jucovy and Garringer (2007) reported that there are various reasons schools choose to develop a school-based mentoring model. According to Coller and Kuo (2014) school-based mentoring programs attract a pool of volunteers who might not consider participating or might not be able to participate in community-based mentoring. In addition to attracting more volunteers, SBM programs were reported to include young people who may not have been able to participate in community-based mentoring (Herrara et. al, 2007).   Because SBMP are located in school settings, the cost of the program is relatively low compared to community-based mentoring programs (Jucovy & Garringer, 2007). Bayer, Grossman, and DuBois (2015) concluded that SBM programs result in positive outcomes for young people.

According to Herrara et. al (2007), one benefit of SBM programs is the ability to utilize volunteers who might not be involved in mentoring otherwise. Compared to community-based programs, school-based programs require a shorter and less intensive commitment (Herrara et. al, 2007). As a result, SBM programs have the ability to draw volunteers who have limited amounts of free time, such as professionals, high school students, and college students. Jucovy and Garringer (2007) reported that older adults and those apprehensive about spending time with youth in a community setting favor SBM programs because meetings with youth occur in secure school settings. Moreover, Wheeler, Keller, and DuBois (2010) suggested that school-based mentors are more diverse in age, race, and ethnicity than community-based mentors. Herrara et. al (2007)

concluded that all of these differences cause SBM programs to have a larger volunteer base than CBM programs.

Wheeler et al. (2010) proposed that SBM programs may have a greater capability to reach certain populations of youth who may be underserved by CBM programs. Unlike parent referrals in CBM programs, teachers, counselors, social workers, and other school officials refer students who need one-on-one attention from a caring adult. Jucovy and Garringer (2007) asserted that some youth only need extra attention and support at school. Schwartz, et al. (2012) pointed out that mentors may be more willing to help mentees with school work, communicate with teachers and administrators, and discuss youth school experiences since these programs are located in schools. Furthermore, Smith and Stormont (2011) added that students who are at highest risk often have unstable home environments which create problems such as transportation and scheduling. Such problems are minimized or eliminated when the mentor and mentee meet at school, thus providing support these youths so desperately need.

Bayer, Grossman, and DuBois (2015) contended that school districts in financial distress must identify inexpensive means to support struggling students. After conducting a research study on the BBBS school-based mentoring program, Herrera et. al (2007) found that SBM programs spend approximately $10 per young person on events while CBM programs spend an approximately $66 per young person. Because school-based mentoring programs make use of school facilities and resources, they can be operated at fairly low cost (Jucovy & Garringer, 2007). Wheeler et. al (2010) added that more children are served at lower costs because school-based programs reduce staff investment in mentor screening and supervision. Furthermore, Converse and Kraft

(2009) postulated that using school personnel as mentors makes SBM even more "cost effective" (pg. 33).

Jucovy and Garringer (2007) reported that school-based mentoring yields many positive results for young people. According Schwartz, et. al (2012), SBM programs can:

- Reduce disciplinary referrals, fighting, and suspensions

- Reduce skipping classes

- Improve academic achievement

- Improve the quality of class assignments

- Increase the number of homework and class assignments turned in

- Increase students' perceptions of academic abilities

- Improve connectedness to school and to peers

Bayer, et. al (2015) conducted a study of the SBM program of BBBSA. The study included 1,139 students from 71 schools. The researchers found significant improvements in the teacher-reported academic performance and the self-reported scholastic confidence of mentees. As a result, the researchers concluded that using community volunteers in a school-based mentoring program can help schools achieve academic goals.

Disruptive Behavior. According to Black and Fernando (2014), success in student learning requires a classroom environment free from disruptions so students can fully concentrate. Agbuga, Xiana, and McBride (2010) reported that disruptive behavior has been one of the most serious concerns of educators because this type of behavior hinders teaching, focus, and learning. Johnson and Hannon (2014) defined disruptive, or problem behavior, as any behavior that disrupts the learning process for

students in the classroom. Moreover, it contaminates positive classroom climate and social interactions and reduces student participation and engagement (Agbuga, et al., 2010).

Walker, Ramsey, and Gresham (2004) concluded that students with disruptive behavior waste instructional time, disrupt the learning of all students, threaten safety, overwhelm teachers, and ultimately ruin their own chances for a successful education and a prosperous life. Martens and Andreen (2013) wrote that issues with student behavior interrupt the learning process of themselves and others when teachers must take time to redirect the disruptive student. If the student's behavior is not addressed and appropriate behavior is not taught, the disruptive behavior will most likely be repeated (ALCU, 2013). According to Walker et. al (2004), 17 percent of teachers participating in a survey reported that they lost four or more hours of instruction each week due to disruptive behavior. Precisely, 21 percent of urban elementary teachers and 24 percent of urban secondary teachers reported losing four or more hours per week. The ACLU (2013) concluded that overall academic performance suffers even more when teachers have to take time away from other students to "catch students up" (pg. 15) after they return to the classroom from an exclusion.

Problem behavior and disciplinary actions resulting in suspensions and expulsions from school may damage the learning process by creating an environment that is not conducive to learning. According to Ray (2012), children with behavior problems are more likely to do poorly in school, leading to even more behavior problems. An ACLU (2013) report explained that when a student is suspended or expelled, the student misses instructional time, falls behind, experiences frustration or embarrassment, and becomes

more disruptive. The ACLU (2013) added that a culture of hostility and sometimes violence is created in the school, making the teachers feel less safe.   Walker et. al (2004) concluded that academic achievement cannot rise significantly with the loss of instructional time and teacher stress produced from the constant disruption and possible safety threat.

Walker et.al (2004) asserted that disruptive behavior in young students leads to future behavior and academic failures and eventually derail possibilities for a successful education and successful life. Brennan, Shaw, Dishion, and Wilson (2015) reported that high levels of aggressive behavior during early childhood may indicate the risk of future difficulties and a higher risk for adolescent and adult antisocial behavior. According to Ray (2012), Bradshaw, Waasdorp, and Leaf (2014), the onset of conduct problems in young black boys proved to be an indicator of depression, drug use, truancy, and other antisocial behavior during the adolescent years.   Findings from a study of sixth and seventh graders revealed that one or more suspensions in sixth grade were associated with suspensions in students who were suspended in seventh grade (Bryan et. al, 2012). The researchers reported that repeated referrals, suspensions, and expulsions also led to student disengagement from school, academic failure, and school dropout. Gregory et. al (2010) suggested that students who are repeatedly sanctioned become less bonded to school, may be more likely to turn to lawbreaking activities, and have a higher risk of incarceration.   Furthermore, data from the Conduct Problems Prevention Research Group (2010) supported that, without interventions, a child may become a career criminal and will cost society approximately $1.3 million.

According to research and data, racial disparities exist in disciplinary practices with African Americans overrepresented in office referrals, suspension, and expulsion (Gregory & Mosely, 2004; Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). Gregory and Mosely (2004) noted that teachers perceive African American students as "more defiant, rule breaking, or disruptive than other racial and ethnic groups" (pg. 19). Russ (2014) stated that minorities, especially African American males, are more likely to be excluded from the classroom and school as punishment.   Case studies on school discipline disproportions revealed major findings:

- In 2003, Chicago Public Schools (CPS) suspended more than 21,000 students.   Although African American students only made up just over half of the student population, 70% of the students suspended were African American students (Russ, 2014).

- A 2010 North Carolina study revealed that African American 6th grade students were 79% more likely than White 6th grade students to be suspended (Russ, 2014).

- During the 2011-2012 school year, Florida arrested 13,789 public school students. Over 50% of the total students arrested were African American (Russ, 2014).

According to Darensbourg and Perez (2010), African American males tend to display more disruptive behaviors than their peers do.   Data regarding discipline in public schools revealed that African American males are three and a half times more likely to be suspended than White males (Russ, 2014). In a study conducted by Smith

and Harper (2015), findings revealed that African American males comprised 35% of suspensions and 34% of boys expelled from K-12 public schools.

