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Elementary Teachers' Perceptions on How Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Relate to Academic Achievement

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College of Education

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Abstract

This phenomenological research study reviews elementary teachers' perceptions on how Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) relate to academic achievement. Researchers have identified the need for effective behavioral management plans to assist teachers with student discipline concerns and academic achievement. PBIS provides an effective framework for accomplishing these outcomes. Purposeful sampling identified 10 participants for individual interviews and completing a Qualtrics survey. During the 1:1 interviews, participants expressed their perceived ideas and experiences with PBIS as a behavioral management framework that was used to manage behavior and improve student academic achievement. The surveys provided an additional analysis of the participants' perceptions of PBIS and academic achievement. The findings indicated a strong relationship between PBIS and academic achievement. The study concluded that elementary teachers perceived PBIS to be an effective behavioral management resource for student discipline and achievement when supported by administrators or the PBIS team, used consistently, and with fidelity. However, the study reveals that many of the participants believed PBIS does not provide effective strategies to improve achievement to assist with severely behaved or non-compliant students. With more training, guidance, and assistance from the PBIS team, teachers may be able to create a strategic plan to improve the achievement levels of non-compliant students.

Keywords: Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports framework, academic achievement, teacher perceptions, behavioral management

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandparents, the late Reverend Abram and Bonnie Bell Davis, whose hard work and sacrifice encouraged me to focus on my doctoral educational pursuits. I know you would be proud of my accomplishments. I miss you dearly.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Introduction to the Study

Teachers perform a multitude of roles which include functioning as a facilitator, advisor, tutor, instructor, and disciplinarian. However, many teachers may perceive the role of a disciplinarian as the most essential aspect to the teaching experience because the focus is on creating a classroom environment where learning takes place without interruptions and distractions. This type of environment can exist when teachers implement a behavioral management plan that will support teachers in redirecting student behavioral issues and promotes academic growth.

The intent of this study was to examine the perceptions of elementary teachers' use of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a classroom management strategy that is used to increase student academic achievement. According to the Office of Special Education Programs (2012), PBIS is a behavioral modification framework used in many school districts to improve student behavior, increase instructional time, and improve student academic achievement. However, after conducting an extensive search of literature, there was not an abundant amount of research on how elementary teachers view PBIS as a behavioral management strategy and how PBIS relates to academic achievement. The school district in which the research was being conducted piloted the PBIS framework within a few schools eight years ago. Within three years, all schools in the district implemented the PBIS framework as a part of the classroom management system. This was the fifth year of utilizing PBIS at the research site. Throughout the five years, there were numerous changes at the research site such as teachers leaving the district, transferring within the district, or retiring from the district. Although teachers with PBIS experience were hired to work at the research site, most schools

developed their own behavioral and academic support procedures. Due to changes in personnel at the research site, teachers may need continuous training to effectively implement PBIS. Thus, teachers who review this research will be able to evaluate the context to which PBIS was used as a behavioral modification framework and its relationship with academic achievement from the perceptions of elementary teachers who implemented this method into their classrooms.

Background

The primary responsibility of a teacher is to instruct students in the best possible learning environment. However, the learning environment is often compromised by students who choose to distract and disrupt the educational setting. Teachers with effective classroom management tend to focus on behavioral interventions to reduce students' arduous behaviors and eliminate the elements that contribute to them. Specifically, elementary school teachers may need to apply effective deterrence and intervention approaches that aim to promote positive behaviors and improve student academic achievement (Kelm, et al., 2014). Approaches designed to reduce the undesirable results of disruptive or distracting behaviors may increase the probabilities that effective instructional practices and student learning will occur. One such approach is Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), which is a multitiered system of support for improving school behavior and offers a framework for practices that may improve behaviors directly related to academic performance (Flannery, Fenning, et al., 2014). According to one study by Johnson, et al., (2013), reading and mathematics achievement on standardized test scores have been shown to increase following the implementation of PBIS. Classroom teachers may benefit from adopting approaches aimed to prevent problem behaviors and increase academic achievement. In addition, providing teachers with tools that prevent behavioral issues can play a critical role in supporting them in

managing disruptive behavior in their classrooms. Teachers may be able to increase time for instruction and reduce student behavioral challenges when using behavioral strategies that are focused on managing individual students. In essence, the purpose of having an effective classroom management system is to increase student academic achievement while reducing the time spent on redirecting distracting and disruptive student behaviors.

The U.S. Department of Education (2014) has endorsed PBIS as a preventive, evidence- based framework to support positive student behaviors, increase the teachers' time for instructional practices, and improve student academic achievement in the classroom. The PBIS framework, aimed to reduce disruptive student behavioral problems, is currently implemented in numerous schools across the nation. The framework consists of behavioral, social learning, and organizational behavioral principles (OSEP, 2012). PBIS also improves the learning environment by alleviating instructional time loss due to teachers redirecting students' disruptive and distracting classroom behaviors. Reinke, et al., (2014) noted that PBIS supported teachers by providing the foundation for an effective behavioral management plan. PBIS has been associated with redirecting indecorous behaviors with skill- building instruction and reinforcing positive behavior. Horner, et al., (2005) identified PBIS as a systems method developed to establish and maintain a positive school environment in which teachers model the type of behavior that is expected and communicate the consequences for failing to comply with the rules. Creating positive environments with research-based strategies may reduce disruptive student behaviors, increase instructional time, and improve academic achievement.

The Technical Assistance Center on Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports, established by the U.S. Department of Education's Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP, 2012), indicated that PBIS is a framework and behavioral management program that

decreases classroom behavioral problems, increases instructional time, and improves academic achievement. It is a systematically research-based intervention tool that can reduce inappropriate classroom disruptions and aggression while increasing academic engagement (OSEP, 2012). The PBIS behavioral strategies are implemented to assist teachers with classroom management and improve the time spent for instructional practices rather than time spent on addressing student distractions. Behavioral challenges may make it difficult for educators to effectively manage their classroom environment, instruct students, and increase student academic achievement levels.

Teachers are responsible for managing and instructing students which includes students who exhibit disruptive and distracting behaviors. Many teachers have reported that behavioral management has become a major issue in the classroom (Reinke, et al., 2014). In fact, some general classroom behavioral practices do not meet the needs of assisting teachers with behavioral management; therefore, teachers may need effective behavioral programs that can improve the amount of time spent teaching instead of correcting behaviors (Rusby, et al., 2011).

Classroom behavioral management is critical to providing effective instruction. Lack of a classroom behavioral management program can affect teachers' performance in providing effective instruction. In the elementary school setting, addressing classroom behavioral problems can interfere with the teacher's ability to focus on teaching and student learning. Reinke, et al., (2014) noted that teachers' perceptions of implementing an effective classroom behavioral management program is one of the most difficult aspects of the teaching profession. Many teachers may perceive maintaining the academic structure to be overwhelming and frustrating when trying to manage a classroom with disruptive students.

Aggressive and disruptive behaviors exhibited by students can create a chaotic classroom environment in which teachers may be unable to teach. Disruptive classroom behaviors can contribute to loss of instructional time which affects student achievement in the classroom environment. In addition, Powell, et al., (2011) noted that student aggression and disruptive behaviors, such as defiance, lying, cheating, verbal abuse or physical attacks against teachers, have the potential to cause serious harm and disrupts the learning environment which restricts teachers from educating students. It can potentially affect the overall academic achievement levels of the aggressive students and other students that are in the learning environment.

A negative change in classroom climate can adversely affect students academically. Students with challenging behaviors who are aggressive in the classroom are at risk of academic failure. Disruptive behaviors impede the learning process and the classroom environment; therefore, creating an avenue that may negatively affect student achievement. When student learning is interrupted due to disruptive behavior of students, not only is the student who is being redirected affected, but also the other students in the classroom. Disruptive students interfere with the learning of their peers by causing a loss of instructional time (Thompson, 2012).

According to Gage, et al., (2015), PBIS is designed to enhance the learning environment by reducing the time teachers spend redirecting students, increasing the amount of time students are engaged in instruction, and improving the level of academic engagement during instruction. As a national framework, PBIS has been used in many schools to assist in implementing classroom and schoolwide behavioral practices that have been designed to positively impact the school and classroom climates (OSEP, 2012). Managing student

behavior may increase the chances of student academic successes and limit reactive disruptive behaviors. This research was specifically designed to investigate teachers' perceptions of PBIS and whether utilization of PBIS was an effective classroom management strategy tool and its relationship with academic achievement.

Problem Statement

Research exists linking PBIS to classroom behavioral management practices; however, there is limited research on teachers' perceptions and experiences in implementing the PBIS framework. Also, research is limited on teachers' perceptions of PBIS as a behavioral management plan that improves academic achievement by reducing time teachers spend on redirecting student behaviors. In addition, there have been limited resources for first year teachers or teachers who have not used PBIS in the classroom. PBIS professional development has not been provided throughout the school year at the research site. Teachers may not consistently implement PBIS strategies each day to impact the relationship with PBIS and student achievement due to lack of ongoing professional development on PBIS. Furthermore, teachers may not have been adequately trained to implement PBIS as the behavioral management program to improve academic achievement by reducing time teachers spend on redirecting student behaviors.

Research Question

The following question guided this study:

- How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a behavioral management tool that assists in improving academic achievement?

Purpose of the Study

Elementary classroom teachers spend a significant amount of their day instructing and guiding students; therefore, it is important that teachers are given effective classroom behavioral management tools to utilize in order for learning to be successful for every student (Oliver, et al., 2011). The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore elementary (K-5) teachers' experiences and thoughts on the impact of PBIS as a behavioral management tool that assists in improving academic achievement.

Scope

This research study occurred at an urban Title I elementary school in the southern region of the United States with the enrollment population designed for prekindergarten through fifth grade. Since the implementation of PBIS at the research site, numerous teachers have left due to transfers, retirement, and various reasons. Therefore, purposeful sampling was used for the recruitment process. Purposeful sampling is when specific people within the population are chosen for a study or research project (Emmel, 2013). There was a limited number of teachers who met the criteria of having three years of experience using PBIS as it relates to academic achievement. The intended sample of the study was 10 licensed teachers with a minimum of three years in implementing PBIS as an intervention strategy that aims to improve academic achievement. Interview sessions were scheduled with the first 10 teachers who responded and agreed to participate in the research study. Five alternate teachers, who met the criteria, were considered if any of the 10 participants chose to withdraw from the study. The teacher participants represented varied teaching experiences which ranged between three years through 25 years of educating children. The participants were state-certified first through fifth grade teachers. The set of teacher participants had a common experience of implementing

PBIS as a behavioral management strategy that aims to increase academic performance and improve classroom behaviors. According to McMillan (2012), knowledge of participants is built on their own lived experiences.

Participation in the study was voluntary and the teacher participants could end their participation at any time without risk or harm. Allowing for teachers to voluntarily participate in the study allowed for diverse levels of experiences, backgrounds, and teaching levels. There were not any identifiable attributes in order to protect the anonymity of the teacher participants. The data from the research study was collected from the teachers participation in a Qualtrics survey and a 1:1 interview.

Individual interview sessions were conducted with each teacher participant during the second week of the research study to determine their perspectives and attitudes of implementing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). The interview took approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to conduct with each participant. The interview provided information about the teachers' experience with implementing PBIS, teachers' perceptions on how students responded to the implementation of PBIS, and teachers' perceptions on the effects of PBIS with academic learning. The interview questions were developed to address the participants' phenomenological lived experiences of which they have experienced as classroom teachers. These lived experiences included the classroom discipline process, teacher-student interactions, procedures of handling student behaviors while teaching, and utilizing the behavior management system as a means to improve student achievement. The interviews were recorded with a digital recorder and transcribed into a Microsoft Word document using my desktop computer. I used the Qualtrics survey software as another form of instrumentation for the study. The survey was provided online for teachers to record their

perceptions about PBIS as a behavioral management framework and its relationship to academic achievement.

Potential Benefits

The potential benefits of this study were for teacher participants and other elementary teachers to gain a better perspective of the PBIS framework as it relates to improving instructional time and student academic achievement. This was the 8th year of implementation of PBIS in the school district and the 5th year at the research site. The teachers may have been able to determine which PBIS strategies worked best for their class to increase academic achievement, if additional PBIS training or support from the PBIS coach was needed, and if their perceptions of PBIS affected how they implemented the behavioral management framework in the classroom.

Significance of the Study

The study demonstrated how teachers utilized PBIS as a behavioral management tool and how it related to academics. The study could provide information on how individual teachers implemented PBIS strategies. It may indicate that various strategies work in certain classrooms and not in others. The study provided the participants' viewpoints on whether or not PBIS negates all the behavioral challenges and improves academic achievement. The study provided teachers' assessments on the manner in which PBIS was effective or ineffective as a behavioral management plan and teachers' perceptions of PBIS relationship to academic achievement (Coffey, & Horner, 2012; Slavin, et al., 2010).

The study was significant because it may provide other teachers with knowledge about the implementation of PBIS as a behavioral management tool and indicators of how it affects academics. The study may indicate that teachers are essential in the implementation of PBIS and

if they do not fully support the behavioral management framework, the effectiveness of PBIS could be significantly compromised. In Chapter 2, the research will show that PBIS can be an effective behavioral intervention program; however, there was limited research on how teachers perceived this program and how it impacted academic achievement (Horner, et al., 2007). The study may also contribute to teachers and school districts creating more professional opportunities for implementing PBIS. In addition, the teacher participants' perceptions, knowledge, challenges, and usage of PBIS may generate the need for school administrators and supervisors to look at developing district behavioral management plans that address the behavioral needs of their students.

Definition of Terms

Behavior. The totality of what people do, good or bad, right or wrong, helpful or useless, productive or wasteful (Charles, 2002). It is the conduct actions of individuals which essentially is an observable physical activity (Bergner, 2011).

Behavior contracts. The written agreement between teacher and students indicating what the student are to do and what they will receive when they comply (Charles, 2002).

Behavior modification. The use of techniques such as reinforcement, modeling, and discrimination training to increase or decrease the frequency of specified behaviors (Charles, 2002; Gall, et al., 2010).

Behavioral. The manner of behaving or acting (Racz, et al.,2016).

Challenging behaviors. Intense behaviors that present instructional, physical, and social concerns to the teacher. These behaviors disrupt the learning environment, present danger to the student and others, cause physical pain or mental harm, cause property damage,

or seriously disrupt the teaching-learning process. Challenging behaviors are habitually demonstrated by a student and are difficult to regulate (Burke, et al., 2011; Waschbusch, et al., 2015; Chai, & Lieberman-Betz, 2016).

Classroom rules. The written code of conduct for classroom behavior (Charles, 2002).

Climate. The feeling or tone that prevails in the classroom (Charles, 2002).

Codes. Labels used to describe a segment of text or an image (Creswell, 2005).

Code checking. The determination of the reliability of data by calculating the level of agreement between different researchers who coded it into categories (Gall, et al., 2010).

Coding Process. A process in which the researcher makes sense out of text data, divides it into text or image segments, labels the segments, examines the codes for overlap and redundancy, and collapses these codes into themes (Creswell, 2005).

Disruption. The interruption and interfering with the classroom structure and flow of instructional activities for example, interrupting or disturbing the instructional process and group activities (Racz et al., 2016).

Disruptive behavior. Any behavior that is off-task and a distraction to the teacher and class peers. It is the aggressive, defiant, and distracting behaviors that create problems in the classroom (Nash, et al., 2016).

Likert scale. An instrument that asks individuals to respond to a series of statements by indicating whether they strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), or strongly disagree (SD) with each statement (Gay, & Airasian, 2003).

Member checking. The participants review of documents such as transcripts to determine if the data accurately reflect the viewpoint of the participants (McMillan, 2012).

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). A framework for enhancing and implementing an evidence based intervention designed to improve behavior and academic outcomes for students (OSEP, 2012).

Self-regulate. The ability to control attention and inhibit responses and to regulate emotions in order to respond adaptively to the environment (Sawyer, Miller-Lewis, Searle, Sawyer, & Lynch, 2015).

Summary

The chapter began with an introduction and background of the research study. It provided relevant information on how the PBIS concept was derived as a behavioral management plan. The study indicated the types of student disruptive behaviors that are exemplified in the classroom and the importance of teachers being able to manage their classrooms without losing instructional time. A definition of PBIS was provided with identifying the benefits for implementing the behavioral management strategy. The study indicated that many elementary teachers are spending a significant amount of the instructional day redirecting student behaviors. The study also addressed the importance of using an effective behavioral management program to alleviate this problem for student learning and achievement to occur. Behavioral disruptions can create obstacles to the academic success of students. Student behavioral challenges in the classroom can lead to adverse learning conditions for the disruptive student, as well as the peers. A student's time engaged in the disruptive behavior within the classroom can significantly reduce instructional time and delays in academic achievement due to an interruption in the learning process. In the problem statement and purpose of the study, it was discussed that there is limited information on teachers' perceptions on how PBIS relates to achievement; therefore, the research study was

designed to determine elementary (K-5) teachers' experiences and thoughts on the impact PBIS has with behavioral management and academic achievement.

The research question, scope, and potential benefits provided information about the teacher participants grade level, experiences with PBIS, the measurement tools that were guided by the research questions, and the benefits of participating and reading this study. Chapter 1 concluded with the significance of the study which indicated the need for the study and definitions which provided clarification for the terminology utilized throughout the study. In Chapter 2, the literature provides more information on the conceptual framework, behavior management is defined, an analysis of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is provided, and the reasons for furthering the research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The literature review begins with a conceptual framework for behavioral management and the influence of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework in the classroom setting. The literature review is comprised of current and past studies in which researchers have conducted in this field of study. This chapter includes subsections that discuss general perceived relationships between PBIS and academic achievement. Included in this chapter are the following key areas: (a) relationship between classroom behavior and academic achievement, (b) conceptual framework (c) defining behavior management, (d) identifying and analyzing Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS), and (e) reasons for further research. The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore how elementary teachers perceived the relationship between Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) towards academic achievement.

School systems have often contended with practicing dispassionate discipline methods (Vincent & Tobin, 2011). The literature presented a gap in research regarding teacher perspective on the framework of PBIS students' disruptive behaviors and how these behaviors are increasing in numerous classrooms (Musti-Rao & Hayden, 2011; Kelm, et al., 2014). Disruptive behaviors such as noncompliance, tardiness, disrespect, truancy can impede academic learning and reduce valuable instructional time (Musti-Rao & Hayden, 2011; Ward & Gersten, 2013). There are behavioral interventions that may be able to improve behavior and academic outcomes for all students (Freeman, et al., 2016). Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is one intervention framework that many schools are implementing to improve the learning environment by reducing the amount of time teachers spend addressing disruptive behaviors and increasing academic performance (Gage, et al., 2015).

According to Simonsen, et al., (2008), PBIS is a systematic approach that enables teachers to effectively and efficiently support student behavior. This is a systematic set of discipline practices in which behavioral expectations are clearly defined, supported, and implemented in the classroom where all students are held accountable to the same behavioral standards (Vincent & Tobin, 2011). PBIS provides a foundation for espousing effective classroom management in the classroom (Reinke, et al., 2014). The PBIS approach aims to minimize classroom behavioral issues, increase time spent on learning, and improve academic success (Coffey & Horner, 2012; Solomon, et al., 2015).

Classroom Behavior and Academic Achievement

Martella and Marchand-Martella (2015) determined that there was a strong positive correlation between behavior problems and low academic achievement. Students exhibiting positive behaviors, such as following directions, remaining on task, and being attentive and respectful to the teacher, tend to have higher academic grades and higher test scores (Finn, et al., 1995; Pianta, et al., 1995) while students with behavioral problems were more likely to experience academic challenges. Student academic achievement tends to improve when there were limited interruptions and redirections in the learning environment (Greenwood et al., 2002). Students who exhibited aggressive and disruptive behaviors risked the consequences of receiving limited instruction and may have demonstrated low academic performance. Past research has identified that students with challenging behavior may exhibit disruptive behaviors to escape specific tasks, settings, or people and may need to take a break from their environmental setting (Stormont, et al., 2016). Therefore, when disruptive students impede the learning environment, it may lead to the removal of the student from the instructional environment (Whisman, &

Hammer, 2014). More specifically, students with disruptive and aggressive behaviors may have received low academic grades and low assessment scores.

The research indicated that there was a growing number of teachers who became increasingly displeased with the impact of student behavioral issues at their school, low student academic achievement, and the public perception that schools are out of control (Simonsen, et al., 2008). Freiberg, et al., (2009) suggested student behaviors that cause classroom disruptions created an undulating effect that may influence other students, extended beyond the classroom walls which could negatively impact the school climate, and subsequently, affected the community. Because the quality of the school climate contributed to academic outcomes, how teachers managed these disruptions impacted the learning environment and student achievement (Thapa, et al., 2013).

Study Topic

The indicators of effective schools were comprised of classrooms in which educators promoted positive environments, had high expectations for learning, and successfully managed their classrooms to support academic and social development (Strange, et al., 2004; Lassen, et al., 2006; Simonsen, et al., 2008; Caldarella, et al., 2014). Martella and Marchand-Martella (2015) noted that student academic success or failures were mainly determined by how well teachers provided effective instruction to their students. However, many educators believed it was a daunting task trying to create a successful and positive learning environment when there were constant behavioral distractions or interruptions (Simonsen, et al., 2008; Benner, et al., 2012; Kelm, et al., 2014). Therefore, schools were focusing on behavioral methods that improved teachers' classroom management practices, promoted positive learning environments,

and increased academic achievement for the students (Slavin, et al., 2010; Coffey, & Horner, 2012).

Conceptual Framework

Redl and Wattenburg (1959) developed strategic methods to assist teachers in understanding and managing classroom misbehavior (Charles, 2002). Accordingly, Redl and Wattenburg (1959) theorized that students misbehaved differently as group participants than as individuals. They found that diagnostic thinking was the teacher's most effective tool for resolving conflict and behavior challenges. It involved teachers being able to determine the cause of the misbehavior, taking the appropriate actions based on the facts, evaluating the results, and remaining flexible or open to various possibilities in providing additional strategies to manage behavior (Charles, 2002). Redl and Wattenburg (1959) emphasized that corporal punishment should be the final method of behavior correction because it had detrimental mental effects on student self-image and their relationship with the school staff member providing the punishment. They determined that corporal punishment was a poor model of teaching students how to resolve issues or problems.

Skinner (1958) developed a theory of implementing discipline through shaping the desired behavior of students. Skinner's (1975) human behavior theory stated the importance of constant reinforcement of the desired behavior because behaviors that were not reinforced become extinguished or non-existent. He believed that punishment could not extinguish inappropriate behavior and surmised that our environment controls and shapes our behavior (Charles, 2002). Skinner (1975) noted that when people were asked about their behavior, it allowed them to assess why they behaved in that manner. Although this type of behavior modification was effective in teaching students the desirable behavior, it did not teach the

students how to discern appropriate from inappropriate behavior (Charles, 2002). Dewey (1896) on the other hand, suggested that character building from the implementation of character education would benefit students. Skinner (1963) noted that behavior was an interesting component of what might be called its character.

Glasser's approach to behavior focused on supplying teachers with the tools to assist students in making better behavioral choices (Glasser, & Dotson, 1998, Charles, 2002). He believed that students were in control of their behavior. Kohn (2008) believed that students should be taught self-discipline to help them control their impulses. Implementing rules and routines prevented problematic behaviors, instilled self-discipline, and decreased the amount of time spent on negative behaviors (Shook, 2012). Glasser urged teachers to allow students to participate in the process of formulating the classroom rules and consequences (Glasser, & Dotson, 1998). He postulated that by providing students with the opportunity to assist in developing their classroom rules allowed them to take ownership of the results or consequences (Glasser, & Dotson, 1998). Glasser (1997) also used a shared classroom management approach in which he discussed the importance of teachers and students to recognize the behavioral differences of individuals. This type of classroom management style allowed teachers to create behavioral modifications based on a student's individual behavior.

Not long after Glasser's contribution of behavior modification was introduced, a new form of behavior management was developed. Kounin (1970) investigated the effects of classroom management and lesson management on student behavior. He placed emphasis on giving teachers the instruments needed to manage students, lessons, and classrooms to reduce the occurrences of misbehavior. Kounin researched the interconnectedness of lesson management and classroom discipline. He denoted that the most effective method of maintaining good

discipline was to keep students engaged in class activities. Kounin (1970) ascertained that good classroom management was due to the behavior of teachers, not the behavior of students. The behavioral management styles of the teacher maximized instructional time, reduced student misbehavior, and improved academic achievement. Kounin (1970) also believed that actively engaged students presented less disruptive behaviors. However, teachers stressed that disruptive behaviors must be addressed as it occurred in order for the lesson to continue (Charles, 2002).

For many school districts, improving students' academic achievement was accomplished by addressing issues with instruction and behavior (Epstein, Atkins, Cullinan, Kutash, & Weaver, 2008). Public school systems were finding that students who exhibited destructive and disruptive behaviors interfered with the educational process and created a significant amount of stress for teachers (Westling, 2010). The 2014 National Center for Educational Statistics reported that about 38% of teachers agreed or strongly agreed that student misbehavior interfered with their instructional time (Robers, et al., 2015). Chafouleas, et al., (2012) denoted that classroom management should involve building students sense of self-management and reinforcing appropriate behavior.

Within any given elementary school, the ultimate responsibility of the classroom teacher has been to manage his or her students' conduct, including the management of students' disruptive behaviors (Leflot, et al., 2013). According to Racz, et al., (2016), research showed that some behavioral management techniques provided teachers with strategies that created positive classroom environments by decreasing student aggressive behaviors and improving academic achievement. In addition, some behavioral management techniques reinforced children's appropriate classroom behavior and reduced disruptive classroom behaviors while other behavior management techniques such as reprimands, corrections, and

commands elicited more child disruptions (Leflot, et al., 2013).

Several studies have indicated the relationship between academic achievement and problem behavior. In one study, McIntosh (2005) investigated the phenomenon of student academic performance in literacy across several grade levels. McIntosh (2005) found the relationship between academic and behavior challenges began on the elementary level. He stated that children enter kindergarten with varying reading skills and if they do not respond to literacy instruction, they tend to fall behind which can create a negative spiral of student achievement and behavior. Accordingly, the students' literacy skills did not keep pace with their peers, academic tasks became more difficult, and problem behaviors became prevalent in the classroom. In another study, Nelson, et al., (2004) discussed that students with extreme challenging behaviors experienced broader academic deficits than their peers. Academic deficits often led to failing academic performance and future problematic behavior which can correlate with lower academic scores in the upper grades.

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature

Children enter the school system expected to have certain competences and experiences that will permit them to negotiate the academic and social demands of the school environment (Lane, et al., 2004). When students lack the academic and social skills needed for school, they become at risk for numerous undesirable outcomes such as difficulties with achievement, attention, and disruptive behavior (Claessens, & Dowsett, 2014). Caldarella, et al., (2015) expressed that teachers across all educational levels have reported spending an excessive amount of time redirecting student misbehavior. According to Dicke, et al., (2014), classroom disturbances were one of the causes of the development of teacher emotional exhaustion.

Student misbehavior had been one of the most dominant job-related stressors for teachers (Dicke, et al., 2014). Teachers often found it exhausting and frustrating trying to manage a classroom that had disruptive students (Claessens, & Dowsett, 2014). A review of teacher stressors indicated that classroom management and student misbehavior caused teacher burnout (Dicke, et al., 2014). Due to the escalation of misbehavior of students, many schools began taking actions to limit the amount of disruptive student behavior by employing and adding resource officials or law enforcement officers to the staff. Freiberg, et al., (2009) surmised the following:

> Classroom management becomes the gatekeeper to student learning by either supporting a consistent and predictable classroom or allowing a disruptive, chaotic, and random learning environment to occur. Advances in classroom management that encompass effective and efficient use of instructional time, the building of student self-discipline, student engagement in the operations of the classroom, and enabling greater student involvement in more complex academic learning can create a highly significant pathway to student achievement. (p. 79)

Behavior was referred to as the conduct actions of individuals which essentially was an observable physical activity (Bergner, 2011). Behavior challenges had affected the entire classroom in which disruptive students not only detracted from their own learning experience, but also interrupted the learning of classmates (Burke, et al., 2011). Disruptive classroom behaviors had been identified as one of the most challenging problems educators face because of the negative impact it had on student learning (Waschbusch, et al., 2015). According to Nash, et al., (2016), disruptive behavior was referred to any behavior that was off-task and created a distraction to the teacher and class peers.

Student undesirable behavior often had a direct affect to academic attainment (Martella, & Marchand-Martella, 2015). Teacher behavioral management methods affected student academic success and classroom disruptions steal valuable teaching and learning time (Shook, 2012). Behavior management had a direct implication on academic and student performance in the classroom. Claessens and Dowsett (2014) noted that problems with attention or disruptive behavior led to achievement problems and achievement problems led to problems with attention or disruptive behavior. Disruptive student behaviors can inhibit the feelings of teachers and set a tone for how and what they feel can be taught (Freibert, et al., 2009).

Behavioral management had been a critical element within the classroom structure that determined the type of learning environment. Some teachers have found that creating a safe and pleasant classroom environment in which students were well-behaved was essential for teaching and learning. Creating a well-disciplined student learning environment or classroom often meant that teachers could use extreme measures to limit behavioral distractions through the means of corporal punishment. Paintal (2007) noted that research supported the theory that corporal punishment was an ineffective discipline strategy for redirecting student behaviors. Although the techniques minimized undesirable student conduct, it resulted in other behavioral challenges. “The use of schoolwide expectations for behavior, especially in the context of PBIS, creates a more predictable, positive, and consistent school environment” (Gietz, & McIntosh, 2014, p. 171). Reducing student behavioral problems increased classroom instructional time and facilitate academic learning (Gage, et al., 2013; Gietz, & McIntosh, 2014).

Classroom problem behaviors exhibited by students were aggression, disruptive

behavior, off-task behavior, non-compliance, and property destruction which often led to teacher dissatisfaction (Hansen, et al., 2014). Students with and without classroom problems or disabilities have negative consequences with respect to social and emotional situation within the classroom community (Krull, 2014). Disruptive behaviors such as shouting, talking loudly, speaking out, and distracting the teacher can prevent students from learning (Hulac, & Benson, 2010; Dursley, & Betts, 2015). In many studies, disruptive behaviors were stated to negatively affect the teaching and learning environment and students' disruptive behaviors were shown as one of the greatest challenge in the classroom (Sezer, 2017). Charles (2002) and Lane, et al., (2015) contended that some basic categories of disruptive behaviors within the confines of the classroom include aggression, immorality, defiance, wasting time, and speaking without permission.

Tillery, et al., (2010) indicated that some teachers considered student negative behavior as anything that could inhibit instruction. Students who exhibited difficulty regulating their behavior lost valuable learning opportunities in the classroom (Burke, et al., 2011; Claessens & Dowsett, 2014). Greenberg, et al., (2003) conveyed that behavioral management methods designed to improve school and classroom environments, including the reduction of negative disruptive or distracting behaviors, enhanced the chances that effective teaching and learning occurred for the students exhibiting problem behaviors and for their classmates. Although negative behaviors interfere with classroom learning and waste much of the instructional time, it led to the implementation of classroom discipline (Burke, et al., 2011).

Discipline and misbehavior were noted as being interconnected; it was what the teacher intended to do to prevent, redirect, or suppress the student's misbehavior. Discipline means to model the expected behaviors for students and eliminate unwanted behaviors by implementing

a reward and punishment system (Polat, et al., 2013). Ideally, the goal of discipline was to reduce the need of teacher behavior interventions by creating a classroom environment which aimed to control students' behaviors, solve their problems, and implement positive discipline as a management technique (Özan, 2015). Hochweber, et al., (2014) stated that classrooms with an unfavorable student composition tend to produce interruptions and disciplinary problems. Discipline methods led to behavior modification.

Behavioral Modification

McCarthy-Tucker, et al., (2001) denoted that excellent classroom management skills are essential components for successful teaching. However, in order to develop these skills, teachers should have the tools to maintain an effective classroom environment. Optimizing learning time requires good classroom management (Hochweber, et al., 2014). Supported with research-based strategies for classroom management, teachers may experience less stress, greater professional success, and fewer time-consuming disruptions during lessons (Canter, 2003). An organized classroom management plan is an effective tool and determinant of how well students will have the opportunity to learn in the classroom (Wong, et al., 2012).

Efforts to improve, increase, or promote positive student behaviors in classrooms can be challenging; however, teaching students how to self- regulate will empower students to control their own behavior in any situation (Parker, et al., 2010). Understanding that all behavior is an expression of a certain need, teachers should be perceptive and determine the motivation behind behaviors to address problems before critical learning time is lost (Daly, 2005). Teachers should identify and use the strategies that work with students who lack self-discipline, interfere with teaching and learning, and limit teachers' instructional effectiveness in which the goal of such interventions is to adequately support environments conducive to

learning (Gilpatrick, 2010). Although the implementation of behavior strategies may be a daunting task, it is vital that educators utilize research-based frameworks that will result in increased student attendance, behavior, and in many cases, academic achievement (Flannery, et al., 2014).