In a report on the racial disparities of school suspension and expulsion, Smith and Harper (2015) discovered that African American students were approximately half of all students suspended and expelled from Southern public schools. In Mississippi, with the highest total among the southern states, an alarming total of 37,897 African American students were suspended from public schools in one school year. According to data gathered for the 2009-2010 school year, Black students in Mississippi made up 50% of the student population but received nearly 75% of the out-of-school suspensions (ACLU, 2013). Among the Southern states, 47% of the students suspended and 44% of the students expelled were African American males, the highest among all racial and ethnic groups (ACLU, 2013). Data retrieved by Smith and Harper (2015) further revealed that 427,768 Black male students were suspended and 14,643 were expelled, the highest numbers among both sexes and all racial/ ethnic groups. In Mississippi, African males in public schools made up 71.5% of suspensions and 71.2% of expulsions compared to the national rates of 35.4% for suspensions and 34.1% for expulsions (Smith & Harper, 2015).

Data from the USDOE (2014) indicated that disproportionate rates of problem behavior and exclusionary practices exist as early as pre-kindergarten. Ray (2012) confirmed that persistent patterns of disruptive and antisocial behavior in African American boys that were present in early and middle school were observable as early as age three. Wright and Ford (2016) affirmed preschool-aged boys are five times more likely to be expelled than girls. Wright and Ford (2016) added that African American

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males have a higher risk for expulsion than their peers. Consequently, African American males in elementary school are disciplined and expelled at alarmingly disproportionate rates (Evans, 2012). According to a study commissioned by the Yale University Child Study Center to investigate racial disparity in school disciplinary practices, expulsion rates for all pre-kindergarten students participating in state-funded programs were more than three times higher than the rates for K-12 students (Bryan, et al., 2012). Data revealed even higher expulsion rates for five to six year olds, African Americans, and males (Bryan, et al., 2012). Data from the USDOE (2014) revealed that African American students make up 18% of children enrolled in preschool. However, this small percentage of pupils account for over 40% of the preschool pupil suspended one time and nearly 50% of the preschool pupils suspended more than one time (USDOE, 2014).

Evans (2012) insisted that educators, parents, policy makers, and advocates should work "with all deliberate speed" to eliminate racial disparities in school discipline (pg. 182). Walker, et. al (2004) maintained that interventions should begin before children reach age eight to greatly reduce, if not eradicate, disruptive behavior. Fernando and Black (2014) proposed that programs designed to train students in skills that promote prosocial behavior may be beneficial in creating non-disruptive classrooms, lessening teacher stress, and increasing student achievement. Walker, et. al (2004) purposed that schools can help students achieve academic and social success and advance the overall goal of educating students by minimizing disruptive behavior. Gregory, Allen, Mikami, Hafen, and Pianta (2014) wrote that there is potential to close the racial discipline gap if the preceding events of perceived misbehavior that cause a student to be excluded from the classroom and suspended can be disrupted.

Student Achievement among African American Male Students. One of the most prevalent findings in educational research is the under achievement of African American males in elementary, secondary, and post-secondary settings (Dyce, 2013). As a result of the high rates of suspension and expulsions due to disruptive behavior, African American male students are excluded from the learning process and lose valuable instructional time (Gregory, et. al, 2010). Consequently, not only does a gap between Black males students and their peers exist in school discipline practices but also in student achievement.

Praeger (2011) asserted that the achievement of Black males falls far below the achievement of Asian and White males. According to Dyce (2013), black males tend to earn lower grades and test scores, are assigned to lower academic courses, and are disproportionately placed in special education classes. Praeger (2011) reported that only 12% of Black males in fourth grade are proficient in reading compared to 38% of White males in fourth grade. Dyce (2013) also stated that black males graduate high school and college at lower rates than black females. Praeger (2011) wrote that over half of Black males drop out of school in many large urban school districts across the country. Hence, Dyce (2013) concluded that the plight of the African American male is a national crisis.

Summary

Providing support to schools is imperative to increasing the ability of schools to contribute to the social, intellectual, and academic development of Black males. The federal government has made provisions and allocated funds for PBIS, counseling and mentoring services through the federal mandates of NCLB, RtT, and ESSA. Bandura's social learning theory will serve as the theoretical framework. Researchers concluded that PBIS enhances positive behavior, improves school climate, and reduces racial

disparities in school discipline. Furthermore, experts maintained that mentoring and

counseling increases student achievement while improving student behavior.

CHAPTER III - METHODOLOGY

This chapter describes the research method design used for this study on the relationship of PBIS, counseling, mentoring, disruptive classroom behavior, and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grades. Chapter III consists of the participants, research design, procedures, and analysis of data. The chapter also describes the instrument that will be used to collect data in the study. The independent and dependent variables are explained along with the statistical processes that will be used to analyze data.

Research Design

The research design for this study regarding the relationship of PBIS, counseling, mentoring, disruptive classroom behavior, and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grades was non-experimental and employed quantitative analyses. Data were gathered from questionnaires completed by Pre-K through fifth grade elementary teachers. The questionnaire focused on the outcomes of disciplinary actions received by African American males in Pre-K through fifth grades and their achievement in reading. The questionnaire also focused on the intervention strategies of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

This study sought to investigate whether Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring impacted disruptive classroom behavior and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. PBIS implementation, school counselor services, and daily interactions with mentors have been documented to reduce disruptive behavior and increase student

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achievement in middle and high school students (Aratani et. al, 2011; Grant & Dieker, 2011; Coller & Kuo, 2014; Jackson, et. al, 2014; Watson, et. al, 2015). Experts recommended providing interventions for students at younger ages to increase student achievement and overall academic success in later years (Ray, 2012). Based on the literature, the following research questions were proposed:

1. Among Pre-K through fifth grade African American males, do PBIS, counseling, and mentoring have an impact on disciplinary referrals?

2. Among Pre-K through fifth grade African American males, do PBIS, counseling, and mentoring have an impact on reading scores?

The following hypotheses related to the research questions were addressed in the study:

H_1 There is an inverse relationship between the participation in PBIS and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

H_2 There is an inverse relationship between the participation in counseling and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

H_3 There is an inverse relationship between the participation in mentoring and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

H_4 There is a positive relationship between the participation in PBIS and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

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H_5 There is a positive relationship between the participation in counseling and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

H_6 There is a positive relationship between the participation in mentoring and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

Participants in the Study

This study included Pre-K through fifth grade teacher participants, student achievement reading data, and disciplinary data. The researcher sought permission from 26 public school districts to conduct the study and to distribute the electronic questionnaire via email. However, only three school districts granted the researcher permission. Thus, the target sample included Pre-K through fifth grade teachers from three school districts in Mississippi. Participants in the study included elementary teachers who teach in schools in three school districts in the state of Mississippi. The researcher was granted permission from three public school districts to conduct the study and to distribute the electronic questionnaire via email. The superintendents of a northern and two southern Mississippi school districts granted the researcher permission to contact teachers and conduct the study with elementary public school teachers in their school districts. The instrument was distributed to 13 elementary teachers in Pre-K through fifth grade. Nine (69%) of these teachers completed and submitted the electronic questionnaire.

The researcher first obtained approval to conduct the study from the dissertation committee. Upon receiving approval to conduct the study, the researcher contacted

superintendents of school districts to conduct the study. Once the superintendents

granted permission, the researcher sought approval from the Institutional Review Board

(IRB) to conduct the research study. The approval document of the IRB is included and

labeled as Appendix A. Upon receiving permission from the IRB, the researcher

distributed questionnaires to Pre-K through fifth grade teachers in electronic copy via

email using Qualtrics. There was no active participation by students. The data were

collected by participating teachers, and they removed all identifiable information of

students before submitting the data to the researcher. According to the USDOE (2017),

identifiable information includes student names, student identification numbers, birth

dates, or any information which can be used to identify an individual.

<center>Instrumentation</center>

After obtaining committee approval and permission to conduct the study from

schools districts, the researcher secured permission to conduct the study from the IRB. A

survey was given to Pre-K through fifth grade teachers in school districts in the state of

Mississippi, and the responses were analyzed quantitatively. The survey was distributed

electronically via email using Qualtrics. The survey was developed by the researcher to

determine the relationship between the number of disruptive behaviors and reading

achievement. The surveys were analyzed using descriptive and differential statistical

processes.

The survey consisted of three sections with a total of 35 items (Appendix E).