Approaches to behavioral modification. There are multiple approaches aimed at improving school and classroom environments by reducing the amount of negative behaviors occurring from disruptive or distracting students. According to Alderman and MacDonald (2015), students must develop the capacity to self-regulate and assume responsibility for their behavior. In order to assist students with behavioral modification, many effective classrooms focus on interventions to decrease students' problematic behaviors by altering or removing factors that trigger the student's conduct. Behavioral modification strategies that concentrate on building and strengthening behavioral techniques can lead to behavioral modification and academic successes. These strategies addressed disruptive student behaviors and other remediation strategies intended to improve student academic performance. Elementary school teachers, as well as school and district administrators, often developed and implemented effective prevention and intervention strategies that targeted the underlying behavioral problems and promoted positive student behavior (Hansen, et al., 2014). In addition, behavioral consultants, PBIS coaches, and school counselors are needed to support teachers in implementing behavioral management strategies and interventions (Reinke, et al., 2013).

As children enter the primary grades, addressing classroom behavioral problems competes with time required to meet school district's nine-weeks and end of the year accountability standards (Bulotsky-Shearer & Fantuzzo, 2011). Research suggested that conduct problems interfere with teachers' abilities to focus on teaching; however, reducing

discipline problems should increase exposure to classroom instruction and lead to academic skill acquisition (Fremont & Wallbrown, 1979; Gage, et al., 2015). Therefore, many teachers with effective classrooms tend to focus on interventions to decrease students' problematic behavior and alter or remove factors that trigger them (Hochweber, et al., 2014).

Types of student behaviors. One of the most challenging distractors in the classroom for teachers has been student behavior; student behavioral problems have consumed a great deal of teacher and school resources (Sugai & Horner, 2002; Lassen, et al., et al., 2006). Aggressive and disruptive behaviors exhibited by students during their initial years of elementary school can increase the risk of conduct behavior problems with their instructors and peers (Thomas, et al., 2008). Through the classroom management approach, teachers can impact students' capacity for self-regulation and sense of responsibility (Alderman, & McDonald, 2015). The practice of incorporating self-management interventions with rewards or feedback can improve students on-task behavior when given praise (Hansen, et al., 2014). However, rewarding students alone without adding praise have been ineffective in redirecting student behavior. Negative consequences and reactive strategies are often ineffective in reducing discipline issues and are oftentimes counterproductive (Gilpatrick, 2010).

Ineffective classroom managers may have problems establishing a functioning learning environment (Hochweber, et al., 2014). The implementation of effective classroom intervention strategies can allow teachers to prevent additional development of problem behaviors. Clear expectations and routines promote students understanding of appropriate behaviors (Park, & Lynch, 2014). Self-regulation requires students to stop and think about what they are doing, compare their behavior to a criterion and record the results of the comparison (Johnson, & Johnson, 1999).

Behavior and academic outcomes are important indicators of the effectiveness of school and long-term student outcomes (Hammond, et al., 2007). In addition, student achievement has suffered in schools that have not adequately addressed the discipline and behavioral issues that have plagued classrooms for many years (Shupe, 1998). Students who struggle with academic performance often become frustrated and exhibit behavioral problems (Claessens, & Dowsett, 2014). Understanding how teaching and academic achievement are affected by disruptive student behavior may prompt educators to resolve classroom management deficits in an attempt to improve student academic outcomes (Gilpatrick, 2010).

An estimated one-third of students fail to learn because of psychosocial problems that interfere with their ability to fully attend to and engage in instructional activities (Greenberg, et al., et al., 2003). Due to low academic performances and/or lack of social skills, many students choose to exhibit disruptive behaviors and/or decide not to participate in instructional activities (Greenberg, et al., 2003). PBIS utilizes differentiated academic and behavioral supports that increase in intensity, frequency, duration, learning (e.g., disability), individualization based on responsiveness to intervention, and student medical or physical characteristics (OSEP, 2012). Classroom teachers, in coordination with other school personnel (i.e., administrators, grade-level teams, and special educators), may benefit from adopting a school-wide approach to preventing problem behaviors and increasing positive social interactions among students and with school staff (Embry, & Biglan, 2008). Social relationships and collaborative opportunities can play a critical role in supporting teachers in managing disruptive behavior in their classrooms. By using strategies focused on both individual students and the whole classroom, students receive strategies to self-regulate and misbehavior is less likely to occur (Charles, 2002).

Additionally, positive discipline in the classroom will empower students to become more successful in the classroom and in society due to the implementation or application of self- regulation strategies (Embry, & Biglan, 2008). Thus, conduct behavioral problems will greatly diminish as students acquire self-regulation skills that will assist them in accepting others, communicating effectively, showing respect, and maintaining a positive attitude (Charles, 2002). According to the Paxis Institute (Embry, & Biglan, 2008), when students learn and apply self- regulation strategies, students improve not only with their behavior, but their achievement scores will also improve.

Behavioral Management Approaches

Gump (1990) conveyed that in an ecological approach to school discipline, the teacher places emphasis on the strength and quality of the classroom activities being taught. The theory behind this approach is that by students participating in well-managed classroom activities, there will be less time associated with negative behavior and more time spent engaged in self- discipline. The use of an ecological approach to classroom management focuses on stopping undesirable attributes and factors that can disrupt the classroom learning. The focal point of the strategy is to use an indirect approach to improving school discipline that is not student focus.

The focus tends to be on the classroom setting through classroom management.

According to Gump (1990), the teacher uses the ecological approach by promoting cooperation and coordinated action with other students. The ecological approach provides an environment where the students receive a sense of caring, support, clear expectations, and guidance that motivates them to engage positively in the classroom. The success of the ecological approach depends on several factors. These factors include the number of students

in the class, the complexity of the class assignment, the time constraints for completing the assignment, the ability of the students in the group and their willingness to perform the assignment, the social and emotional capacities of the students, and the distractions that may be within the classroom setting (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010). To facilitate an ecological approach for Behavior Modification, the teacher must set the stage for student cooperation. The classroom must be organized and set-up as a learning environment. The teacher must define and clearly articulate the activity segment in terms that the students will understand. The teacher introduces the activity, the environment, tells how each student can participate, and how they will be monitored and graded.

Another point of the ecological approach is to keep every student fully engaged in the class work. The teacher monitors the students and uses an unobtrusive approach to remind students to be back on track. One ecological approach to classroom management comes from Gump's (1990) finding through his work with the Midwest Psychological Field Station. The concept of the findings was that a child's behavior conformed to whatever setting the child occupied. Children in the same place behaved more alike than a single child in a different place. Gump (1990) conceived that defined places were clearly coercive of behavior. This type of defined places led to phenomena more stable, more extra individual, and more ecological than the specific psychological means (Gump, 1990).

The second ecological approach to classroom management was given by Kounin's (1970) insight on what teachers did that would facilitate high levels of student work involvement in classrooms. Utilizing 285 videotaped lessons, Kounin (1970) concluded that teachers who experienced high levels of work involvement used proactive strategies geared at focus groups and positive techniques rather than reprimands to correct individual student

behaviors. In an effective classroom, teachers tend to establish a functioning learning environment and less skilled classroom managers have less opportunity to monitor students' learning progress and academic performance (Hochweber, et al., 2014).

Osher, Bear, Sprague, and Doyle (2010) surmised that there had not been enough concrete studies performed to examine whether an ecological approach of classroom management in controlling behavior promotes student achievement and self-discipline. However, the ecological approach does offer promise that classroom engagement through classroom activities does alter the negative behavior in students. The more students are actively engaged in activities, the less chance for chaotic behavior (Wong, Wong, Rogers, & Brooks, 2012).

Classroom Management and Student Performance

Discipline is a form of behavioral management. Effective teachers do not discipline a classroom; they manage a classroom (Wong, Wong, Rogers, & Brooks, 2012). Student behavioral disruptions hinder the learning experience, interfere with students' ability to follow the lessons, and affect academic achievement. When there are frequent student disruptions, teachers spend time disciplining students rather than providing adequate instruction (Kyriakides, & Creemers, 2009). Effective classroom discipline can improve academic achievement.

A well-managed classroom environment is perceived to be a precondition for effective teaching and learning in which the goal is to improve the achievement level of each student (Jennings, & Greenburg, 2009). Effective teachers are not only expected to structure their lessons, but are expected to respond to the different learning needs of their students by providing more structuring tasks to those groups of students that need them most (Kyriakides,

& Creemers, 2009). When teachers do not effectively manage behavioral challenges within the context of their classroom, students may demonstrate lower levels of on-task behavior and academic performance (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003; Jennings, & Greenburg, 2009). One method that can counter students off-task and aggressive behaviors in a well-managed classroom is with academic and behavioral interventions. Academic and behavioral interventions can assist students who demonstrate aggressive behaviors and assist teachers with classroom management (Jennings, & Greenburg, 2009). Interventions can provide teachers with support that will minimize behavioral disruptions, as well as, provide students with support that will improve achievement levels.

PBIS Framework

Teachers' perspectives about behavior management is essential to their choice of a behavior management strategy (Tillery, et al., 2010). Teachers' approaches to behavior management and intervention strategies are often implemented using praise, rewards, implementation of classroom management, knowledge about Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports framework, and the response to intervention. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is an approach that proactively addresses behavioral challenges, includes data- based accountability, and focuses on teaching appropriate behaviors (Scheuermann, et al., 2013; Park, & Lynch, 2014). It is a logical model for delivering behavioral support to all students (Sprague, 2006).

Teachers in the primary grade levels are ideally positioned to intervene in handling behavioral difficulties if they have received proper training and have available resources (Severson, et al., 2007). Untreated behavior problems often cause serious adjustment problems for young children (Sprague & Walker, 2000). Social and emotional problems can be seen in

children as early as the age of two (Briggs-Gowan, et al., 2006). Early identification and treatment is necessary to ensure positive outcome in the future (Forness, et al., 2000).

Nelson, Martella, and Galand (1998) indicated that schools that have established rules and expectations decrease the level of disruptive behaviors and reduce the number of office referrals. In addition, schools should have clear schoolwide expectations for all students. Elementary school teachers may need to develop and implement effective prevention and intervention strategies that promote positive student behavior (Epstein, et al., 2008). One behavioral approach to redirect student behaviors is PBIS framework. The U.S. Department of Education (2014) recommended PBIS as a preventative, evidence-based framework to support positive student behaviors in the classroom. PBIS is a universal, school- wide prevention strategy that is currently implemented in numerous schools across the nation to reduce disruptive behavior problems through the application of behavioral, social learning, and organizational behavioral principles (OSEP, 2012). PBIS is a systems approach to establishing and maintaining a positive school climate where students are taught exactly what type of behavior is expected, acknowledgements of what is considered appropriate behavior, and the consequences for breaking rules (Horner, Sugai, Todd, & Lewis-Palmer, 2005). PBIS has been funded through grants from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention and National Institute of Mental Health as a no cost measure to be implemented in classrooms or school-wide (Bradshaw et. Al., 2012, Goodman-Scott, 2014).

PBIS is a systems approach to instituting the social culture and behavioral supports needed for all children in a school to achieve social and academic success (Horner, Sugai, & Lewis, 2015). PBIS was designed to promote safety, prosocial behavior, and academic

readiness by outlining a structure within a framework to explicitly teach and reinforce positive student behaviors in schools (Scheuermann, et al., 2013; Solomon, et al., 2015). Initially, PBIS was designed to reduce problem behavior in individuals with developmental disabilities (Lassen, et al., 2006). PBIS was formed as a result of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997 which was an approach to addressing misbehavior and placing emphasis on using functional assessment and positive approaches to encourage good behavior (PBIS, n. d.).

PBIS is perceived to affect achievement indirectly through improved student social relations, student-teacher relationships, and the feeling of having a safe haven at school (Horner, et al., 2015). Schools that utilized PBIS in their system were perceived by their students as significantly safer and more socially supportive (Horner et al., 2009). It is one preventive measure that allows for children to receive intervention before they reach a crisis state (Severson et al., 2007). There are three tiers to this approach (Lampron, & Gonsoulin, 2013). The first tier is considered the primary prevention arm. This tier provides universal interventions schoolwide. The strategies used include teaching expectations, providing incentives, and utilizing evidence-based classroom management strategies. The second tier focuses on selected students with standard interventions (i.e., social skills, anger management groups). The third and final tier provides for an intensive, individualized intervention aimed at high-risk students (Sprague, 2006). By using PBIS within the framework of IDEA, it can be used as a tool to determine eligibility for students to receive special education services, as well as achieving federal mandates for early intervention and accountability (Gresham, 2005).

Horner, et al. (2015) identified the core elements of PBIS as primary, secondary, and tertiary. The primary prevention tier of the core elements consists of the behavioral

expectations being defined and taught. On the primary level, there should be clearly defined consequences for problem behaviors and a reward system for students exhibiting appropriate behavior. The primary prevention tier also includes differentiated behavioral instruction, continuous collection of data, and universal screening for supporting student behavioral problems.

The secondary prevention tier of the core elements is comprised of various systems. These systems include increasing structure and predictability, increasing reliant adult feedback, linking behavioral and academic performance, and increasing communication with parents. Progress monitoring and the collection of data are also elements of the secondary tier.

The tertiary prevention tier of core elements is very specific and identifies elements that seek to regulate student behavioral problems. The tertiary tier uses functional behavioral assessments for students, team-based comprehensive assessments, and data for decision-making (Horner, et al., 2015). The tertiary tier also consists of individualized interventions based on assessments that focus on preventing behavioral problems, providing strategies which place problem behavior on extinction, providing strategies for enhancing the reward system for exhibiting appropriate behavior, and using negative consequences if necessary. The primary, secondary, and tertiary core element tiers provide teachers with strategies that support student behavioral problems (Horner, et al., 2015).

Teachers may recognize the importance of effective behavior management and prefer positive interventions; however, other studies showed that teachers tend to deliver low rates of praise (Hardman & Smith, 1999). Some teachers would rather choose interventions haphazardly with little individualization and no direct link to specific criteria for establishing

progress (Myers, & Holland, 2000; Tillery, et al., 2010). Nungesser and Watkins (2005) indicated that many of the interactions teachers have with students exhibiting behavioral problems are negative (i.e., reprimands) and the management strategies are often punitive.

According to Tillery, et al., (2010), many teachers may view themselves as being one of the strongest influences on how a student behavior is exhibited. Negative behavior can emerge if there are no clear rules established for the student to follow. When other students see the negative action from their classmates and get exposed to those different personalities and ways of doing things it can be a powerful influence (Tillery, et al., 2010). Modifying the classroom learning environment by implementing behavioral management strategies can decrease problem behavior (Epstein, et al., 2008).

Universal Approaches to Behavioral Management

School-wide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Supports (SWPBIS) is a schoolwide system used to communicate and teach rules; whereas, PBIS is the classroom system used to communicate and teach rules. SWPBIS is designed to improve learning environments by increasing the amount of time students are in school (i.e., decreased out-of -school suspensions), engaged in instruction, as well as the level of academic engagement of students during instruction (Gage, et al., 2015). In addition, this school-wide system offers rewards to students who follow rules throughout the school environment.

SWPBIS is a function based behavioral interventions framework (Horner, et al., 2004). It is a multi-tiered framework that guides the organization of behavior support within the school with the aim of improving behavioral and academic outcomes for all students (Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Freeman, et al., 2016). This approach uses a system for developing and managing student behavior. SWPBIS is a complete methodology designed for preventive discipline

measures (Freeman, et al., 2016). The SWPBIS method emphasizes decreasing problem behavior in schools and classrooms while developing an integrated system of support for students, teachers, and other adults at the school, including expectations in the cafeteria and on school transportation (Reinke, et al., 2013).

Schools are trying to find ways to close the gap between discipline and achievement to ensure all students will make adequate yearly progress. Schools may need to invest in a proactive approach to organizing and managing resources to decrease problem behavior and increase academic achievement. In addition, they need to collect and use data to guide their decisions; implement relevant, evidence-based practices; and invest in an intervention system that will ensure that these practices can be achieved and sustained over a period of time. SWPBIS is one proactive system that supports this belief. When schools selected SWPBIS, they typically experienced decreased inappropriate behaviors. Also, it was found that students' academic performance levels improved. With this approach in behavioral management, teachers were able to teach academics (Simonsen, Sugai, & Negron, 2008).

SWPBIS hypothesized that when teachers and school staff actively teach, model and role play expectations, and reward positive behaviors related to classroom compliance and academic effort, then the proportion of students with mild and serious behavioral problems will be reduced causing the school's overall behavioral climate to improve (Sugai, Horner, & Gresham, 2002). The procedures used in the SWPBIS system are organized around three main behavioral approaches. These procedures include prevention, multi-tiered support, and data-based decision making.

Barriers That May Hinder the Implementation of PBIS in Schools

According to Simonsen, Sugai, & Negron (2008), barriers to intervention

implementation are often found when the following occurs:

- No established expectations
- No developed and scripted lesson plans that will teach expectations
- Lack of active supervision in classroom and non-classroom settings
- No strategies to acknowledge appropriate behavior
- No strategies in place to respond to inappropriate behavior
- No staff reinforcement system
- No action plan that will guide roll-out and implementation

Another barrier may be when teachers' perceptions and understanding of behavioral management strategies differ from their colleagues within the school environment (Tillery, et al., 2010).

Improving Classroom Environments Through Self-Regulation

There has been a shift in classroom management in which students must develop the capacity to self-regulate and assume more responsibility for their conduct (Alderman, & MacDonald, 2015). Challenging behaviors often interfere with classroom interactions which can impact learning and academic achievement (Park, & Lynch, 2014). Students who frequently disrupt their classrooms experience lost time for academic lessons (Burke, et al., 2011). Ineffective managed classrooms may compromise the teacher's ability to accurately monitor student achievement due to having to consistently address student misbehavior (Hochweber, et al., 2014).

Teachers who lack classroom experience and do not have coping strategies in place are often faced with student misbehavior and disengagement issues (Evertson & Weinstein, 2006; Friedman, 2000; Jones, 2006; Dicke, et al., 2014). When young teachers are faced with the

realities of the classroom, self-efficacy becomes a critical protective factor for them (Friedman, 2000; Dicke, Marsh, et al., 2014). A self-regulation environment consists of empowering students and teachers in a mutual partnership for a democratic process (Alderman, & MacDonald, 2015). Additionally, it has been hypothesized that teachers' self-efficacy controls in managing the classroom leads to fewer classroom disturbances and subsequently decreases emotional exhaustion (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008; Dicke, Marsh, et al., 2014).

PBIS and Academic Achievement

Most of the research on PBIS and academic achievement has indicated that challenging behaviors impede the learning process and affect student achievement. Multiple studies examined the relationship between PBIS and improved scores in reading and mathematics. Reading achievement was associated with the implementation of PBIS (Bradshaw & Pas, 2011; Gage, et al., 2013), however there was only a small amount of evidence suggesting positive effects in reading (Lane, & Menzies, 2003; Gage, et al., 2013). There were moderate gains for students who scored at or above proficient on the California high stakes reading assessment for students attending three middle schools that utilized PBIS (Sailor, et al., 2006). Another study examined the combination of PBIS and targeted reading programs in which there was limited evidence of reading gains (Nelson, et al., 2002). Putnam, et al., (2006) indicated that student achievement was significantly related to student behavior and time spent on instruction. They found the implementation of PBIS decreased challenging behaviors in the classroom; therefore, resulting in increased instructional time and gains in student achievement.

Student achievement in mathematics were similar to reading achievement in which there were increases in math achievement (Sailor et al., 2006). Lassen, Steele, and Sailor

(2006) discovered there were greater increases in math than in reading. Simonsen, et al., (2012) found significant positive differences for schools implementing PBIS with fidelity. However, one study indicated that implementation of PBIS may not affect academic achievement and in some cases, teachers who did not implement PBIS with fidelity had some students who showed gains in academic achievement and utilizing PBIS alone may not solve student academic achievement challenges (Gage, et al., 2015).

Further Research

In order to implement an intervention plan, schools may need to identify what they plan to achieve. More specifically, schools should review their district improvement plans to identify priority issues (Simonsen, et al., 2008). Schools may need to establish a group of representatives to facilitate and guide the intervention implementation process. According to Simonsen, et al. (2008), this group should include (a) an administrator who has the authority to commit school resources; (b) teachers who represent the certified faculty; (c) representative of special services (i.e., counselor, school psychologist, school social worker, etc.) who brings behavioral expertise; (d) member of the support staff (i.e., para-professional, secretary, janitor, etc.); and (e) family member. The representatives should be supportive and understand the importance of the team (Simonsen, et al.,2008; Reinke, 2013). A PBIS coach to lead the team should be identified and he/she should have social influence over other team members. Schools need to have at least an 80 percent buy-in from the faculty and staff for intervention implementation. Additionally, a system in place that allows input, data collection on behavioral issues, and training in SWPBS may be beneficial (Simonsen, et al., 2008).

Synthesis of Research Findings

There has been growing concerns about the intensification of student behavioral

challenges in the schools. Due to the increase of student behavioral problems, many schools have begun taking actions to limit the amount of violence or chaotic disruptive behavior by employing and adding resource officials or law enforcement officers to the staff. Many teachers believe that a safe and pleasant classroom environment in which students are well-behaved is essential for teaching and academic achievement. For years, creating a well-disciplined student learning environment often meant that teachers were allowed to use extreme measures to limit conduct behavior distractions through the means of corporal punishment. Although these techniques regulated student conduct behaviors, it resulted in undesirable effects such as fear, lack of motivation, and dislike for school. The former techniques have been replaced with discipline methods that promote self-regulation and positive attitudes towards the learning experience.

Many teachers have found that students who frequently misbehaved in the classroom often preferred to exhibit their behavioral problems within group dynamics rather than as individuals. Oftentimes, the teacher's most effective tool for resolving conflict and behavior challenges was diagnostic thinking. Diagnostic thinking is being able to determine the cause of the misbehavior, taking the appropriate actions based on the facts, evaluating the results, and remaining flexible or open to various possibilities in providing additional strategies to manage the behavior which can be difficult for teachers to address. Interestingly, some teachers found the diagnostic thinking did not directly affect academic achievement.

However, behavior and academic outcomes are important indicators of the effectiveness of school and long-term student outcomes (Hammond, et al., 2007; Freeman, et al., 2016).). The relationship between student behavior and student achievement indicate that teachers who apply behavioral interventions to decrease students' problematic behavior, alter

the factors that trigger them which can improve student academic achievement (Greenberg, et al., 2003). Nelson, & Burns, (2010) stated that decreasing problem behaviors and increasing academically engaged behaviors could be considered reciprocal actions because of the relationship between behavioral engagement and academic outcomes.

Critique of Previous Research

The efforts to improve, increase, or promote positive behaviors in classrooms can be challenging; however, teaching students how to self- regulate will empower them to control their own behavior in any situation and allow for teachers to be able to have more time for instruction (Parker, et al., 2010). Understanding that all behavior is an expression of a certain need, teachers should be perceptive and determine the motivation behind behaviors to address problems before critical learning time is lost (Daly, 2005). Teachers may need to identify and use the strategies that work with students who lack self-discipline, interfere with teaching and learning, and limit teachers' instructional effectiveness in which the goal of such interventions is to adequately support environments conducive to learning.

Although the implementation of behavioral strategies may be a daunting task, teachers may consider utilizing research-based frameworks that can result in improved student behavior and academic achievement (Flannery, et al., 2014). Classroom teachers ability to limit or prevent behavioral distractions and disruptions will determine how successful their management of student behaviors in the classroom. Accordingly, the PBIS framework has been considered as a successful behavioral management intervention strategy that yields positive results for teachers because it provides strategies to redirect student behaviors and improves academic achievement. Gaining a better understanding of PBIS factors could lead to more effective intervention efforts and better outcomes for teachers,

students, and schools (Waschbusch, et al., 2015).

Summary

Teachers cite discipline concerns as a major issue in schools. They may believe that there are limitations in the methods used to modify the behavior of their students. Many issues that cause behavior or conduct disruptions in the classroom are due to lack of behavioral strategies or programs and student self-efficacy. There are behavioral strategies for teachers that will enhance classroom management practices in which the goals are to improve student achievement and teach students self-efficacy. “There’s not a teacher alive who hasn’t felt the frustration of trying to manage a classroom with at least one student who repeatedly pulls other students off-task with annoying, disorderly behavior” (Daly, 2005, p. 9).

Implementing positive behavioral supports can minimize problem behaviors, whereby reducing the need for costly and strategic interventions. Effective behavioral support that improves and increases student engagement allows for increased time for instruction and learning. Schools that implement positive behavioral frameworks and initiatives are regarded, by the teachers, as safer, more enjoyable, and more productive work environments.

In addition, scholar achievement has suffered in schools that have not adequately addressed the discipline and behavioral issues that have plagued classrooms for many years (Shupe, 1998). Gilpatrick (2010) concurred that students’ negative peer interactions in the classroom played a role on their academic failures. Understanding how teaching and learning are affected by disruptive student behavior may prompt educators to resolve classroom management deficits in an attempt to improve student academic outcomes.

Negative consequences and reactive strategies are often ineffective in reducing discipline issues. McCarthy-Tucker, et al. (2001) conveyed that excellent classroom

management skills were essential components for successful teaching. Supported with research- based strategies for classroom management, teachers can experience less stress, greater professional success, and fewer time-consuming disruptions during lessons (Canter, 2003). Arnold, et al., (1999) indicated that research suggested that students' educational achievement can be improved by addressing disruptive behavior, because academic difficulties and problems create a cycle in which each problem exacerbates other student behaviors in the classroom. Therefore, regardless of experience, teachers must be prepared with proactive classroom management strategies to address problematic behaviors before the situations take their toll on their wellness and self- efficacy (Gilpatrick, 2010). Because disruptive behavior typically results in lost instructional time and compromises the learning environment, interventions that improve and maximize instructional time by keeping students in the classroom should produce improvements in academic areas (Lassen, et al., 2006).

Chapter 3: Methodology

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore elementary teachers' perceptions on how Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) relate to the academic achievement of students. This chapter included the discussion of the chosen research methodology and design, the selection process of participants, the instrumentation to be conducted, and data collection procedures. Data was discussed and collected using the methods of survey and interviews with participating teachers, in order to determine their perceptions, attitudes, and knowledge of PBIS as a method to increasing student academic achievement. PBIS has been effectively used by many teachers as a behavioral intervention program that aims to increase student academic achievement. However, there was limited research on teachers' perceptions of PBIS as an effective method of improving student academic achievement. Since PBIS has been implemented, many teachers have left the research site and there has not been ongoing training to support teachers. Although teachers with PBIS experience may have been hired to work at the research site, the school develops its own behavioral and academic support procedures, as well as its aphorisms. Newly hired and transferred teachers may not have been adequately trained at the research site to effectively implement PBIS as a behavioral management plan to improve academic achievement.

Student academic achievement can be affected by classroom disruptions (Fernandez-Balboa, 1991; Osher, et al., 2010). Teachers encounter various forms of student disruptive behaviors such as blurting out, talking back, leaving his or her seat without permission, off task, making noises, and throwing objects in the classroom each day (Nash, et al., 2016). When student disruptive behaviors are presented in the classroom, the focus on learning and climate changes which indicates the need to implement strategies that will reduce the classroom

disruptions and return the focus back to student learning (Moreno, 2011).

A key component to improve the academic achievement of students may involve the classroom management practice of individual teachers (Hart, 2010). Understanding the rationale of the students' disruptive behavior will give the teacher a better perspective of what behavior intervention strategy to employ that will lead to less disruptive behaviors and improvement of student achievement success in the classroom (Nash, et al., 2016). According to Martella and Marchand-Martella (2015), the focus should be on increasing academic performance by implementing behavioral management methods to improve student behaviors. Teachers may need to discover methods to improve academic achievement through the implementation of an effective behavioral intervention strategy that will reduce disruptive behaviors.

Research Design and Rationale

Research Question:

- How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a behavioral management tool that assists in improving academic achievement?

This research study was conducted using a phenomenological approach. This type of study was suited for phenomenological research because teacher participants, at the research site, have common or shared experiences in the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). I did not choose the narrative research, grounded theory, ethnography, or case study to conduct the research study. Narrative research focuses on the collection of stories, documents, and group conversations about individuals lived and told experiences, as well as shedding light on the individuals and how they view themselves (Creswell, 2013). Grounded theory would have led me to focus on

a process or an action. An ethnography was not considered because it placed focus on an entire culture-sharing group which involved extended observations of the group. The case study was a consideration, but it relied on the identification of a specific case within a real-life, contemporary context and the study is conducted over a period of time (Creswell, 2013). Subsequently, the phenomenological research study was chosen because it described the common meaning for several individuals and their lived experiences (Smith, 2007; et al., 2011; Creswell, 2013). The focus was on what the participants had in common and reducing the individual experiences into a phenomenon which is a single concept or idea.

An important characteristic of phenomenological research was based on the participants' perspectives of their experiences and how they developed meaning from their experiences (McMillan, 2012). According to Creswell (2013), researchers identify a phenomenon and collect data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon. Knapp (2007) suggested that the phenomenological approach is used to seek clarification and understanding of people's perceptions and experiences. McMillan (2012) conveyed that a traditional phenomenological study identifies the following:

- The purpose is understanding the essence of the common phenomenon.
- The data collection process consists of interviews of no more than 10 participants.
- The data analysis includes statements, meanings, themes, and general description.
- The reporting results identifies the description of essence of the experience from participants' perspectives.

In addition, the phenomenological research design was selected because it would provide an understanding of the perceptions of elementary school teachers on the use of PBIS and how teachers perceived the relationship of PBIS and academic achievement.

Participant and Purposeful Sampling

This research study occurred at an urban Title I prekindergarten through fifth grade elementary school in the southern region of the United States. The research study site was in its 5th year of implementing PBIS to improve student behavior, increase instructional time, and improve student academic achievement. At the beginning of the 2016 school year, staff participated in a PBIS training provided by the research study site's PBIS coaches. In addition, there was a PBIS team consisting of an administrator and staff members that were assigned to provide coaching for teachers. However, there was not ongoing training at the research site.

Purposeful sampling was used for the recruitment process. Purposeful sampling is when specific people within the population are chosen for a study or research project. Since the implementation of PBIS, many teachers have left the research site. Therefore, a limited number of certified teachers met the criteria of having a minimum of three years implementing PBIS as a tool to improve academic achievement.

The intended sample of the study was 10 licensed teachers with five alternate teachers. The first 10 teachers who agreed and signed the consent form (Appendix B) were included in the study. The 10 teachers participated in a Qualtrics online survey (Appendix D) and a 1:1 interview (Appendix C). The number of teacher participants represented a subset of a larger population with a common interest or phenomenon. Participation in the study was voluntary in which the teacher participants could have ended their participation at any time without risk or harm. Allowing for teachers to voluntarily participate in the study allowed for diverse levels of experiences, backgrounds, and teaching levels. In the event that any of the 10 teacher participants would have withdrawn from the study, I would have returned to the list of

potential participants to invite one of the eleventh through fifteenth alternates to participate in the study.

I recruited teachers by sending a letter to each potential participant using their personal email address. I set a deadline of one week to accept volunteers for the study. I sent a reminder to the teacher participants who had not responded to the email one to two days before the deadline. I sent a personal email to each teacher participant with a schedule giving them a choice of a day and time to interview. At the beginning of the interview process, I reminded the teacher participants of the purpose of the study, the research procedures (Appendix B), the right to withdraw from the study at any time, and protection of confidentiality, as well as allowed the participant an opportunity to ask questions related to the procedures of the research study. The structured interview consisted of open-ended questions (Appendix C) to determine the teachers' perceptions on how behavior management strategies relate to academic achievement. I assigned each teacher participant a pseudonym that was the only identifier for the study. Teacher participants were not identified in any publication or report. After the interview, I began the transcribing process by listening to the recorded interviews on the digital recorder and applying the data to a word document on my desktop computer. Once transcribed, I reviewed the transcript while listening to the recorded interviews. To ensure accuracy, I emailed the interview transcript and my conclusions or narrative account of the interview to the personal email account of each participant for his or her review as part of the member checking process. The data was stored in a secure file cabinet in my home office. The study documents will be destroyed five years after the conclusion of this study. The results of the study will be published, but the identity of each participant will remain confidential under the disclosures of the law.

Instrumentation

The data collection instruments for this study were self-designed and consisted of a structured interview (Appendix C) and a survey (Appendix D). I conducted interviews to determine the teacher participants' perspectives and attitudes of implementing PBIS. The interview consisted of 27 open-ended questions to pose during the interview process. The interviews took approximately 45 minutes to 1 hour to conduct with each teacher participant (Appendix C). The interviews provided information about the teachers' experience with implementing PBIS, teachers' perceptions on how students responded to the implementation of PBIS, and teachers' perceptions on the effects of PBIS with academic learning. The interviews were recorded as permission was granted to do so when the participants completed a consent form (Appendix B) to participate in the study. The interviews were recorded on my digital recorder and I transcribed the interviews into a word document on my desktop computer.