Each section required participants to respond to items by choosing the correct response

and entering the correct reading score and letter grade. Section I of the instrument

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contained a demographic item of the teacher participant. The item addressed grade level taught and offered the options of: Pre-K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th.

Section II consisted of 28 items about the variable of PBIS strategies used by teachers and received by students in the classroom. This section required teacher participants to respond to Likert-scaled items. Teacher participants responded to items addressing the use of PBIS strategies in the classroom by choosing from the options of: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, or Very Often.

Section III of the instrument consisted of student information. Item 1 addressed the grade level of the student. Item 2 of Section III addressed the variable of student participation in counseling. The item required each participant to indicate the frequency of the student participating in counseling sessions. Items 3 and 4 of Section III consisted of items about the variable of student participation in mentoring. The items required each participant to indicate whether or not the student participated in school-based mentoring and/or community-based mentoring.

Item 5 in Section III addressed the variable of disruptive behavior measured by the number of office referrals. The item required each participant to indicate a range of how many office referrals a student received. Participants were required to choose from the options of: 0, 1-2, 3, or 4 or more. The number office referrals reported indicated whether or not the student displayed disruptive behavior. Items 6 and 7 of Section III addressed the variable of student reading scores. The item required each participant to enter a numerical and letter grade from the most recent report card. Participants were able to enter information for multiple students. As a result, the length of this section was determined by the number of students entered by the participants.

Responses from Items 1-28 in Section II and Items 2, 3, 4, and 5 in Section III addressed Research Question 1 and supported Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3. Responses from Items 1-28 in Section II and Items 2, 3, 4, and 6 addressed Research Question 2 and support Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6. After Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval was obtained (Appendix A), the survey was distributed to Pre-K through fifth grade teachers in various schools in the state of Mississippi, and the responses were analyzed using quantitative measures.

Prior to the study, a pilot test was administered to 20 participants in order to determine reliability of the instrument. The data from the responses of pilot test participants were analyzed, and the instrument was determined reliable.

Data Collection Process

The researcher sought approval to conduct the study from the dissertation committee. After obtaining approval, district superintendents received a letter via email in which the researcher requested permission to conduct the research study using employees' responses (Appendix B). Upon receiving permission from superintendents, the researcher sought approval to conduct the research study from Institutional Review Board (IRB). Upon receiving IRB approval of the research study, the data collection process began. The researcher requested student data from schools in three public school districts in Mississippi.

Upon receiving district consent and IRB approval, the researcher explained the purpose of the study and described the data collection process to the principal and/or counselor of each participating elementary school. The counselor served as the point of contact for the school site, collected consent forms, and trained teachers on the data

collection process on behalf of the researcher. The researcher discussed the data collection process thoroughly. If the school counselor agreed to assist the researcher in the research study, the counselor signed the letter of consent and returned it to the researcher. Once the counselor returned the signed consent form to the researcher and exhibited an understanding of the research study and data collection process, the researcher provided the counselors with the materials the counselors needed to begin the process.

A cover letter (Appendix C) and informed consent document (Appendix D) were provided for review by pre-K through fifth grade teachers whose participation in the study was requested. The school counselor distributed a signed consent form to participating teachers explaining the purpose and details of the study. The form also explained the study was voluntary and assured them there would be no negative consequences for choosing not to participate in or to withdraw from the study. The letter explained that the researcher would not see any identifiable information. It further explained that teachers' identities would remain anonymous. The teachers were informed that returning the signed consent forms indicated their consent to participate in the study. Consent letters and forms were collected and stored in a locked file cabinet in the counselor's office to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of students and teachers.

The school counselor also distributed a letter to obtain parental consent to access student data. The letter explained the purpose and details of the study to parents of elementary African American male students. The letter also explained the study was voluntary and assured them there would be no negative consequences for declining consent to access the data of their child. The letter explained that the researcher would

not see any identifiable information. It further explained that parents' identities would remain anonymous. The parents were informed that returning the signed parental consent letter to access student data indicated their consent to allow teachers to access their child's data.   Consent letters were collected and stored in a locked file cabinet in the counselor's office to protect the anonymity and confidentiality of students and teachers.

The researcher emailed the link to the online teacher questionnaire to the school principal and/or counselor. The school principal and/or counselor forwarded the email with the link to the online teacher questionnaire to the participating teachers. The online teacher questionnaire consisted of Likert-type questions that required a choice for each item and one open-ended item for the reading letter grade. The teachers were asked to report his or her grade level and the frequency of the use of PBIS techniques in the classroom as classroom management mechanisms. The teacher questionnaire consisted of questions to collect the grade of the student, indicators of student participation in counseling and mentoring, number of disruptive behaviors resulting in office referrals, and reading scores and/or letter grades from the most recent grade report. This information was collected by the teacher.   Identifiable information, such as names, social security numbers, MSIS numbers, and dates of birth, was not be seen by the researcher or entered into the questionnaire.

Once the teachers completed the questionnaire, he or she submitted the questionnaire electronically to the researcher. There was no active participation by students in this study. Signed parental consent letters and teacher signed consent forms were kept in a locked file cabinet in the counselor's office at each school site. Electronic data files containing anonymous teacher and student data were password-protected on the

researcher's and statistical advisor's computers. Electronic questionnaire data containing teacher and student data will be permanently deleted at the end of the study. Signed parental consent letters retained by the school counselor in a locked file cabinet were destroyed at the end of the study. The final results of the study are discussed in Chapter IV.

Variables Used in the Study

The dependent variables were teacher reports of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals and student achievement in reading. The independent variables were student participation in PBIS, counseling, and mentoring. For the purpose of this study, the variable of PBIS was the teacher's mean score of the use of PBIS techniques in the classroom. The variable of counseling was whether or not the student participated in counseling with a school counselor or mental health counselor. The variable of mentoring was whether or not the student had a mentor. The length of time for the independent variables were from the start of the school year until the time of data collection. These variables were based on the literature that addresses how schools and districts can reduce patterns of disruptive behavior and increase student achievement of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grades.

Analysis of Data

The responses were analyzed quantitatively using descriptive statistics and multiple regression and logistic regression analyses. Descriptive statistics of frequency, mean, and standard deviation were utilized to examine teacher use of PBIS techniques in the classroom, student participation in counseling and mentoring, reading scores, and disciplinary actions resulting in office referrals. A logistic regression analysis was used

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to analyze Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 to determine the relationship between the students'

participation in PBIS, counseling, mentoring, and the number of disruptive behaviors that

resulted in office referrals.   A multiple regression analysis was used to analyze

Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 to determine the relationship between the students' participation

in PBIS, counseling, mentoring, and reading scores. A significance test was performed to

determine if the research hypotheses were supported. The level of significance was set at

0.05.

Summary

Chapter III described the research design, research questions and hypotheses,

participants, and instrument used for collecting data in the proposed study. The chapter

further expounded on the statistical measures utilized to analyze the responses of the

participants. PBIS, counseling, and mentoring are intervention strategies for school

districts to implement in order to reduce and eliminate the disproportionate rate of

classroom disciplinary infractions, suspension, expulsion, and the underachievement of

young African American males. Interventions should be implemented as early as

possible to prepare young African American males for academic success. This study

produced results that will encourage and support school and community leaders to begin

interventions early to enable African American males to overcome barriers to academic

achievement and personal success.

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CHAPTER IV – RESULTS

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring on disruptive classroom behavior resulting in office referrals and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. The research design for this study was non-experimental and used quantitative analyses. Data were collected from questionnaires completed by public school teachers in the state of Mississippi from grades Pre-K through fifth grade. Data were analyzed to determine the relationship between the participation in PBIS, counseling, mentoring, office referrals, and reading scores. Multiple and logistic regression analyses were used to identify statistically significant differences and relationships among the variables. The results and statistical findings of the study are presented in this chapter.

Review of Research Design, Instrumentation, and Analyses

The research design employed quantitative analyses for this study regarding the relationship of PBIS, counseling, mentoring, disruptive classroom behavior, and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grades. Data were collected from a questionnaire that focused on the outcomes of disciplinary actions received by African American males in Pre-K through fifth grades and their achievement in reading. The questionnaire also focused on the intervention strategies of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring. Students' reading achievement was measured using reading scores. Disciplinary actions were measured by an indication of whether the student received an office referral or not. Data were analyzed to establish the relationship between the participation in PBIS, counseling, and mentoring and the presence of office

referrals. Data were also analyzed to determine the relationship between the participation in PBIS, counseling, and mentoring and reading scores.