The purpose of a survey is to gain information from people about a topic. A survey is a non-experimental, opinion-based research instrument. Surveys are usually used to determine descriptive characteristics of non-observable phenomena such as perceptions, attitudes, behaviors and beliefs. The survey used was a self-designed survey (Appendix D) using Qualtrics software. The survey was given to teacher participants to share their thoughts on the relationship between PBIS and academic achievement, as well as classroom management issues. The survey provided an additional aspect in determining the teachers' satisfaction with PBIS as a behavioral management framework and its relationship to academic achievement. The survey (Appendix D) consisted of 20 items with a 5-point Likert scale to rate the

statements from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Data Collection

The teacher participants were 10 certified elementary school teachers. The data collected over the course of the study measured the effectiveness of PBIS in an urban Title I school based on the results from teacher participants surveys and interviews. All individual interviews were conducted in the computer laboratory room, located at the research study site, at the end of the instructional day. The school's interior classroom structure was designed with partition walls and open entrances. The computer laboratory room was usually not utilized by students, teachers, and administrators after the school day has ended. The computer laboratory room had standard walls and a door that could be closed to ensure privacy for the teacher participants during the interview sessions.

The interviews were recorded to allow for an accurate record. I used prompts when necessary to foster further discussion from the teacher participants. Teacher participants were provided with the interview questions written on index cards. If there was an interruption or an emergency during the recording, the interview was paused to address the interruption and resumed or was rescheduled. The data will be stored in encrypted files on my desktop computer in my home office for five years. My computer contained a security passcode to turn on the computer. In addition to the password system on the computer, I used BitLocker drive encryption in Windows 10. It was one of Windows' most important security features. BitLocker drive encryption protected data by encrypting the entire disk volumes it was stored on. It used a specialized Encrypting File System to achieve this. The research recruitment process began by emailing each potential teacher participant to discuss the research study. I explained that the study was voluntary and could be stopped by the teacher participant at any

time. If the teacher agreed to participate in the study, I scheduled an interview session in which I presented a consent form (Appendix B) at the interview for him or her to sign and collected the signed form.

Attributes. The attributes or features of this research study were the methods of data collection which will be through the utilization of interviews and surveys. An interview is a one-on-one conversation in which questions or statements are presented and responses are made. For this research study, a structured interview comprised of specific questions occurring in a specified order will be conducted. The interviews provided information about the teachers' experiences with implementing PBIS. The structured interview consisted of open-ended questions developed to determine teachers' perceptions on how PBIS relate to academic achievement.

The survey was designed with clear and specific questions in order to discover attitudes and beliefs of PBIS. The survey was designed in a statement format. I utilized Qualtrics as the survey software tool. Qualtrics was an online website that allowed people to create surveys and distribute to participants. Qualtrics provided free, customizable surveys, as well as a collection of paid back-end programs that include data analysis, sample selection, bias elimination, and data representation tools. In case of electrical or technological failure, the participants were given a paper-based version of the online survey to complete. I realized that a self-generated survey could only be used to make generalizable knowledge claims because it was not validated. The results concluded from the Qualtrics survey pertained to the elementary teachers' perceptions at the research site.

Data Analysis Procedures

I explored the teacher participants' perceptions of PBIS as a behavioral management

tool that assisted in improving elementary students' academic achievement. The data analysis process was used to determine themes, categories, and new ideas as a method to identify a better understanding of this phenomenon. Creswell (2013) acknowledged that organizing data, establishing a tool, and reducing data into categories as three analysis strategies used in qualitative research. The first step in the analysis process was the collection and organization of data. Individual interviews were used to collect data. I recorded the 10 interview sessions to ensure an accurate depiction of the statements given by the teacher participants. The recorded interviews were transferred into 10 computer audio files. The next step was to transcribe the data. I organized the data from the interviews by transcribing verbatim all teacher participants' audio recordings into 10 individual word document files. I utilized the sound organizer file from my desk top computer as the audio tool to listen to the recorded interviews. The sound organizer file allowed me to start the playback, slow the speed, and stop the playback to transcribe the data. After the data was transposed, I read the interview transcripts several times to get a sense of the interview before dissecting the data into smaller text segments.

The next step in the analysis process was to establish a tool and reduce the data into categories through the coding process. In the first step of the coding process, I began to segment and label the text to form descriptions and broad themes. I begin the coding process of labeling the segments, examining the data for overlap and redundancy, and collapsing the broad themes into smaller themes. I analyzed the data by identifying similarities of the teacher participants' perceptions and entered the data in an Excel spreadsheet. The spreadsheet contained the overall data collected from the interview sessions. This included the questions and responses from each teacher participant. There was no identifiable teacher participant information entered on the spreadsheet.

My analysis identified commonalities such as similar patterns and ideas that are relevant to the teacher participants' experiences and perspectives about PBIS relating to academic achievement. In this process, I grouped similar codes and looked for redundant codes. I reduced the list of codes into smaller themes by examining the codes the teacher participants frequently discussed during their individual interview session. I used the data analysis steps of open, axial, and selective coding. Open coding allowed for an initial search of the categories about the phenomenon being studied. I created a list of the words or phrases that were significant to the perceptions and experiences of the teacher participants. Then, I applied axial coding by analyzing the open codes and relating other categories to the codes. I explored the factors that influence the phenomenon and identified the connections. In selective coding, I reduced the axial codes and identified one category that shaped the core of the phenomenon.

A survey instrument was also used in the data collection process. I generated a 5-point Likert scale, using the Qualtrics survey software, to code the statements into categories corresponding with (5) Strongly Agree, (4) Agree, (3) Neither Agree nor Disagree, (2) Disagree, and (1) Strongly Disagree (Appendix D). I utilized the Qualtrics software to display the results of the survey and to export data into the Excel software. The software assisted in coding the responses of the participants. I identified the commonalities such as similar patterns and ideas that were relevant to the teacher participants' perceptions of the relationship between PBIS and academic achievement.

Likewise with the analysis of the interviews, I used open, axial, and selective coding. In open coding, I identified and grouped the categories when reading the survey data collected through the Qualtrics Survey Software. The categories were behavioral and academic, effective

classroom management with effective instruction, PBIS framework, effective academic instruction, and effective approaches to address severe behavior. Through axial coding, I connected the statements from open coding that led to the connection of PBIS and academic achievement. I grouped the statements into three groups. The groups were consistency, methods, and processes. Survey statements 1, 3, 8, 10, 11, 13, 15, 16, 17, 19, and 20 were grouped under the consistency category. Survey statements 5, 6, and 9 were grouped under the methods category. Survey statements 2, 3, 4, 7, 12, 14, and 18 were grouped under the processes category. In selective coding, I explored the teacher participants' perception of PBIS relationship with academic achievement. The selective code related to the core of the teacher participants' perception that the implementation of PBIS strategies improved student academic achievement. The final analysis included the report of the study results, limitations, individual perceptions, and generality of the study.

Trustworthiness

Credibility. Credibility is defined as the extent to which data, data analysis, and conclusions are accurate and trustworthy (McMillan, 2012). In order to establish credibility of the study, I utilized member checking and triangulation. According to Creswell (2009) member checking and triangulation are two components that enhance credibility in research studies. Triangulation compares the findings of different techniques. Triangulation is a technique that seeks convergence of findings, cross-validation, among different sources and methods of data collection (McMillan, 2012). Data are collected from different individuals at different times or in different places, or several sources of data are used to see if the results are consistent. If the results from each source of data point to the same conclusion, then the researcher has triangulated the findings which can be done with two sources of data.

Member checking is when the researcher asks the participants to review interpretations, conclusions, and documents such as transcripts to determine if the data accurately reflect the viewpoint of the participants (McMillan, 2012). Creswell (2008) identified member checking as when the researcher allows the participant to review the transcripts for accuracy. The researcher can check with the participant about codes themes and other findings to see if these are viewed by the participants as fair, reasonable, accurate, and complete.

The credibility of the data was established through the use of digital-recorded interviews, surveys, and member checking. Recording the interviews allowed the teacher participants to give their attention to the researcher and to focus on the questions. Creating transcripts of the interview allowed the teacher participants to review, edit, or clarify their responses which ensured their information was accurate.

Dependability. The dependability of the research study involved the actual experiences of the teacher participants and the data triangulation of the interviews and surveys. To ensure dependability, I maintained accurate notes during the interview process. I analyzed the interview questions several times to ensure the interview statements and survey items were aligned to the research questions. To ensure dependability, the interviews were kept confidential. Digital recordings of interviews, letters of consent, and interview transcripts were stored and locked in my home office filing cabinet. The interview data were stored and password secured in my desktop computer at my home office. There was no identifiable information on any of the documents and teacher participants did not know the identities of the other teacher participants. I avoided interjecting any personal experiences with PBIS during the research process such as personal feeling, thoughts, or reflections. A dependable research study provided the foundation to extend research for future studies about teachers' perception

on how PBIS relate to academic achievement.

Expected Findings

I expected to find that the relationship between classroom management strategies and student behavioral outcomes was dependent on the learning process. I expected to find that behavioral intervention strategies are related to student behavioral outcomes. I expected to find that behavioral intervention strategies affected the amount of time teachers spend on instruction which affects student achievement.

Limitations of the Research

There were limitations of the research such as the location of the study, limited amount of grade level participants, and teachers' ethnicity, background, and gender. The study was conducted at a public urban Title I school located in the southern region of the United States that was comprised of grades prekindergarten through fifth. The primary ethnicity of the teacher population was African American. The primary gender of the research study was female. The study did not involve prekindergarten teachers, kindergarten teachers, and extension teachers such as the music teacher, counselor, librarian, and the computer laboratory instructor. The scope of the study focused on first through fifth grade teachers' perspectives of how PBIS relate to academic achievement. The teacher participants' perceptions of what student behaviors were distracting or disruptive varied based on each teacher participants' personal tolerance. There could have been possible omissions or inadequate reports of the teacher participants' experiences with PBIS. In addition, some teacher participants may have felt obligated to participate in the research because I am their colleague. Five alternate teachers were considered if any of the 10 teacher participants decided to withdraw from the study. If a teacher participant decided to withdraw from the study, I would have met with the next person

that considered participating in the study.

Delimitations of the Study

There were delimitations of the study that included inviting only elementary teachers as participants, using only data from teachers of one elementary school, and the site location was in an urban environment. Involving only elementary teachers in the study conveyed their perspectives of PBIS from the lower educational division in which students continue to need guidance and behavioral development. Middle school and high school teachers were not included; therefore, their perceptions of utilizing PBIS for older students were not analyzed. Elementary students may tend to need more behavior management and directions to teach them how to maintain appropriate behavior. Additionally, utilizing data from only one research study site imparted the perspectives of a limited number of teachers instead of projecting a broader representation of elementary teachers experiences with PBIS in the classroom. Furthermore, the study did not include the perspectives on how PBIS relates to academic achievement from teachers of private schools and suburban schools.

Conflict of Interest

There were no relationships, biases, or ethical conflicts that prevented me from conducting this research study. I was a certified teacher at the elementary school where the research study was being conducted. The teacher participants at the research site were my colleagues and I did not hold any administrative positions at the research study site. Although I was aware of the implementation of PBIS at the school as a classroom behavioral framework, as well as some student behavioral challenges, I did not impart any personal feelings or biases during this research study.

Ethical Issues of the Study

The ethical issue of the research design included the apprehensiveness of teacher participants in fully disclosing their perceptions of behavioral intervention strategies and academic achievement. The teacher participants may have believed that the data would be disseminated to the school district. The teacher participants may have been concerned that their identity would be exposed through the structured interview process and survey. Another ethical concern included safeguarding the data. The data was secured to prevent anyone, other than the researcher, from viewing the data. Teacher participants also may have believed there would have been consequences based on their answers. I reiterated that the study was completely voluntary with no consequences for participation or non-participation. A final ethical concern was that the principal may have wanted to review the finding of the study to determine teacher participants' perceptions of PBIS. To prevent this conflict, I met with the principal once the research study was approved by the IRB to inform the principal that the data collected in the study would not be shared with the school's administration. However, at the end of the study, the final dissertation was published for anyone to read.

Researcher's Bias

As a teacher at the research study site, during the data collection process, I avoided the bias of subconsciously giving subtle clues with my body language, or tone of voice, that may subtly influence the teacher participants into giving answers skewed towards my own opinions about PBIS and its relationship with student achievement. Another bias I had was my preconceived idea that a well-managed classroom drastically reduces student behavioral challenges and improves academic achievement. One additional bias I had was when PBIS is fully implemented consistently, it should provide teachers with the tools needed to effectively

manage the classroom and improve student achievement.

Summary

Chapter 3 represented a plan of the process for addressing the research questions regarding teacher participants' perceptions on how PBIS related to academic achievement. The chapter identified the methods used to examine the study through a qualitative approach. The chapter identified the potential teacher participants in the research study as first grade through fifth grade teachers in the southern region of the United States who are implementing PBIS in their classrooms. I discussed with each teacher participant that this was a confidential, volunteer study and he or she may withdraw from the study at any time. The chapter described the data collection process, analysis, and the procedures related to understanding if there was a relationship between PBIS, student behaviors, and academic achievement. This chapter concluded with identifying the expected findings, ethical issues, and any limitations that affected the research study.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

Introduction

There is growing support for implementing universal behavioral interventions in early schooling that impact academic achievement (McCormick, Cappella, O'Connor, & McClowry, 2015). This phenomenological research study was to determine teachers' perceptions of how Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) relate to student academic achievement in an elementary school. The data for this study was collected from 10 teacher participants in a 1:1 interview and a Qualtrics survey over a 6-week period. The study began after receiving approval from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and concluded in March 2017 prior to state testing. The teacher participants in the study were comprised of 10 first through fifth grade teachers with 3−25 years of classroom experience and 3−5 years of implementing PBIS in the classroom. The 10 teacher participants volunteered to participate in a 1:1 interview session. Each interview session was recorded and later transcribed. I emailed the interview transcript and my conclusions of the interview to the personal email account of each teacher participant to review for accuracy.

The self-designed online Qualtrics survey served as an additional aspect of the teacher participants' perceptions of relating PBIS with academic achievement. The teacher participants submitted responses to the Likert 20 statements survey with strongly agree (5), agree (4), neither agree or disagree (3), disagree (2), and strongly disagree (1). The interviews were conducted in January 2017 and February 2017. The survey was emailed in February and reminder emails were sent periodically to encourage 100% participation. All teacher participants completed the survey by March 2017. The teacher participants' responses to the interview questions and the survey items provided results for answering the following research

question:

- How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a behavioral management tool that assists in improving academic achievement?

This chapter details the results from the data collection and serves as an analysis of the research process and procedures. The data results are presented in the response to the research question, interview patterns, similarities found within the survey, relationships, and themes. Key findings in this study indicated that most of the elementary teachers' perceptions of PBIS did yield effective results on improving student academic achievement.

In my role as researcher at the research study site, I provided no personal preferences or beliefs about my feeling and attitude toward utilizing PBIS. During the interview sessions, I did not discuss my experiences with PBIS. My role was to ask the teacher participants the approved set of questions and to record their answers as stated. With some of the teacher participants' responses, I expanded the question for clarification of their answer.

Each teacher participant was given a pseudonym; therefore, no teacher participant was identified during the recorded interview. After I transcribed the interview, the data was sent to the teacher participants' personal email address to confirm the accurateness of the interview transcriptions. In addition, the survey was sent to each teacher participants' personal email address and responses were submitted to the Qualtrics Software system. The survey was password protected to ensure only the teacher participants of the study could respond to the survey. The teacher participants were given the password when the survey was sent to their personal email address. I did not complete the survey and was not present when the teacher participants completed the survey.

Description of the Research Study Site

The setting for this study was an urban Title I elementary school in the southern region of the United States. The school was built in the 1980's and has been renovated with new classrooms and technology. I conducted the interviews during the third term of the 2016-2017 school year, prior to the state mandated testing dates for elementary students. The teacher participants were volunteers who wanted to join the study. The number of teacher participants represented a subset of a larger population with a common interest or phenomenon. Purposeful sampling was utilized for this research study. Purposeful sampling is when specific people within the population are chosen for a study or research project. Purposeful sampling was used because all teacher participants had experienced the phenomenon being studied and met the criteria (Creswell, 2013). All teacher participants had to have a teacher certification with a minimum of three years utilizing PBIS as a behavioral management tool to assist in improving student academic achievement.

The teacher participants were from various grade levels. No talented and gifted teachers or specialty teachers such as counselor, interventionist, music, and librarian participated in the study. Each teacher participant in this study was assigned a pseudonym to ensure the identity remained anonymous. Since the implementation of PBIS, many teachers left the research site due to retirement, transfers within the district, moving to other districts, and changing careers. Consequently, a limited number of certified teachers met the criteria of implementing the PBIS framework as a tool to improve academic achievement.

Research Methodology and Analysis

PBIS is a practice of a systems approach or framework based on behavior to improve the classroom environment where teaching and learning happen (Ögülmüs, & Vuran, 2016).

The aim of the PBIS framework is to provide teachers with significant behavioral and academic strategies that reduce problem behavior and increase academic achievement for all students (Sugai, G., & Horner, R. H. 2009; Ögülmüs, & Vuran, 2016). By improving student behavior, teachers have more time and ability to deliver effective instruction (Putnam, Horner, & Algozzine, 2006; Gage, Sugai, & Lewis, 2013). Researchers Muscott, Mann, and LeBrun (2008) determined there was a connection between PBIS and student achievement. However, Bradshaw, Mitchell, and Leaf (2010) found no significant differences in achievement between students subjected to PBIS and those who were not. These inconsistent findings suggest more study is warranted (Houchens, Zhang, Davis, Niu, Chon, & Miller, 2017). This phenomenological research study was chosen because it was used to seek clarification of the elementary school teachers' perceptions and experiences, to describe the common meaning of their lived experiences, and to focus on the teacher participants' common and individual experiences into concepts, themes, or ideas.

The data collection instruments for this study consisted of structured interview questions (Appendix C) and a Qualtrics online survey (Appendix D). The structured interview consisted of open-ended questions (Appendix C) to determine the teacher participants' perceptions on how behavior management strategies related to academic achievement. Each teacher participant was assigned a pseudonym which was the only identifier for this study. The interviews were conducted in January and February of 2017. The survey was sent to the teacher participants' personal email address in February and March of 2017 for them to complete.

The analysis of the data included determining the themes, categories, and ideas as a method to understand the phenomenon. During this data analysis process, I dissected the

interview data to identify codes and patterns. From the first interview through the last, I looked for evolving themes, categories, and ideas. I reviewed the transcripts for descriptive categories known as open coding (Rudestam, & Newton, 2015). Open coding was used to review the data and determine the emerging patterns that were similar for different responses to the interview questions (Buckler, & Walliman, 2016). Accordingly, I prepared and organized the collected data and presented the data as a discussion. After I transcribed the data, I utilized the Creswell's (2013) best practices to code the data by reducing the data into segments and assigning names for the segments, combining the codes into broader categories or themes, and displaying and making comparisons of the data into charts and graphs. Recurring themes were only identified once. The themes were consistent with the literature and the research question. As a result, the phenomenological research design provided an understanding of the perceptions of teacher participants use of PBIS and its relationship with student academic achievement. As the themes emerged from the data, I created a chart relating the open codes, sub-categories or axial codes to the three selective codes of processes, methods, and consistency (Appendix G).

The first step in the analysis of transcripts included reducing the data into themes through coding and condensing the codes which was followed by presenting the data as a discussion (Creswell, 2013). I reviewed the transcriptions to determine the teacher participants thoughts on PBIS and academic achievement. The patterns and codes emerged into themes or categories. As I reviewed the data, I highlighted or color coded all similar responses. I used a yellow highlighter to identify the major concepts, an orange highlighter to identify the sub-categories of the major concepts, and a blue highlighter to identify the emerging themes. If there were no similarities, the response was not colored. I found over 100 words that aligned

with the research question. The primary goal during this process was to create a record table or matrix of the transcripts. Generating a matrix allowed me to recognize the similarities and differences of each participant's response.

The themes were condensed from the 100 words into smaller categories. Open codes were developed from the examining the variables that were included in the data. The open codes identified were effective and positive approaches, attainable goals, effective management, common practice, non-compliant behavior, self-regulation, and teacher and student regularities. Other open codes identified were academic instruction, academic success, behavioral management, non-compliant behavior, self-regulation, discipline consequences, tracking system, reward system, academic and behavioral chart, academic success, tools to increase achievement, attitudes, and resources.

The second step of the process was to condense the data into fewer words to move closer to the "core essence" of what the teacher participants were conveying (Alase, 2017). Axial coding was used to reassemble the data and look for the developing patterns, as well as themes between the open codes (Buckler, & Walliman, 2016). From this analysis, 14 sub-categories were developed. The sub-categories identified were effective instruction, behavioral management, classroom management, disruptions, regular occurring activities, behavioral patterns, academic achievement, teaching and learning, resistance, communication, accountability, administration and teacher support, strategies, and motivation.

The third step of the process was to condense the data into fewer words through selective coding. In the selective coding process, I examined how some of the categories or factors influenced the phenomenon and the strategies utilized (Creswell, 2005). I looked for the relationships in the categories and used selective coding (Rudestam, & Newton, 2015). After

reading and analyzing the interview transcripts, I identified several codes and narrowed the codes into three major categories of processes, methods, and consistency.

Interviews

A pilot study was conducted with a Pre-K teacher at the research site to recognize and discover any errors or weaknesses with the interview design and process. The pilot study allowed me to revise the structured interview and interview delivery process prior to conducting the study. The interviews were conducted after the instructional day to not interfere with instructional time. The teacher participants were scheduled to be interviewed after I received their consent forms. The teacher participants agreed to the digital recording of their interviews which was transcribed verbatim and emailed to the participant for accuracy. The interviews were recorded using a Sony Digital Voice ICD-PX333 battery operated recorder. I had an extra set of batteries in case of battery failure. During the interviews, emerging themes, categories, and new ideas were identified for a better understanding of the phenomenon.

The structured interviews were conducted without having any physical disruptions. There were school-wide intercom announcements that lasted about 10 seconds which interrupted the interviews for teacher participant A, C, and G. During the interruption, I paused the recorder. Once the announcement was made and the intercom system was turned off, the interviews were resumed. Each interview lasted approximately 45 minutes.

The structured interviews were conducted over a 6-week period. The interviews were open-ended questions designed to determine the teacher participants' thoughts on PBIS as a tool that assist in improving student academic achievement. Each teacher participant had a unique view of his or her experience with PBIS as it related to academic achievement. The individual interviews allowed each teacher participant to draw upon his or her own practices

and experiences. The questions were designed to provide an insight of the teacher participants' perceptions on utilizing a behavioral management framework that supports improving student academic achievement.

After the interviews, I began the transcription process by listening to the recorded interviews on the digital recorder and applying the data into a word document on my desktop computer. Once transcribed, I reviewed the transcript while listening to the recorded interviews. To ensure accuracy, I emailed the transcript and narrative analysis to the personal email account of each teacher participant to review for accuracy.

Survey

A survey is a non-experimental, opinion-based research instrument. The purpose of a survey is to collect information from a sample of people about their attitudes or opinions about a topic (Creswell, 2013). Surveys are usually used to determine descriptive characteristics of non- observable phenomena such as perceptions, attitudes, behaviors and beliefs. The survey was written in a statement format and was used to discover the teacher participants' attitudes and beliefs of PBIS. I utilized the Qualtrics software as the survey tool. Qualtrics is an online website that allows people to create surveys and distribute to participants. I created a customized survey with the software providing data analysis, sample selection, bias elimination, and data representation tools. A computer generated 5-point Likert scale was used to rate the teacher participants' responses from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. The survey (Appendix D) was emailed to the teacher participants' personal email address using the Qualtrics Survey software's anonymous distribution system. The survey results provided an additional perspective of the research question by extending the teacher participants' perceptions on how PBIS related to student academic achievement (Appendix G).

In case of an electrical or technological failure in which the teacher participants were unable to complete the online survey, I would have provided the teacher participants with a paper-based version of the online survey for them to complete. I realized that a self-generated survey cannot be used to make generalizable knowledge claims because it was not validated. However, the results from the Qualtrics survey offered another facet of the elementary teachers' perspectives on how PBIS relating to academic achievement at the research site.

Summary of the Findings

According to the findings of this research study on how elementary teachers perceived PBIS as a behavioral management tool that assisted in improving academic achievement, 80% of the teacher participants reported PBIS as a program that was beneficial in improving behavioral problems and academic achievement for most students. The data resulted from teacher participants individual interview session and their completion of a 20-item Likert online survey. The perception of the PBIS framework varied for each participant. Teacher participants H and I indicated that the PBIS framework offered a few good strategies, however, did not provide students with realistic outcomes and was not effective for students with severe behavioral problems. Participant A expressed that PBIS was not effective and the school district should develop other discipline policies that provide teachers with effective support and strategies to address behavior and student achievement. Participant B conveyed that "PBIS is beneficial, but not reliable." Participant C stated that PBIS was a good method because "it allows students to look forward to academic and behavioral rewards."

Further analysis of the interview and survey data assisted me in discovering the first theme of the research which was processes. The emergence of the processes theme was based on the procedures, methods, or structure development of the teacher participants experiences.

Processes sub-themes consisted of the teacher participants instruction, management, class disruptions, and regular occurring activities. More than half of the teacher participants found that utilizing the PBIS framework resulted in limited classroom disruptions which allowed more time for instructional practices. The teacher participants disclosed that classroom management was a top priority in producing effective instruction and limiting classroom distractions. Participant A stated that "the management system is based on the PBIS framework and the rules are generally the same as the overall, school rules." During the individual interview session, each teacher participant discussed how PBIS strategies and established rewards system seemed to improve most of the students' achievement levels. Participant B stated that "once the students grasp the behavioral expectations, they will do better, and their achievement will improve." All but two of the teacher participants claimed to review and model the behavioral procedures and academic expectations each week. Participants H and I revealed they only reviewed the procedures and expectations as needed. The consensus of the teacher participants' experience with PBIS determined it to be an effective resource for helping students realize their academic potential and applying methods to assess or improve their behavior.

The second major theme that emerged was methods. The emerging sub-themes were behavioral patterns, academic achievement, teaching and learning, and resistance. The teacher participants all shared a common method for the implementation of the classroom management system. The commonalities were using a student behavioral chart to track the students' daily behavioral patterns and academic progress. Participant C expressed that the students are "constantly on the track to do better and their academic achievement level is growing for most." There were some differences in the teachers' perceptions of issuing

students rewards for behavior and achievement. Each teacher participant used a reward system; however, it varied from receiving verbal praises or hugs to extra computer time or the issuance of reward tickets. The teacher participants each had a personalized method for addressing student resistance. Participant D revealed that students who resist following the procedures are generally upset when other students receive awards, however, the majority revert to their disruptive behaviors. Participant E stated that by utilizing the PBIS strategies, "there has been a drastic reduction of disruptive behaviors and therefore allowing for more time devoted to teaching and student learning."

The third major theme was consistency. The sub-themes that emerged were communication, accountability, administration and teacher support, strategies, and motivation. The teacher participants had mixed responses about the consistency of applying the PBIS framework. Teacher participants commented that students were rarely held accountable for their actions. Some teacher participants believed they did not have support from school administration and the PBIS team. Other teacher participants stated that there were staff members who did not consistently use the strategies of the PBIS framework and thusly created a lack of motivation from other staff members and students. Participant D stated, "The weaknesses of the PBIS framework as I see it is the consistency of it and sometimes it does not affect students behaviorally or academically."

Some of the teacher participants also noted that there were inconsistencies with teachers tracking student academic achievement and behavior, distributing rewards and incentives, and lack of communication and support from parents, PBIS coach, and the leadership team. Participant A indicated there were inconsistencies of teachers utilizing the suggested rules and consequences that were set by the PBIS team. Participant B expressed

"the consistencies between teachers following through with the school procedures whether they're in the cafeteria, extension classes, or hallways are weaknesses of the framework."

The themes mentioned connected the overall perceptions given by the teacher participants on how PBIS related to academic achievement and improved student behaviors. Although some of the teacher participants found the PBIS framework not to be the most effective tool for improving student behaviors and academic achievement, the teacher participants who utilized the PBIS strategies consistently experienced a reduction in undesirable student behaviors and saw an improvement in student academic achievement.

Presentation of the Data and Results

Interviews. In my analysis of the interview data, I sought to answer the research question about elementary teachers' perceptions on how PBIS related to academic achievement. Teacher participants shared their perspectives of PBIS as a behavioral management framework that assists in improving academic achievement in a 1:1 interview session. Each interview was scheduled within three to six weeks period by email for a time after school that was convenient for the teacher participant. Before I began each interview, I restated the voluntary process, reread the consent form, shared the purpose of the study, and my role as the researcher. I reminded each teacher participant of the anonymity of the research.

The structured interview consisted of 27 questions. I began the individual structured interview session by asking each teacher participant basic demographic attributes which included the number of years as a licensed teacher, number of years teaching at the research site, and the number of years implementing the PBIS framework in the classroom. Many of the teacher participants had been teaching for less than 10 years. All teacher participants had three years or more with implementing PBIS in the classroom. Teacher participants A, D, E, F, G,

and H had more than five years of teaching experience. Teacher participants B, C, I, and J had been teaching for at least three years. Teacher participants A, D, E, and F had been teaching at the research study site for more than four years, while teacher participants B, C, and J had three years of teaching at the research study site. Teacher participants G and H had two years of teaching at the research study site, while teacher participant I had only one year of teaching at the research study site. All 10 teacher participants had three years or more experience with implementing PBIS in their classroom.

The teacher participants were asked to expound on their overall experience and perceptions about PBIS. Teacher participants who had less than 10 years of teaching experiences indicated the need for more training on PBIS. All teacher participants stated that they had received some training on PBIS during the 2016-2017 school year. More than half of the teacher participants reported they did not have consistent support and training from the PBIS coach or support team throughout the school year. The data indicated 60% of the teacher participants found PBIS to be a great framework that improved student learning; however, 40% of the teacher participants stated it was not realistic or effective.

The 10 teacher participants acknowledged receiving PBIS lesson plans. However, there was concern by all 10 teacher participants about not receiving any additional professional development on PBIS after the initial training at the beginning of the school year and not having on-going support from the PBIS team. Teacher participant A stated having little assistance from the PBIS coach, PBIS team, or the administration. Although, most of the teacher participants still believed that PBIS was an effective behavioral management tool that could help with behavior issues and consequently improve academic success.

Teacher participants C, D, E, G, H, and J believed PBIS was an essential component

for addressing student disruptions in the classroom. However, teacher participants B and I thought PBIS was good, but not realistic. Whereas, teacher participant A did not consider PBIS framework as an effective behavioral management tool and thought the school district should fully implement concise discipline policies. According to all the teacher participants, the PBIS team only provided 2 hours of training at the beginning of the school year and no additional training or feedback was given throughout the school year. Participant I, who had been at the research study site for only 1 year, reported receiving "an overview of PBIS with no assistance from anyone on implementing PBIS in the classroom." This information was vital to my research study because it showed a foundational background of how the teacher participants perceived ideas about PBIS. Additionally, the information indicated the number of years that each teacher participant had experience with implementing PBIS in the classroom, their attitudes about PBIS, and the number of training sessions and other supportive feedback from the PBIS team.

During the interview sessions, each teacher participant discussed the utilization of the PBIS lesson plans. Teacher participant A did not use the PBIS lesson plan during any portion of the 2016-2017 school year. Teacher participants B, C, D, and I only used the lesson plans at the beginning of the school year. Whereas, teacher participants E, F, G, H, and J used the PBIS lesson plans each week or as needed. However, all teacher participants modeled the behavioral expectations for the students daily. Participants B and C thought modeling and role playing were significant components that linked behavior and achievement. Participant B used mock scenarios that gave students a better understanding of how to respond to issues that may hinder or improve their academic achievement levels.

Teacher participants D, E F, G, H, and J thought modeling had a positive affect because

it provided students with an opportunity to view the correct way to conduct themselves. Teacher participant H believed modeling or role playing could help remove the attention off the behavior and improve student achievement. However, Teacher participants A and I did not believe modeling the PBIS behavioral expectations had any effect on academic achievement. According to teacher participant A, "Data collected indicates that modeling and role playing PBIS expectations do not seem to have had a significant impact on student academic achievement." Role-playing and modeling can provide clear expectations for students. According to teacher participants, role-playing and modeling allowed students to be participants, so they would understand the classroom behavioral management and academic processes. Students who remain focused on learning are least likely to become a distraction in the classroom.