There were three sections in the questionnaire. The first section of the instrument addressed the grade level taught by the teacher. The second section addressed the use of PBIS strategies by the teacher in the classroom. The third section of the instrument consisted of student information, such as grade level, disciplinary data, and reading scores. This section also assessed students' participation in counseling and mentoring.

Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 were analyzed using logistic regression analysis to examine the relationship between the participation in PBIS, counseling, and mentoring and office referrals. The dependent variable, office referrals, was dichotomous. The dependent variable was coded "1" if students had referrals and "0" if students did not have referrals. Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 were analyzed using multiple regression analysis to determine the relationship between the participation in PBIS, counseling, and mentoring and reading scores. The level of significance was set at 0.05. The quantitative results for the study are provided in the following sections.

<div align="center">Descriptive Statistics</div>

The researcher requested teacher and student information from teachers in three Mississippi school districts. The study required data of African American male students who were in grades Pre-K through fifth grades in 2018-2019. The questionnaires were distributed to participants as an electronic document via email using Qualtrics. Participants were given two weeks to respond to the survey. The survey consisted of questions to collect the grade level of the teacher and the use of PBIS techniques in the classroom. The survey also consisted of questions to collect the grade of the student,

indicators of participation in counseling and mentoring, presence of office referrals, and reading scores. There were no missing data, and all reported data were usable in the analysis. Complete details of the response of teachers and the provision of student data are included in the section entitled Data Collection Process of Chapter III.

Descriptive Statistics for Background Items

Section I of the instrument addressed the grade level taught by the teacher. Descriptive statistics were analyzed to examine the grade levels taught by teachers. In Section I, the item assessed the grade level taught. The public school elementary teachers indicated the grade level taught. The response options were Pre-K, 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and 5th. The percentages and counts of teachers per grade level are listed in Table 2.

Table 2 *Frequencies of Teachers by Grade Levels*

Grade Level	Frequency	Percent
Pre-K	1	11.1%
K	1	11.1%
1st	2	22.2%
2nd	2	22.2%
3rd	1	11.1%
4th	1	11.1%
5th	1	11.1%
Total	9	100.0%

Descriptive Statistics for Research Variables

Descriptive statistics were analyzed to examine teacher use of PBIS techniques in the classroom, student participation in counseling and mentoring, reading scores, and disciplinary actions resulting in office referrals. The survey consisted of three sections with a total of 35 items. Each section required participants to respond to items by choosing the correct response and entering the correct reading score and letter grade.

Section II consisted of 28 items about the variable of PBIS strategies used by teachers and received by students in the classroom. This section required teacher participants to respond to Likert-scaled items. Teacher participants responded to items addressing the use of PBIS strategies in the classroom by choosing from the options of: Never, Rarely, Sometimes, Often, or Very Often.

The students in the research study received PBIS strategies used by the teacher participants in the study. For the majority, participants used PBIS strategies in their classrooms with the majority (66%) of students receiving PBIS strategies "Often" and the remainder receiving them "Very Often". The frequencies of PBIS strategies used are listed in Table 3. Additionally, the distribution of teacher responses by grade level revealed that students receiving PBIS strategies "Very Often (34%)" were from grades 2nd to 5th, while there was a wider range of students receiving strategies "Often" from grades Pre-K to 5th. The distribution of responses by grade level for PBIS categories is listed in Table 4. The mean number for the variable of PBIS was (M = 4.34). The PBIS strategy *"Ignore disrupted behavior"* was used less frequently among participants (M = 1.4), while *"Teach social behavior"* and *"Reward"* were used most frequently (M = 3.8, separately). The mean and standard deviation of the variable PBIS are listed in Table 8.

Table 3 *Frequencies of PBIS Strategies*

PBIS category	Frequency	Percent
Often	23	65.7%
Very Often	12	34.3%
Total	35	100.0%

Table 4 *Distribution of PBIS Strategies by Grade Level*

| | PBIS Categories | | | | | |
| | Often | | Very Often | | Total | |
Grade Level	N	%	n	%	n	%
Pre-K	5	14.3%	0	0.0%	5	14.3%
K	2	5.7%	0	0.0%	2	5.7%
1st	10	28.6%	0	0.0 %	10	28.6%
2nd	2	5.7%	3	8.6%	5	14.3%
3rd	0	0.0%	4	11.4%	4	11.4%
4th	4	11.4%	0	0.0%	4	11.4%
5th	0	0.0%	5	5.0%	5	14.3%
Total	23	65.7%	12	34.3%	35	100.0%

Responses from Item 2 of Section III of the questionnaire addressed the variable of student participation in counseling. The item required each participant to indicate the frequency of the student participating in counseling sessions. Teacher participants reported that 26 students (74%) did not participate in counseling sessions, while nine students (26%) participated counseling sessions. The frequencies of students participating in counseling are listed in Table 5. Responses from items 3 and 4 of Section III of the questionnaire consisted of items about the variable of student participation in mentoring. The items required each participant to indicate whether or not the student

participated in school-based mentoring and/or community-based mentoring. Teacher

participants reported that 27 students (77%) did not have a mentor, while eight students

(23%) did have a mentor. The frequencies of students participating in mentoring are

listed in Table 6.

Responses from Item 5 in Section III of the survey addressed the dependent

variable of disruptive behavior measured by the number of office referrals. The item

required each participant to indicate a range of how many office referrals a student

received. Participants were required to choose from the options of: 0, 1-2, 3, or 4 or

more. The number office referrals reported indicated whether or not the student

displayed disruptive behavior. The dependent variable, office referrals, was

dichotomous. The dependent variable was coded "1" if students had referrals and "0" if

students did not have referrals. Teacher participants reported that 18 students (51%) did

not receive an office referral. Teacher responses revealed that 17 (49%) received one or

more office referrals. The frequencies for office referrals are listed in Table 7.

Responses from Items 6 and 7 of Section III of the questionnaire addressed the variable

of student reading scores. The item required each participant to enter a numerical and

letter grade from the most recent report card. The mean for the variable of reading scores

was (M = 83.23).   The mean and standard deviation for reading scores are listed in

Table 8.

Table 5 *Frequencies of Students in Counseling*

Counseling	Frequency	Percent
No	26	74.3%
Yes	9	25.7%
Total	35	100.0%

Table 6 *Frequencies of Students in Mentoring*

Mentoring	Frequency	Percent
No	27	77.1%
Yes	8	22.9%
Total	35	100.0%

Table 7 *Frequencies of Students Receiving Referrals*

Referrals	Frequency	Percent
No	18	51.4%
Yes	17	48.6%
Total	35	100.0%

Table 8 *Descriptive Statistics for PBIS and Reading Score*

Variable	n	Mean	SD
PBIS	35	4.34	0.48
Reading Score	35	83.23	10.1

Research Question and Hypothesis Results

This study addressed two research questions and six hypotheses. Research

Question 1 asked: Among Pre-K through fifth grade African American males, do PBIS,

counseling, and mentoring have an impact on disciplinary referrals? Hypotheses 1, 2,

and 3 were associated with Research Question 1. Research Question 2 asked: Among

Pre-K through fifth grade African American males, do PBIS, counseling, and mentoring

have an impact on reading scores? Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 were associated with Research

Question 2.

A logistic regression analysis tested Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 to determine the

relationship between the students' participation in PBIS, counseling, mentoring, and

disruptive behaviors that resulted in disciplinary referrals. The independent variables

were counseling, mentoring, and PBIS, and the dependent variable was office referrals.

The dependent variable, office referrals, was dichotomous. The dependent variable was

coded "1" if students had referrals and "0" if students did not have referrals. The sample

size was $N = 35$, and there were no missing cases in the data. A test of the full model

including all three predictors was compared against a constant-only model. The results

indicated that the full model was a significant predictor of whether or not students were

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referred due to disciplinary action (χ^2(3, N = 35) = .011, p < .001). This revealed that the predictors, together, significantly distinguished between students who were referred due to disciplinary action and those that were not referred.

Furthermore, Nagelkerke R Square was .363, indicating that the model explains 36.3% of the variation in whether or not a student receives a referral. The Hosmer and Lemeshow test was not significant (χ^2(3) = 12.51, p = .085), indicating that the model fit was a good fit at different observed levels of the outcome. The classification table based on a model without any predictors (constant only) correctly predicted outcomes 51.4% of the time. Adding predictors to the model, the correct prediction of outcomes increased to 74.3%, with 83.3% correctly classifying no referral, and 64.7% correctly classifying a referral.

Hypothesis 1 stated: There is an inverse relationship between the participation in PBIS and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Responses from Items 1-28 in Section II and item 5 in Section III of the questionnaire addressed this hypothesis. A logistic regression analysis was used to test Hypothesis 1 to determine the relationship between the students' participation in PBIS and disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals. PBIS had an odds ratio (Exp(B)) of less than one, indicating a negative relationship with the outcome. Using the Wald statistic criteria, no significance was found for PBIS (x^2(1, N = 35) = .167, p = .682). The hypothesis was not supported. These results are listed in Table 9.

Hypothesis 2 stated: There is an inverse relationship between the participation in counseling and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received

by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Responses from Items

2 and 5 in Section III of the questionnaire addressed this hypothesis. A logistic

regression analysis was used to test Hypothesis 2 to determine the relationship between

the participation in counseling and disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals.

Counseling had an odds ratio (Exp(B)) of less than one, indicating a negative relationship

with the outcome. Using the Wald statistic criteria, the test revealed that counseling

$(x^2(1, N = 35) = 5.375, p = .020)$ was the only significant predictor of disruptive

behaviors that result in office referrals. The hypothesis was supported. Thus, the odds of

being referred as a result of disciplinary action is 0.06 times less for a student who

participated in counseling sessions compared to a student who did participate in

counseling sessions. These results are listed in Table 9.

Hypothesis 3 stated: There is an inverse relationship between the participation in

mentoring and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received

by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Responses from Items

3, 4, and 5 in Section III of the questionnaire addressed this hypothesis. A logistic

regression analysis was used to test Hypothesis 3 to determine the relationship between

the students' participation in mentoring and disruptive behaviors that result in office

referrals. Mentoring had an odds ratio (Exp(B)) of less than one, indicating a negative

relationship with the outcome. Using the Wald statistic criteria, no significant result was

found for mentoring $(x^2(1, N = 35) = 2.206, p = .138)$. The hypothesis was not supported.

These results are listed in Table 9.

Table 9 *Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Disciplinary Referrals*

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standard Error	Wald	*df*	Sig	*Exp B*
Constant	3.351	1.438	5.430	1	.020	28.525
Counseling	-2.857	3.806	-0.002	1	.020	.057
Mentoring	-1.489	1.003	2.206	1	.138	.226
PBIS	-.423	1.033	.167	1	.682	.655

Research Question 2 asked: Among Pre-K through fifth grade African American males, are PBIS, counseling, and mentoring related to reading scores? Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 were associated with Research Question 2. A multiple regression analysis was used to test Hypotheses 4, 5, and 6 to determine the relationship between the students' participation in PBIS, counseling, mentoring, and reading scores. The independent variables were counseling, mentoring, and PBIS. The dependent variable was reading scores. Additionally, PBIS was centered to help with interpretation. The sample size was $N = 35$, and there were no missing cases in the data. The model summary revealed an R^2 of 0.253 indicating 25.3% of the variation in reading scores can be explained by the model containing all predictor variables. The model was statistically significant with $F(3, 31) = 3.496$, $p = 0.027$. These results indicated that the model, with all the

predictors included, was a good predictor of reading scores.   These results are listed in Table 10.

Hypothesis 4 stated: There is a positive relationship between the participation in PBIS and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Responses from Items 1-28 in Section II and item 6 in Section III of the questionnaire addressed this hypothesis. The test revealed a negative β coefficient for PBIS indicating a negative relationship with the result. No significant relationship was found for PBIS center (β = -3.86, p = 0.35). The hypothesis was not supported. These results are listed in Table 10.

Hypothesis 5 stated: There is a positive relationship between the participation in counseling and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Responses from Items 2 and 6 in Section III of the questionnaire addressed this hypothesis. The test revealed a negative β coefficient for counseling indicating a negative relationship with the result. No significant relationship was found for counseling (β = -0.04, p = 0.99). The hypothesis was not supported. These results are listed in Table 10.

Hypothesis 6 stated: There is a positive relationship between the participation in mentoring and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Responses from Items 3, 4, and 6 in Section III of the questionnaire addressed this hypothesis. The test revealed a negative β coefficient for mentoring indicating a negative relationship with the outcome. However, mentoring was the only significant predictor of reading scores, β = -10.96, p < .001. Looking at the beta (standardized) values, mentoring had the highest impact on predicting reading score, with

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β = -0.462. These findings revealed that, holding the other variables constant, students who participated in mentoring scored lower on reading scores compared to students who did not participate in mentoring. Since the test revealed a negative relationship with the outcome, the hypothesis was not supported. These results are listed in Table 9.

Table 10 *Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Predicting Reading Scores*

Variables	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Standard Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig
Constant	85.727	1.969		43.528	< .001
Counseling	-0.038	3.806	-0.002	-0.010	0.992
Mentoring	-10.958	3.723	-0.462	-2.943	0.006
PBIS	-3.862	4.065	-0.158	-0.950	0.349

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring on disruptive classroom behavior resulting in office referrals and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. To fulfill the purpose, the study tested and analyzed six hypotheses. Descriptive statistics and multiple or logistic regression were used to identify statistically significant differences and relationships

among the variables. All of the participants were public school teachers in the state of Mississippi from grades Pre-K through fifth grade.

The analysis of the data indicated that there was not a significant relationship between the participation in PBIS and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. There was no significant relationship between the participation in mentoring and the number of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals. The analysis of the data indicated that counseling was the only significant predictor of disruptive behaviors that result in office referrals.

The analysis of the data indicated that there was not a significant relationship between the participation in PBIS and the reading scores of African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. There was no significant relationship between the participation in counseling and reading scores. The analysis of the data indicated that mentoring was the only significant predictor of reading scores. However, the test revealed a negative relationship between mentoring and reading scores. Thus, the hypothesis regarding mentoring and reading scores was not supported.

CHAPTER V – CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring on disruptive classroom behavior resulting in office referrals and student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. This study investigated the use of PBIS techniques within the classroom of elementary teachers, student participation in counseling sessions, and student participation in mentor programs. This study also investigated reading scores and disciplinary data of students. Survey responses of public school elementary teachers were examined. Their responses were used to conclude if the use PBIS techniques in the classroom, counseling, and mentoring were related to the number of disciplinary referrals and reading scores of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. The instrument produced quantitative data used for the research study. This study produced results that can encourage and support school and community leaders to begin interventions early to enable African American males overcome barriers to academic achievement and success. This chapter provides a summary of procedures and results, a discussion of the findings, and recommendations for policy, practice, and additional research.

Summary of Procedures

A teacher questionnaire was used as the survey instrument. An expert panel was used to validate the instrument. The researcher requested permission from Mississippi public school districts to distribute the questionnaire to elementary teachers. In the request, the researcher assured all identifiable information of students and teachers would not be collected or seen by the researcher.

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The researcher requested permission to distribute the electronic teacher questionnaire. The researcher was granted permission from three public school districts to conduct the study and to distribute the electronic questionnaire via email. The researcher was granted permission from three Mississippi superintendents to distribute the teacher surveys. The superintendents of a northern and two southern Mississippi school districts granted the researcher permission to contact teachers and conduct the study with elementary public school teachers in their school districts.

The researcher first obtained approval to conduct the study from the dissertation committee. Upon receiving approval to conduct the study, the researcher contacted superintendents of school districts to conduct the study. Once the superintendents granted permission, the researcher sought approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the research study. The approval document of the IRB is included and labeled as Appendix A. Upon receiving permission from the IRB, the researcher distributed questionnaires to Pre-K through fifth grade teachers in electronic copy via email using Qualtrics. There was no active participation by students in this research study. Participating teachers collected the data and removed all identifiable information of students before submitting the data to the researcher.