The teacher participants identified classroom behavioral management and academic processes as being key elements in creating an atmosphere of teaching and learning. Each teacher participant stated that the behavioral and academic expectations, rewards system, and consequences were displayed on the wall in the classroom. Each teacher participant used the foundation of the PBIS framework daily; however, the teacher participants have individualized the framework to address the behavioral and academic needs of their students. Teacher participant C stated that "students should be able to view the behavior and academic expectations in order for them to take ownership of what they do. I also use the displays to refer back to them when a student becomes distracted or even when I give incentives for academic growth."

The teacher participants utilized the school's procedural rules as the four main classroom rules which included raise hands to speak, follow direction, keep hands, feet, and

other objects to self, and respect self, peers, and all staff. Participants B, F, and G viewed the PBIS classroom behavioral management strategy as allowing teachers the flexibility to develop rules, consequences, and rewards based on the needs of the students. In Participant D's class, students were rewarded with candy or given a treat from the classroom treasure box if they followed the rules or improved academically. All teacher participants stated that they had clearly defined the classroom behavioral expectations and review student behavioral procedures or responsibilities each day. In addition, each teacher participant conveyed utilizing a daily behavioral and academic chart to record the students' behavior and academic performances. This led to extending the questioning to find out more about the procedures used for notifying parents about their child's daily behavior and academic progress.

Collectively the findings indicated that the teacher participants valued the use of behavioral and academic progress charts as the primary means of tracking students behaviors, as well as their academic growth. The charts were on a 10-point system ranging from 1 to 10 with 10 being great and 1 indicating the student was non-compliant for the day for both behavior and academics. Teacher participant E stated, "I use daily behavior and academic logs to communicate with the parents about behavior in the classroom, hallway, restroom, and during the content area periods. Each student begins the day with 10 points. The points can be deducted throughout the day based on behavioral and academic infractions. The log has student conduct and academic progress to indicate to parents what has occurred with their child throughout the day. For example, the daily log indicates if the child is talking and if the child was on task. So, I use a dual log because if the child is talking, disturbing others, or not on task, it affects the academic performance of the student and possibly the students in the vicinity." In addition to using behavioral and academic progress charts, teacher participants A,

D, F, and G called parents when students exhibited severe or non-compliant behaviors or when there was a decline in academic performance.

After questioning the teacher participants about the behavioral component of the PBIS framework, I began to ask more specific questions on relating the framework to student academic achievement. Significant differences resulted in the teacher participants responses to the impact PBIS has made on student behaviors, student learning, and academic achievement. Teacher participants C, E, F, G, and J believed that the usage of PBIS strategies in the classroom had shown a drastic reduction in student disruptive behavior. Teacher participants A, D, and I conveyed that the PBIS framework had not affected student academic achievement. These teacher participants believed that PBIS did not present appropriate consequences and student test scores did not indicate that PBIS had a positive effect on student achievement.

Teacher participants were asked to give their perception on impact PBIS had made on decreasing student behavior. All teacher participants, except two, were pleased with the impact PBIS had made on the overall student achievement for most students. Teacher participant F revealed, “PBIS has greatly affected student achievement. PBIS has provided a sense of structure for each student which gears them to strive for success. When students follow the expectations of PBIS, they are more focused on being successful academically.” However, teacher participants A and I believed PBIS had no effect on student academic achievement.

Teacher participants A, C, D, and I did not believe that PBIS assisted in improving students’ attitude toward school. They perceived PBIS as an instantaneous plan with no long-term affect. The other teacher participants stated that PBIS had assisted in improving students’

attitude toward school. They believed that because of the opportunities to participate in school activities, rewards that they received, and the positive words and environment made students exhibit positive behavior.

It was a consensus among the teacher participants that student' attitude toward their peers was more positive. The teacher participants said the students learned to respect each other and worked together. Teacher participant G said the students were very cooperative with each other and there was zero bullying in the classroom. However, teacher participant A was the only person to state that the improvement had little impact.

Teacher participants B, C, D, E, F, H, J, and G believed that student academic levels have improved due to the implementation of the PBIS framework. Teacher participant F revealed, "PBIS has greatly affected student achievement. PBIS has provided a sense of structure for each student which gears them to strive for success. When students follow the expectations of PBIS, they are more focused on being successful academically." Teacher participants A and I did not believe there was a significant increase in student achievement, therefore stating PBIS provided no impact on student achievement. The interviews indicated that as student behavioral problems decreased, student academic performances increased.

Similar results were found in how the teacher participants were proactive in addressing student behavioral problems. All teacher participants indicated that they were proactive and had discipline repertoire in place that minimized the need for frequent office referrals. Teacher participants E, G, H, and J utilized PBIS behavioral management strategies before student behaviors could escalate. There were occurrences when students' behaviors intensified to extreme and non-compliant levels. According to all teacher participants, the classroom environment plays a key role in academic achievement. As a result, teacher participant C

stated that changing a students' classroom environment could improve academic achievement because some classrooms were not conducive to the student learning because of noise levels, teacher-student conflict, chaos, and student disturbances. Teacher participant B stated that most students learn better when they are comfortable and feel safe.

The teacher participants discussed their two most common examples of students complying with the PBIS framework. Each teacher participant referred to the way students follow hallway expectations by facing forward and keeping hands to self. Another common example of complying with the PBIS framework was when students followed the classroom rules and behavioral procedures. These types of behavioral incidences create an atmosphere in which learning can take place and leads to academic achievement. The teacher participants also gave descriptions of students not complying with the PBIS framework. A common example of students not complying with the PBIS framework was when students attacked or assaulted others by fighting, pulling chairs from underneath someone, or throwing objects. Another common example expressed by the teacher participants was when students continued to speak out or talk during instruction. These common distractors create an environment which causes valuable time lost for teachers providing instruction and time lost for students learning which affects academic achievement.

The teacher participants were asked to discuss what processes were utilized to keep other students focused on learning when the learning environment was disrupted. Teacher participants A, B, and C told their students to continue working on the task while they addressed the disruptive students. Teacher participants D, F, H, and I told their students to ignore the behavior and stay on task. Teacher participant E stated that "when there are distractions or disruptions in the classroom, I speak with the students in their ear. I do not

embarrass students in front of the class." Teacher participant J indicated limited student disruptions because of the consistent use of the PBIS framework.

The teacher participants were asked if students could be academically successful in a poorly managed classroom. Teacher participants A, C, D, E, F, G, H, and J did not believe students could not be productive in a chaotic classroom environment because distractions limit learning and loss of instruction affects student academic achievement. Teacher participant B stated, "I do believe that students can be successful in a poorly managed classroom. It is not the ideal academic setting for any student, but if instruction is being performed, there will be some students that will be successful." Teacher participant I thought that academically stronger students can be successful in a poorly managed classroom, but it would be hard for any student to focus and be academically successful.

The teacher participants were asked to share their experiences of when students realize their behavior is being tracked, how it relates to their academic achievement level. Teacher participant D expressed that students with frequent behavioral challenges did not mind their behavior being tracked because most of the time, the behavior did not improve, so the academic levels did not improve. Teacher participants A, B, E, H, and J imparted that using daily academic and behavioral charts to communicate with parents for students with frequent behavioral challenges did not seem to positively affect their academic achievement; however, students with minor infractions did show an improvement in academics. Teacher participant G stated, "All of my students know that if I call a parent, the parent will be disappointed and upset when they find out their scholar is not achieving at their highest potential due to behavior.

When asked if PBIS affected student academic achievement, teacher participants A and D did not feel that PBIS has really affected student's academic achievement. Teacher

participant A thought there were many factors that affected student success and teacher participant D thought that the PBIS framework was designed to reward students for displaying appropriate behavior and improving academically. Both teacher participants A and D believed it was difficult to pinpoint if PBIS has any positive affect on student achievement. The remaining teacher participants surmised that PBIS has positively affected student achievement because it provided teachers with the tools, such as behavioral management strategies, needed to create structure, so learning could take place.

The teacher participants were asked what they perceived as the strengths and weaknesses of PBIS as it related to student academic achievement. Teacher participant B thought the strengths of PBIS were "active listening, role playing, and modeling, all of which incorporate current speaking and listening standards of the common core curriculum. Teacher participants E, F, G, and J stated that the PBIS strengths included the implementation of life skills such as procedures, expectations, opportunities for improvement, and consequences. Teacher participant C thought the weakness of the PBIS framework was that it should be "geared more directly towards the academic portion rather than the behavioral portion of it. I think if we can get it aligned more towards academics, I think it would significantly benefit the students, as well as teachers."

After the individual interview session, each teacher participant was asked to provide any additional thoughts about PBIS relating to academic achievement. Teacher participants A and D stated PBIS had not affected student achievement. Teacher participants E and F said PBIS provided a foundation for academic success and can improve student academic achievement. Teacher participant G expressed that the PBIS framework provided the tools needed to create a structured learning environment, so students can achieve more. After each

teacher participant shared final thoughts about PBIS and academic achievement, I thanked the teacher participant for contributing to the research study.

Survey

The purpose of the Qualtrics survey was to provide another aspect from the 10 teacher participants about PBIS and achievement. The survey was given to teacher participants to share their thoughts on the relationship between PBIS and academic achievement, as well as classroom management issues. All teacher participants completed the survey. The survey provided an additional component in determining the teacher participants' satisfaction with PBIS as a behavioral management framework and its relationship to academic achievement. The survey (Appendix D) consisted of 20 items with a 5-point Likert scale to rate the statements from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

The findings indicted that seven of the 10 teacher participants agreed that students with no behavioral problems experienced high rates of success. The teacher participants also agreed that implementing the PBIS framework as a behavioral management intervention strategy allowed more time for instruction. They believed PBIS is an effective classroom behavioral management tool that supports teaching and learning. This finding coincides with the interviews which the teacher participants stated that PBIS was effective in managing student disruptive behaviors, as well as improving student achievement. The teacher participants concurred that most students succeed when PBIS is implemented in the classroom.

Teacher participants agreed implementing PBIS had improved the behavioral climate in the classroom. Yet, the survey results showed six of the 10 teacher participants thought that PBIS was not the most effective and positive approach to address severe problem behaviors. When deciding how PBIS had assisted students with behavioral challenges, seven of the 10

teacher participants agreed PBIS had made an impact with students self-regulating their behavior.

In addition, six of the 10 teacher participants believed PBIS provided teachers with tools to increase student academic achievement. Only seven of the teacher participants thought PBIS provided informative and corrective feedback, promoted prosocial skills, and maximized academic success. When discussing if the teacher participants were dissatisfied with the support given by the PBIS coach or coordinator, only four of the 10 teacher participants were satisfied with support given by the PBIS coach or coordinator.

The teacher participants were satisfied with the PBIS reward system at the research site. It was considered to be a very effective reward system in which eight of the teacher participants indicating they were satisfied. Only two of the teacher participants thought the PBIS reward system was ineffective. In the area of PBIS procedures for severe or non-compliant students, teacher participants had conflicting views. Six of the teacher participants believed the PBIS procedures were in place to address severe and non-compliant students while four of the teacher participants felt there were no PBIS procedures in place to address severe or non-compliant students.

Further analysis of the survey indicated that eight of the teacher participants agreed that PBIS had a positive impact on student behavior and achievement. This was comparable to the finding in the interview sessions. Seven of the teacher participants expressed that PBIS provided the appropriate disciplinary consequences for students displaying negative behavior. However, all teacher participants stated that PBIS did not provide adequate disciplinary consequences for students with severe behavioral challenges.

Finally, teacher participants shared their response to whether PBIS promoted positive

relationship among students. The data showed that six teacher participants agreed, three disagreed, and one provided no opinion. Further review of the survey indicated that eight of the teacher participants taught the PBIS expectations and consequences on a consistent basis while two of the teacher participants revealed they rarely utilized the PBIS framework. The survey results revealed that eight of the teacher participants consistently modeled PBIS expectations for their students and all 10 of the teacher participants used the daily PBIS classroom tracking system to communicate with parents about the students' behavior and academic progress.

Summary

The data analysis results and findings indicate that overall, the teacher participants who volunteered for the study perceived PBIS to be an effective framework that helped to improve or increase student academic achievement when implemented consistently. However, 50% of the teacher participants thought the PBIS framework did not provide effective strategies for addressing students with frequent or severe behavioral challenges. The teacher participants believed many behaviorally challenged students were not affected by PBIS and there was no effect on academic achievement for these students.

The data also indicated that the teacher participants perceived that the PBIS strategies assist students in remaining focused on the teacher. Most of the teacher participants thought PBIS framework suggestion of providing students rewards gave students something to look forward to receiving. The teachers indicated because the students have something to look forward to, they tend to try to comply with the academic and behavioral expectations. However, there were some students who refused to comply, and the teachers felt PBIS did not help non- compliant students. Teacher participants with no opinion did not buy-in to PBIS as being an effective tool to increase student academic achievement. It is also a possibility that

teacher participants with no opinions did not use PBIS as a tool to reduce behavioral disruptions and improve student academic achievement.

In Chapter 4, I discussed the processes of data collection and data analysis. In Chapter 5, I examine the results, provide my interpretation of the results, discuss the results in relation to the literature, study limitations, implication of the results, and recommendations for further research on relating PBIS with academic achievement.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusions

Introduction

Many teachers have conveyed that behavioral management is a serious issue in the classroom and there is a need for an effective behavioral program that can increase the amount of time spent teaching instead of correcting behaviors (Reinke, Stormont, Herman, Wang, Newcomer, and King, 2014). Student disruptive behaviors such as noncompliance and disrespect can impede academic learning and reduce valuable instructional time (Musti-Rao, & Hayden, 2011; Ward, & Gersten, 2013). There are behavioral interventions that may be able to improve behavioral and academic outcomes for all students (Freeman, Simonsen, McCoach, Sugai, Lombardi, & Horner, 2016). Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) is a behavioral modification framework used in many school districts to reduce disruptive student behavioral problems, increase instructional time, and improve student academic achievement (OESP, 2012). The U.S. Department of Education (2014) has endorsed PBIS as a preventive, evidence-based framework to support positive student behaviors, increase the teachers' time for instructional practices, and improve student academic achievement in the classroom.

In this chapter, I provided a summary of the results, discussed the findings, the results as it related to the literature, limitations, implications of the results, recommendations for further research, and the conclusion. Through the analysis of the results from the interviews and survey, I was able to identify elementary teachers' perceptions on how PBIS relate to academic achievement. The participants shared their thoughts and perceptions in a 1:1 interview session, as well as the completion of an online survey. The results of the interview and survey can assist elementary teachers with being able to ascertain if PBIS strategies work to increase academic achievement, if additional PBIS training or support from the PBIS coach

can affect their classroom intricacies, and if their perceptions of PBIS affect how they implement the behavioral management framework in the classroom.

Summary of the Results

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to examine elementary (K-5) teachers' experiences and thoughts on the impact of PBIS as a behavioral management tool that assists in improving academic achievement. Disruptive classroom behaviors can contribute to loss of instructional time which affects student achievement in the classroom environment. Powell, et al., (2011) indicated that student aggression and disruptive behaviors, such as defiance, lying, and verbal abuse or physical attacks against teachers, have the potential to cause serious harm. These student actions can impede and disrupt the learning environment which restricts teachers from educating students. It can potentially affect the overall academic achievement levels of the defiant student and other students who are in the learning environment.

I sought to discover teachers' perceptions of PBIS and whether utilization of PBIS is an effective classroom management strategy tool and its relationship with academic achievement. I examined the teachers' perceived ideas on PBIS relating to student academic achievement. The study participants noted that students with aggressive or challenging behaviors are at risk of academic failure. Several teacher participants shared that student disruptive behaviors hinder the learning process and disturb the classroom environment; therefore, creating a negative environment which affects student academic achievement. According to 80% of the teacher participants, when the learning environment was interrupted due to disruptive behaviors, not only was the student who was being redirected affected, but also the other students in the classroom.

The results of the teacher participants' interviews and surveys indicated many students with no behavioral issues experience a high academic success rate; however, there were a few instances in which some students were not academically successful although they abided by the strategies of the PBIS framework. Only one teacher participant found the PBIS framework lacked in assisting teachers with managing disruptive students in the classroom. The teacher participants utilized the school-wide behavioral management plan in their classroom. The plan provided four basic PBIS behavioral strategies for students to adhere to which included follow directions, raise a hand for permission to move or speak, respect others, and exhibit self-control. The goal of these PBIS basic strategies were to create a disruptive free classroom that would improve student academic achievement. The findings of this study indicated that effective management of student behaviors may increase the chances of student academic successes and limit reactive disruptive behaviors.