The questionnaire data collected for this research came from responses completed by public school elementary teachers in Mississippi. The electronic questionnaire was distributed via email by the researcher. The electronic surveys were compiled in an electronic database through Qualtrics. The researcher printed each survey and entered the data into a Microsoft Office Excel spreadsheet. The researcher entered the data from the

spreadsheet into SPSS. The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, multiple regression, and logistic regression analyses.

Major Findings

The study included Pre-K through fifth grade teacher participants, student achievement reading data, and disciplinary data. Participants in the study were elementary teachers who teach in schools in the state of Mississippi. There were nine teacher participants who reported data for 35 students. The teacher participants were elementary public school teachers from one northern Mississippi and two southern Mississippi school districts.

Data was collected from a questionnaire that focused on the outcomes of disciplinary actions received by African American males in Pre-K through fifth grades and their achievement in reading. The survey also focused on the intervention strategies of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring in relation to disciplinary actions and achievement in reading.

Results of the analysis of Hypothesis 1 indicated that participation in PBIS was not a significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in PBIS had no impact on disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals.

According to the results of the analysis related to Hypothesis 2, participation in counseling was the only significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through

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fifth grade. Student participation in counseling had an impact on disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals.

The analysis of Hypothesis 3 produced results indicating that participation in mentoring was not a significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in mentoring had no impact on disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals.

Findings from the analysis of Hypothesis 4 indicated that participation in PBIS was not a significant predictor of reading scores received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in PBIS did not have a significant impact on reading scores.

Results of the analysis of Hypothesis 5 indicated that participation in counseling was not a significant predictor of reading scores received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in counseling did not have a significant impact on reading scores.

The analysis of the data regarding Hypothesis 6 indicated that mentoring was the only significant predictor of reading scores. However, the test revealed a negative relationship between mentoring and reading scores. Thus, the hypothesis regarding mentoring and reading scores was not supported.

<div align="center">Discussion</div>

In this present study, participation in PBIS was not a significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in PBIS had

no impact on disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals. This finding was not

consistent with recent literature, which asserted that schools implementing PBIS school-

wide have fewer office discipline referrals (Crump & Lo, 2017)   This finding also

contradicted results from a study conducted in Louisiana by Barrett and Harris (2018)

that revealed that PBIS strategies reduced the number of suspensions by 0.14-0.38 per

student per year (26-72 percent from baseline) and the number of suspension days by 0.7-

1.5 (at least 52 percent).

The results from this study revealed that participation in counseling was the only

significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals

received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student

participation in counseling had an impact on disruptive behaviors that resulted in office

referrals. This finding was consistent with literature that reported that school counselors

are instrumental in reducing disciplinary infractions (Washington, 2010; Bryan, et. al,

2012). Belser, Shillingford, & Joe (2016) also maintained that rates of suspensions for

students of color decreased when counseling services increased.

The results from this study indicated that participation in mentoring was not a

significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals

received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student

participation in mentoring had no impact on disruptive behaviors that resulted in office

referrals. This finding contradicted literature that maintained that mentoring programs

reduced referrals and suspensions (Schwartz, et. al 2012). Findings from this study

conflicted with the assertion of Toms and Stuart (2014) that there is a positive

relationship between mentoring and positive behavior of students who are at risk for exclusionary sanctions.

The results from this study also indicated that participation in PBIS did not significantly predict reading scores received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in PBIS did not have a significant impact on reading scores. This finding opposed the description of PBIS given by the Office of Special Education Programs National Technical Assistance Center (OSEP) on PBIS (2018).   OSEP (2018) maintained that PBIS implementation of PBIS strategies yield "improvements in academic engagement and achievement" (pg. 1). This finding also contradicted results from a study that revealed that student outcomes were significantly higher at schools implementing PBIS with fidelity (Houchens, Zhang, Davis, Niu, Chon, & Miller, 2017).

The results from this study revealed that participation in counseling was not a significant predictor of reading scores received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in counseling did not have a significant impact on reading scores. This finding was not consistent with literature that stated that reading proficiency improved when students of color participated in counseling programs (Belser, et. al, 2016). The finding of this study also opposed the position of Lopez and Mason (2018) that participation in counseling has a positive impact on student achievement.

The results from this study also revealed that mentoring was the only significant predictor of reading scores. However, the test revealed a negative relationship between mentoring and reading scores. Thus, the hypothesis regarding mentoring and reading

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scores was not supported. These findings were inconsistent with the literature that posited that mentoring programs improved the academic performance (Schwartz, et. al, 2012). The findings of this study also opposed the stance of Dickerson and Agosto (2015) that mentoring positively impacts academics of youth from all types of backgrounds.

<div align="center">Limitations</div>

There were some factors that limited the ability to generalize the findings of this study. Participants for the study were limited to Pre-K through fifth grade elementary teachers who teach in public schools in the state of Mississippi. The public school elementary teachers were limited to those who taught in one public school district in northern Mississippi and two public school districts in southern Mississippi, with the majority of the responses coming from southern Mississippi.

The response rate produced sufficient participants for the analyses. Three school districts produced nine participating teachers who reported data for 35 students. However, a higher response rate from more school districts and teachers was desired. A greater number of participants might impact the results and would improve the level in which the results could be generalized.

The independent variables in this study were student participation in PBIS, counseling session, and mentoring. These variables were chosen based on their relationship in the literature with student achievement and disciplinary actions received by African American male students. However, there are other variables that contribute to student achievement and disciplinary actions of African American male students in elementary school. Other variables could include duration of PBIS interventions,

duration of counseling and mentoring sessions, frequency of counseling and mentoring sessions, the number of advanced degrees of the teacher, number of years of teaching experience, culturally sensitive strategies and interventions, and teachers' level of training in PBIS strategies.

<div align="center">Recommendations for Policy and Practice</div>

The educational achievement gap that exists between African American males and their peers continues to be one of the most damaging dilemmas facing American society (Burchinal, McCartney, Steinberg, Crosnoe, Friedman, McLoyd, & Picanta, 2011). They fall far behind White male peers on standardized tests and behind Black females in math and science (Praeger, 2011; Vega, Moore, & Miranda, 2015). In addition, African American males are more likely to be identified as suffering from a learning disability and referred to special education (Reed and Cartledge, 2014). According to Weir (2016), the high school graduation rate in 2014 for white students was 87 percent, while the rate was 73 percent for black students, the rate was 73 percent. Praeger (2011) reported that approximately half of African American males do not complete high school in most American cities. Bracy and Peguero (2014) asserted that those who do not complete high school have poorer health, are more likely to be unemployed, are more likely to be delinquent and use drugs, and have a higher likelihood incarceration.

In addition to the achievement gap between African American males and their peers, there is also a discipline gap (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). According to Reed and Cartledge (2014), it has been documented for nearly four decades through research findings and national and state data that African American students are

<div align="center">72</div>

overrepresented in school disciplinary sanctions compared to their enrollment rates. According to Rudd (2014) and Richard and Hardin (2018), African American boys are disciplined more often for disruptive behavior and receive more out-of-school suspensions and expulsions than White students. Reed and Cartledge (2014) added that African American students are also more likely to be referred to the criminal justice system.

According to Davis (2003), educational interventions are necessary in closing the gaps in achievement and discipline of African American males and their peers. Longstanding discipline disproportions for African American male students are related to unfavorable outcomes and require useful and effective school-based solutions (Cook, et. al, 2018). Noguera (2012) suggested implementing early interventions when warning signs are present. Bell (2010) added that intervening at younger ages is associated with more positive outcomes for students.

The findings in this study support the claim by Johnson and Hannon (2014) that services provided by school counselors are instrumental in students overcoming behavior challenges. In this study, counseling was the only significant predictor of disruptive classroom behaviors that resulted in office referrals. Students who participated in counseling sessions were less likely to receive an office referral than students who did not participate in counseling sessions. In light of these results, school administrators should have a comprehensive school counseling program that is fully implemented within the school.

Although implementing a comprehensive program is deemed as a professional best practice, school counselors face numerous challenges in implementing programs

(Scott, Bubon, & Donohue, 2018). School counselors are often given the task of non-counseling duties such as maintaining, organizing the standardized testing program, and administrative duties (Bardhosi, Schweinle, & Duncan, 2014). Since school administrators have a great deal of influence in determining the role of the school counselor, it is important that principals understand the role of the school counselor. Bardhosi, et. al (2014) reported that there are few administration graduate programs that offer courses in school counseling. To help principals understand the role of the counselor according to the American School Counselor Association (ASCA) model, universities should include school counseling courses within the administration program regarding the proper role of the school counselor and the nature of the comprehensive school counseling program. Executive boards of school districts and other policymakers would benefit from training in the proper role of the school counselor as outlined in the ASCA model.

Recommendations for Future Research

Research often yields the opportunity for further examination. Based on the results of this study, six recommendations for future research are provided. The following inquiries might produce additional understanding of factors that impact academic achievement in reading and disruptive classroom behaviors of African American males in grades Pre-K through fifth grade.

1. Repeat the study to include a larger sample of public school teacher participants in the state of Mississippi.
2. Repeat the study to include a larger sample of public school teacher participants in other geographical regions in the United States.

3. Repeat the study to include a larger population of students. The number of students for whom data were examine in this study was limited to 35. This was sufficient for the analyses. A greater number of participants might impact the results and would improve the level in which the results could be generalized.

4. Analyze data to determine the impact of the duration and frequency of the interventions of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring on student achievement in reading and disruptive behavior of elementary African American male students.

5. Analyze data to determine the influence of teachers' years of teaching experience as it relates to the interventions of PBIS on student achievement in reading and disruptive behavior of elementary African American male students.

6. Analyze data to determine the influence of teachers' level of professional development in the use of PBIS strategies as it relates to the student achievement in reading and disruptive behavior of elementary African American male students.

7. Replicate the study and analyze data to determine if culturally relevant strategies and interventions have a significant impact on reading scores and disruptive behavior of African American elementary male students.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to explore the influence of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring on disruptive classroom behavior resulting in office referrals. The study also examined the impact of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring on student achievement in reading of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.

Previous literature discussed Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS),
counseling, and mentoring.

The researcher collected data for this study from nine Mississippi public school
elementary teacher participants who reported data for 35 students. The study examined
the intervention strategies of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring in relation to disciplinary
actions and achievement in reading. The responses were analyzed using descriptive
statistics and multiple regression and logistic regression analyses.

Several major findings came from this study. Findings indicated that participation
in PBIS was not a significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted
in office referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth
grade. Student participation in PBIS had no impact on disruptive behaviors that resulted
in office referrals. The results of this study suggested that participation in counseling was
the only significant predictor of the number of disruptive behaviors that resulted in office
referrals received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade.
Students who participated in counseling had significantly fewer disruptive behaviors that
resulted in office referrals than students who did not participate in counseling. Results
indicated that participation in mentoring was not a significant predictor of the number of
disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals received by African American male
students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in mentoring had no impact
on disruptive behaviors that resulted in office referrals.

Findings from the study indicated that participation in PBIS was not a significant
predictor of reading scores received by African American male students in Pre-K through
fifth grade. Student participation in PBIS did not have a significant impact on reading

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scores. Also, the results of the study indicated that in participation in counseling was not a significant predictor of reading scores received by African American male students in Pre-K through fifth grade. Student participation in counseling did not have a significant impact on reading scores. Lastly, the findings from this study indicated that mentoring was the only significant predictor of reading scores. However, the test revealed a negative relationship between mentoring and reading scores. Students who participated in mentoring had significantly lower reading grades than students who did not participate in counseling. Thus, the hypothesis regarding mentoring and reading scores was not supported.

There were limitations in this study. However, recommendations for policy and practice were made which suggested that universities could include school counseling courses within the administration program regarding the proper role of the school counselor and the nature of the comprehensive school counseling program. A recommendation was made for administrators to have a comprehensive school counseling program that is fully implemented within the school. Lastly, a recommendation was made for governing boards of school districts and other policymakers to undergo training in the proper role of the school counselor as outlined in the ASCA model.

Recommendations for further research included replicating the study to include a larger sample of public school teacher participants from a larger number of public school districts in other geographical regions in the United States. It was recommended to implement further studies to analyze data to determine the impact of the duration and frequency of interventions of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring on student achievement in reading and disruptive behavior of elementary African American male students. Another

recommendation was to analyze data to determine if culturally relevant strategies and interventions have a significant impact on reading scores and disruptive behavior of African American elementary male students. Other recommendations included analyzing data to determine the influence of teachers' years of experience and level of professional development as it relates to interventions of PBIS on student achievement in reading and disruptive behavior of elementary African American male students.

THE UNIVERSITY OF SOUTHERN MISSISSIPPI.

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NOTICE OF COMMITTEE ACTION

The project has been reviewed by The University of Southern Mississippi Institutional Review Board in accordance with Federal Drug Administration regulations (21 CFR 26, 111), Department of Health and Human Services (45 CFR Part 46), and university guidelines to ensure adherence to the following criteria:

- The risks to subjects are minimized.
- The risks to subjects are reasonable in relation to the anticipated benefits.
- The selection of subjects is equitable.
- Informed consent is adequate and appropriately documented.
- Where appropriate, the research plan makes adequate provisions for monitoring the data collected to ensure the safety of the subjects.
- Where appropriate, there are adequate provisions to protect the privacy of subjects and to maintain the confidentiality of all data.
- Appropriate additional safeguards have been included to protect vulnerable subjects.
- Any unanticipated, serious, or continuing problems encountered regarding risks to subjects must be reported immediately, but not later than 10 days following the event. This should be reported to the IRB Office via the "Adverse Effect Report Form".
- If approved, the maximum period of approval is limited to twelve months.
  Projects that exceed this period must submit an application for renewal or continuation.

PROTOCOL NUMBER: 18041901
PROJECT TITLE: The Impact of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support, Counseling, and Mentoring on the Behavior and Achievement of African American Males in Elementary School
PROJECT TYPE: Doctoral Dissertation
RESEARCHER(S): Elesha Buckley
COLLEGE/DIVISION: College of Education and Psychology
DEPARTMENT: Educational Research and Administration
FUNDING AGENCY/SPONSOR: N/A
IRB COMMITTEE ACTION: Exempt Review Approval
PERIOD OF APPROVAL: 04/30/2018 to 04/29/2019
Lawrence A. Hosman, Ph.D.
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B – SUPERINTENDENT RECRUITMENT LETTER

May 1, 2018

Dear Superintendent:

I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi under the guidance of a dissertation committee led by Dr. David Lee. I am conducting a research study on how Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring are related to patterns in disruptive classroom behavior and student achievement of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grades. My committee recently approved my proposal in which I requested permission to conduct this study. I am seeking permission to survey teachers in your district and would appreciate your help.

During the course of this study, data will be collected from Pre-K-5 teachers in elementary schools in Mississippi to address the effectiveness of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring in terms of behavior and achievement. This study will benefit superintendents and principals by producing results that will encourage and support school and community leaders to begin interventions early to enable African American males to overcome barriers to academic achievement and personal success.

You have my assurance that all information collected during the course of this study will remain confidential. Participation is voluntary and anonymous. The names of participants and identities of their schools or districts will not be used in the study. Only results will be reported and can be available upon request.

Please respond via email. Your response granting permission is necessary to show I have permission to conduct the study in your district. Please contact me via email at elesha.buckley@eagles.usm.edu or by phone at (601) 818-5532 if you have questions or concerns. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Elesha Buckley

APPENDIX C - PARTICIPANT COVER LETTER

May 1, 2018

Dear Participant:

I am currently a doctoral candidate at the University of Southern Mississippi under the guidance of a dissertation committee led by Dr. David Lee. I am conducting a research study on how Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring are related to patterns in disruptive classroom behavior and student achievement of African-American male students in Pre-K through fifth grades. I am seeking your consent to complete a questionnaire and would appreciate your help.

During the course of this study, data will be collected from Pre-K-5 teachers in elementary schools in Mississippi to address the effectiveness of PBIS, counseling, and mentoring in terms of behavior and achievement. This study will benefit superintendents, principals, and teachers by producing results that will encourage and support school and community leaders to begin interventions early to enable African American males to overcome barriers to academic achievement and personal success.

You have my assurance that all information collected during the course of this study will remain confidential. Participation is voluntary and anonymous. The names of participants and identities of their schools or districts will not be used in the study. The survey should take no more than 20 minutes to complete. Only results will be reported and can be available upon request.

This research project has been reviewed and approved by the Human Subjects Protection Review Committee, which ensures that all research fits the federal guidelines for research involving human subjects. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research subject should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5147, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, (601) 266-6820.

Please contact me via email at elesha.buckley@eagles.usm.edu or by phone at (601) 818-5532 if you have questions or concerns. Thank you for your consideration.
Sincerely,

Elesha Buckley

ORI | Office *of* Research Integrity

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
STANDARD (SIGNED) INFORMED CONSENT

STANDARD (SIGNED) INFORMED CONSENT PROCEDURES
This completed document must be signed by each consenting research participant. • The Project Information and Research Description sections of this form should be completed by the Principal Investigator before submitting this form for IRB approval. • Signed copies of the consent form should be provided to all participants. Last Edited February 9th, 2018

Today's date:5/1/2018

PROJECT INFORMATION		
Project Title: The Impact of Positive Behavior Interventions and Support, Counseling, and Mentoring on the Behavior and Achievement of African American Males in Elementary School		
Principal Investigator: Elesha Buckley	Phone: 601-818-5532	Email: elesha.buckley@eagles.usm.edu
College: Education and Psychology	Department: Educational Leadership	

RESEARCH DESCRIPTION

Subject population, criteria for subject selection, and recruitment procedures:

The subject population consists of Pre-K- 5 teachers in elementary schools in the state of Mississippi. The estimated number of participants will be 30 to 100. Expected ages of participants range from 21 to 62. Participants will be recruited through e-mail. Subjects will be obtained from teachers who respond to the recruitment method.

3. **Benefits:**

The potential benefits for subjects include knowing that their participation will contribute to the development and implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), counseling, and mentoring programs in elementary schools. The benefits for superintendents, principals, and teachers include producing results that will encourage and support school and community leaders to begin interventions early to enable at-risk African American males to overcome barriers to academic achievement and personal success. The benefits for universities include creating curriculum, programs, field experiences, and training centered on early interventions for at-risk African American males in elementary schools for teacher preparation and principal preparation courses.

4. **Risks:**

Risks associated with this study are unlikely. Risks could possibly be that participants may not feel comfortable responding to questions about PBIS, counseling, mentoring, student behavior, and academic achievement. To reduce the risk of discomfort, the participants will be told they can discontinue participation at any time. The researcher will ensure the participants that their participation will remain anonymous and confidential. The participants will be informed that only the researcher and the researcher's university advisors will have access to the responses for the duration of the study.

5. Confidentiality:

All information is confidential and anonymous. Demographic information will be gathered from participants. The only demographic information that will be collected is the grade level taught. Identifying information such as name or address will not be collected nor reported. No identifying information will be requested or included in any report or publication about this study. Only the researcher and the researcher's university advisors will review the surveys. All information is confidential and anonymous.

Data will be kept on the researcher's laptop computer or kept at the researcher's house. Only university advisors, the researcher, and the participants will have access at the researcher's discretion.

The questionnaire data will be kept up to one year. After one year, the questionnaire data will be destroyed.

6. Alternative Procedures:

There are no alternatives to participation that will be presented to participants in this study.

7. Participant's Assurance:

This project has been reviewed by the Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations.

Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the IRB at 601-266-5997. Participation in this project is completely voluntary, and participants may withdraw from this study at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits.

Any questions about the research should be directed to the Principal Investigator using the contact information provided in Project Information Section above.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN RESEARCH

Participant's Name: _____ _____

I hereby consent to participate in this research project. All research procedures and their purpose were explained to me, and I had the opportunity to ask questions about both the procedures and their purpose. I received information about all expected benefits, risks, inconveniences, or discomforts, and I had the opportunity to ask questions about them. I understand my participation in the project is completely voluntary and that I may withdraw from the project at any time without penalty, prejudice, or loss of benefits. I understand the extent to which my personal information will be kept confidential. As the research proceeds, I understand that any new information that emerges and that might be relevant to my willingness to continue my participation will be provided to me.

Questions concerning the research, at any time during or after the project, should be directed to the Principal Investigator with the contact information provided above. This project and this consent form have been reviewed by USM's Institutional Review Board, which ensures that research projects involving human subjects follow federal regulations. Any questions or concerns about rights as a research participant should be directed to the Chair of the Institutional Review Board, The University of Southern Mississippi, 118 College Drive #5116, Hattiesburg, MS 39406-0001, 601-266-5997.

_____   _____
Research Participant   **Person Explaining the Study**

_____   _____
Date   **Date**

THE COUNSELING, MENTORING, and CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT

QUESTIONNAIRE

Section I

Demographics

1. What grade level do you teach? (Check all that apply.)

Pre-K   K   1st   2nd   3rd   4th   5th

Section II

Classroom Management

In this section indicate how often you use the following techniques in your classroom.

Respond to the following using the scale below.

1- Never   2- Rarely   3 –Sometimes   4- Often   5- Very Often

In my classroom, I . . . . .

1. Teach positive social behaviors (helping, sharing, waiting, taking turns) **1 2 3 4 5**

2. Comment on inappropriate behavior   **1 2 3 4 5**

3. Reward positive behaviors with incentives (e.g., stickers)   **1 2 3 4 5**

4. Praise positive behavior   **1 2 3 4 5**

5. Provide additional homework for misbehavior   **1 2 3 4 5**

6. Use "Calm Down/Cool Off Time" for aggressive behavior   **1 2 3 4 5**

7. Single out a child or a group of children for misbehavior   **1 2 3 4 5**

8. Use incentive program (e.g., tickets, tokens, prizes)   **1 2 3 4 5**

9. Use physical restraint   **1 2 3 4 5**

10. Send student to principal's office for misbehavior **1 2 3 4 5**

11. Remove child who misbehaves from classroom **1 2 3 4 5**

12. Call parents to report bad behavior **1 2 3 4 5**

13. Ignore misbehavior that is non-disruptive to class **1 2 3 4 5**

14. Use verbal redirection for child who is off-task **1 2 3 4 5**

15. Reprimand in a loud voice **1 2 3 4 5**

16. Send notes home about positive behavior **1 2 3 4 5**

17. Use routines for transitions **1 2 3 4 5**

18. Use group incentives **1 2 3 4 5**

19. Assign character education writing assignment for misbehavior **1 2 3 4 5**

20. Send home notes to report problem behavior to parent **1 2 3 4 5**

21. Use special privileges (e.g., classroom helper, extra computer time) **1 2 3 4 5**

22. Give clear positive directions **1 2 3 4 5**

23. Remind of consequences for misbehavior (e.g., loss of privileges) **1 2 3 4 5**

24. Refer to posted classroom rules to redirect misbehavior **1 2 3 4 5**

25. Use nonverbal signals to redirect child who is off-task **1 2 3 4 5**

26. Call parents to report good behavior **1 2 3 4 5**

27. Reduce recess time for misbehavior **1 2 3 4 5**

28. Ignore misbehavior that is disruptive to class **1 2 3 4 5**

Section III

Student Information

For each of the even-numbered, alphabetically listed African American male students in

your classes, please respond to the following. (Place your African American male

students in alphabetical order. Choose the 2nd, 4th, 6th, 8th, etc. student. Respond to the following for those students.)

1. Indicate this student's grade.

   Pre-K   K   1st 2nd 3rd 4th 5th

2. During the past school year, did this student participate in individual or group counseling sessions led by the school guidance counselor?

____None   ____A few times   ____On a regular basis

3. During the past school year, did this student have a school-based mentor?

____Yes   ____No   ____ Don't Know

4. During the past school year, did this student have a non-school-based mentor?

____Yes   ____No   ____Don't Know

5. During the past school year, how many times did you refer this student to an administrator for disciplinary reasons?

____0   ____1   ____2-3   ____4 or more

6. From the most recent report card, what is this student's score and letter grade?

____ (score)   ____ (letter grade)

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