Discussion of the Results

Teachers are responsible for managing and instructing students, including students who exhibit disruptive and distracting behaviors. Classroom behavioral management is a critical entity for creating an atmosphere to allow teachers to provide effective instruction and support student academic success. Classrooms that lack an efficient behavioral management plan can affect teachers' performance in providing effective instructional practices and negatively impact student academic performance. The teachers' perceptions about the PBIS framework ranged from great to not effective. Most of the teacher participants in grades 3−5 at the research site found PBIS strategies to not have a positive or effective impact on student behaviors and achievement. Further analysis of these teachers' perceptions showed they either did not buy-in to the concepts of the PBIS framework or did not regularly implement the

strategies. The teacher participants perceived that maintaining the academic structure to be overwhelming and frustrating when trying to manage a classroom with disruptive students. Most of the teacher participants agreed the PBIS framework did not provide effective strategies for students with severe or continuous non-compliant behaviors and did not provide strategies to improve academic achievement for these students. The student disruptions led to time wasted, distracted students, and cessation on learning.

All of the teacher participants believed that having an effective classroom began with focusing on student behavioral interventions to reduce students' arduous behaviors and eliminate the elements that contribute to them. Although some did not consistently implement PBIS framework, all the teacher participants agreed that behavioral methods are needed to reduce the undesirable results of disruptive or distracting behaviors to increase the probabilities of providing effective instructional practices and promoting student academic success. The teacher participants conveyed that having administrative support and continuous coaching of the PBIS framework, especially for teachers with less than five years of experience with PBIS, will assist teachers with having effective behavioral management and lead to improving student achievement. The teacher participants perceived that it is important to have support from administration and the PBIS coach or team. The teachers believed there was a need for the administrators or the PBIS team to provide more ongoing professional development or tips throughout the school year to effectively implement the PBIS framework that would help students succeed academically.

Modeling the student behavioral expectations every day can be very beneficial because by modeling the expectations daily, students can conceptualize and visualize the specific appropriate behaviors for conduct and academic learning. It was also important to

post the expectations for academic and behavioral successes on the wall or somewhere in the classroom for all students to view. Providing students with weekly academic and behavioral contracts to take home for the parents to review was advantageous. This form of communication allowed parents to understand, acknowledge, and respond to how their child performed academically and behaviorally each day. This gave the parents an opportunity to assist in correcting the child's behavior or academic performance and have an opportunity to connect with the teacher about any issues or concerns. Behavioral contracts provide teachers, students, and parents a great means of communicative collaboration. It provided a tracking method and an insight into the students' behavior and academic progress. As a result, teachers and parents can be involved in encouraging student performance.

Some of the teacher participants articulated that because the PBIS framework promoted positive strategies, many of the students reflected the academic and behavioral expectations. Because the teacher participants were instructed to abide by the PBIS framework, each teacher participant had to have a rewards system in place for students who followed the academic and behavioral methods. I think students were looking to receive the rewards as a positive consequence of performing well academically and behaviorally. However, many students who challenged the behavioral plan through distracting or disturbing the classroom environment did not reach their full academic potential. There were some teacher participants who stated that their challenging students were not concerned about the academic and behavioral expectations and rewards system. The teachers commented that the PBIS framework did not address severe student behaviors. Therefore, there should be some strategies in place for severely behaved students because some of the students are academically intelligent, but due to behavior, their academic performance was affected.

Unfortunately, these students have been left out of the constructs of the framework.

Effectively engaging students to PBIS throughout the school year can limit classroom disruptions or distractions. According to 70% of the teacher participants, limiting the classroom interruptions created a learning environment that was conducive to student academic success. Many of the teacher participants experienced that PBIS positively affected student academic achievement because the strategic structure allowed students to focus on academic achievement or strive for academic success. I think this level of student focus can assist teachers in raising student achievement levels and improve student academic achievement because of minimal student interruptions in the learning environment. Only 2 of the 10 participants found that PBIS had no effect on student academic achievement. However, it was noted that these teachers did not consistently implement the strategies. Inconsistency could be the difference in how the students comply with the academic and behavioral expectations. I also think that if the teacher does not constantly comply or buy-in with the implementation of the framework, the students may feel the need to imitate the attitudes of their teacher. Participant A concluded that PBIS was not the most effective system to use for strategies to assist teachers with student behavior and academic achievement. Participants C and H concluded that although PBIS is a great tool for behavioral strategies, the framework needs additional strategies to address academics and non- compliant students.

Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature

Managing a classroom effectively is a key component for teachers to maximize academic achievement and promote a positive classroom climate (Myers, Freeman, Simonsen, & Sugai, 2017). Many teachers have become concerned about the number of inappropriate student behaviors that may have contributed to their students' failure of attaining academic

success. Some students display numerous undesirable outcomes, such as difficulties with achievement and displaying disruptive behavior, when they lack the academic skills needed for learning (Claessens & Dowsett, 2014). Currently, the research site has implemented a classroom management plan to assist teachers with improving the academic achievement levels of their students.

The PBIS framework was implemented at the beginning of the school year to provide all teachers with a classroom management plan to maintain classroom order and improve student achievement. The teacher participants were provided with the lesson plans for implementation; however, they received minimal to zero training after the start of the school year as no formal training was provided by the school. The interviews and surveys provided insights of the teacher participants' perceptions of receiving adequate resources from the PBIS team to support the implementation of the framework. Some of the teacher participants conveyed there was not much support from the PBIS team regarding students with severe behavioral challenges. Therefore, it can create academic issues for all students.

Challenging behaviors often interfere with classroom interactions which can impact learning and academic achievement (Park & Lynch, 2014). The interviews from the teacher participants at the research study site revealed that there seemed to be a lack of effective classroom instructional practices when teachers were unable to redirect the behaviors of the challenging students. This could affect the achievement outcomes for the students. The literature stated that effective instruction does not occur if teachers struggle with managing their classrooms and affects student academic success (Shook, 2012; Myers, Freeman, Simonsen, & Sugai, 2017). I was inspired to learn how the teacher participants perceived the PBIS framework relationship to academic achievement. The results from the survey revealed

that many of the teacher participants agreed there were PBIS strategies which emphasized effective academic instruction that led to some improvement in student academic achievement. I found that when teachers implemented the PBIS framework with fidelity, most of the students complied with the behavioral and academic plan. However, there were no behavioral and academic strategies suggested or imposed for students who refused to comply or had severe behavioral problems. The interviews and surveys also revealed that according to the teacher participants perceived ideas, the PBIS framework does not specifically address the academic component for any student.

Limitations

The study was conducted during the second semester of the school year. Purposeful sampling was used due to a limited number of teachers having at least three years of experience in implementing the PBIS framework. Ten teachers participated in the research study. This study was important because there is limited research on elementary teachers' perceptions on how PBIS relate to academic achievement. The limitations or weaknesses found in the interviews and surveys revealed that there is a need for the PBIS administrative team to provide more training on PBIS to ensure every teacher implements the framework correctly. This includes more coaching and training of the PBIS framework for teachers with less than 3 years of experience.

For PBIS to be effective, there should be a school-wide enforcement and monitoring of teachers. This could be done by implementing a checks and balancing system. In conjunction with a school-wide monitoring system, periodical reviews on the effectiveness of PBIS strategies among teachers should be conducted. Additionally, the PBIS administrative team must ensure that all teachers understand the PBIS framework and how implementation can

positively affect and impact student academic achievement.

Oftentimes, teachers observe their students and issue rewards according to what teachers perceive to be appropriate student behavior. Although classroom teachers have autonomy of their rewards and consequences procedures, this system may not be consistently utilized based on the parameters of the framework. There is a need for a reward system that is consistent throughout the school.

The results were as expected and indicated that most of the teacher participants perceived PBIS to be an effective behavioral management plan that improved student academic achievement, but it does not provide strategies to improve achievement to assist with severely behaved or non-compliant students. With more training, guidance, and assistance from the PBIS team, the participants may have been able to design a plan to improve the achievement levels of non-compliant students.

Implication of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory

I believe the implications of the research study are perceptible in an era in which teachers are held accountable for increasing student academic achievement and limiting student behavioral problems. Teachers can become frustrated when student behavior constantly disrupts the learning environment. There must be behavioral management plans to effectively assist teachers with eliminating student behavioral issues and improve academic performance. Teachers need ongoing professional development training and administrative support to assist teachers with curtailing severe student behavioral problems and increase student academic performance.

In an effort to maintain classroom structure and improve the student academic levels, school leaders or district administration must recognize the importance of providing

teachers with effective behavioral management strategies that meet the needs of all students. Teachers have relayed needing a plan in place for students who exhibit severe behavioral issues. Students displaying disruptive behavior not only impact their achievement levels, but also their peers. When distractions or disruptions impede the learning environment, it affects all students academically (Ward, & Gersten, 2013). The time teachers waste redirecting students is time needed for instructional practices that builds student achievement and academic growth.

Some teacher participants at the research study site did not view PBIS strategies as effective behavioral management resources that assisted in improving student academic achievement. The teacher participants stated they did not embrace the PBIS strategies because there were too many steps to address repetitive and severe behaviors. They discussed that the PBIS framework did not provide supportive strategies for teachers to effectively address student disruptive behaviors. An issue in policy was that although all schools within the district utilize PBIS as the behavioral management plan which supports student achievement, the trainings and implementations may vary. As students transfer within the district, the policy of understanding PBIS for the school may differ from what students are accustomed to or familiar. There was no uniform policy of how to implement or apply the PBIS strategies to improve student academic achievement.

A key component of the implementation of PBIS was for administrators and the members of the PBIS team to provide support and feedback to the teachers. The teacher participants' interviews and surveys revealed the need for more support from administrators and the PBIS team. The teacher participant surveys indicated that most of the teachers implemented the strategies daily, however, they found PBIS not to be the most effective and

positive approach to address students' severe behavioral problems. The teacher participants' interviews showed many believed PBIS increased student academic performance. However, some teacher participants revealed they did not consistently apply the PBIS strategies because they believed PBIS was not effective. According to these teacher participants, the strategies did not have a significant impact on student academic achievement.

There should be consistency among the staff in implementing the strategies and devising a plan that will work to eliminate the distractions and increase student academic achievement. The teachers must utilize the PBIS framework with fidelity and meet regularly to determine if there are adjustments needed. They need to establish consequences to address the students with severe behavioral challenges and how they will improve student academic achievement. The PBIS strategies do not address the students with severe and repetitive behavioral challenges. These students are not receiving the interventions and supports needed to improve their behavior and increase their achievement levels. In order for teachers to see a drastic decline in behavioral problems and an increase in student academic achievement, teachers must be supported through trainings that focus on students with severe behavioral problems. Although some students may continue to be non-compliant, there may be less disruptions and more learning opportunities to improve student academic achievement for all students.

Recommendations for Further Research

This PBIS study indicated that most of the elementary teachers' perceptions on how PBIS relate to academic achievement were positive. According to the surveys, teachers were satisfied with their implementation of the framework. The individual interviews revealed some teacher participants used additional behavioral management plans with the PBIS framework

that helped with student academic achievement. Future researchers should include the number of years it may take to successfully implement the PBIS framework. It may take 3−5 years for the PBIS strategies to effectively impact students. Teacher input on PBIS framework to explore the varying behavior problems that are categorized as severe and mildly severe is vital.

Potential barriers were noted during the interviews where a few teachers expressed their dissatisfaction with the framework and found no indicators that bridged the strategies to academic achievement. It is assumed that improved student behavior will result in improved student academic achievement. However, some educators may conclude from this study that improved student behavior does not mean there will be gains in student academic performance.

This study can provide a guide for future research in determining the effectiveness of PBIS as a behavioral management and academic framework for students with severe behaviors. Teachers should have input in planning strategies that will effectively improve student achievement for all students. Schools need to support teachers by providing PBIS support throughout the school year. Teachers should be allowed to determine which PBIS strategies work best for their class to increase academic achievement. There should be a check and balance system to ensure teachers are consistently implementing the strategies. In addition, there should be more discussions among the faculty to address managing disruptive behavior and increasing student achievement for students with disruptive behaviors.

Conclusion

Teachers may find it exhausting and frustrating trying to manage a classroom that has disruptive students. Classroom teachers benefit from adopting approaches aimed to prevent problem behaviors and increase academic achievement. In addition, providing

teachers with tools that prevent behavioral issues can play a critical role in supporting teachers in managing disruptive behavior in their classrooms. Teachers may be able to increase time for instruction and reduce student behavioral challenges when using behavioral strategies that are focused on managing individual students. The purpose of having an effective classroom management system is to increase student academic achievement while reducing the time spent on redirecting distracting and disruptive student behaviors. Creating positive environments with research-based strategies may reduce disruptive student behaviors, increase instructional time, and improve academic achievement. Approaches aimed at improving school and classroom environments, including reducing the negative effects of disruptive or distracting behaviors, can enhance the chances that effective teaching and learning will occur, both for the students exhibiting problem behaviors and for their classmates (Paxis Institute, 2015).

Despite any limitations of this research study, the results and findings confirmed my theory that PBIS is an effective framework that provides strategies to improve student behaviors and academic achievement. Although two teacher participants did not find PBIS to be effective, it was revealed that these teacher participants did not implement the PBIS strategies with fidelity. The two teacher participants also indicated that because they felt it was not an effective behavioral management approach, they did not utilize it often. However, the eight remaining teacher participants utilized the PBIS framework daily and found it had a direct effect on improving student academic achievement. I agree that the PBIS framework has limited strategies for students who display severe behavioral problems, however the students probably did not exhibit the behavior every day. Perhaps the Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) could identify specific strategies to include in the PBIS framework that will

address students with severe behavioral challenges. Many behaviorally challenged students are able to perform on a cognitive level, but they need support in managing their behavior. In conclusion, I believe if all teacher participants had implemented the PBIS strategies consistently and provided the support from the PBIS Coach or team, it would have yielded better positive academic results for most students because there is a relationship between PBIS and academic achievement.

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Appendix A: Recruitment Letter and Procedures

To: Potential Research Participant

From: Tamalita Funches, Researcher

Subject: Recruitment for a research study

Dear_____,

You are invited to participate in an educational research study. I am Tamalita Funches, a doctoral candidate at Concordia University in the Department of Educational Leadership. It is my hope to gain a better perspective on the methods in which elementary teachers implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to reduce classroom disruptions and improve the learning environment, as well as their perceptions on how Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) relate to academic achievement.

The purpose of the study will be to determine elementary teachers' perceptions of PBIS and whether it is beneficial in reducing classroom disruptions and improving academic achievement. There is no compensation for participating in the study. If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to share your thoughts on the relationship between PBIS and academic learning. You will be asked to participate in a private interview held in the computer laboratory. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes to an hour to conduct. An audio recorder will be present to ensure accuracy of your responses and for the purposes of transcription. You will also be asked to complete a 10-minute online survey to provide your perception on PBIS strategies. The entire process should take approximately one hour of your time. There are no known risks associated with participating in this study. The information

you provide will help me in obtaining how teachers feel about the relationship between PBIS and academic achievement. Your perspectives may help other educators understand how PBIS strategies affect academic achievement. You could benefit from this research as you analyze your classroom management practices based on the way it affects your instructional time and academic achievement.

All information about participants in the study will remain confidential. This information will not be distributed to any other agency. Your responses to both the interview and survey will remain confidential. Please refrain from using your employment email as it could jeopardize the confidentiality of the study. Only **use your personal email** for all correspondences pertaining to this study. Your participation is greatly appreciated, but you are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop the study. If you choose to participate in the study, please send me an email notification **within the next two days** so that we may schedule a time to begin. You may email me at [Researcher email redacted].

Sincerely,

Tamalita Funches

Appendix B: Consent Form for Participation in a Research Study

Research Study Title: Elementary Teachers' Perceptions on How Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Relate to Academic Achievement

Principle Investigator: Tamalita Funches, Doctoral Candidate

Research Institution: Concordia University-Portland

Faculty Advisor: Dr. Mark Jimenez

You are invited to participate in an educational research study.

I am Tamalita Funches, a doctoral candidate at Concordia University in the Department of Educational Leadership. It is my hope to gain a better perspective of the manner in which elementary teachers implement Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) to reduce classroom disruptions and improve the learning environment, as well as their perceptions on how Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) relate to academic achievement.

Purpose: The purpose of the study will be to determine elementary teachers' perceptions of PBIS and whether it is beneficial in reducing classroom disruptions and improving academic achievement. There is no compensation for participating in the study. The enrollment period for this study will be during the 2016−2017 academic school year.

Procedures: If you agree to participate in the study, you will be asked to share your thoughts on the relationship between PBIS and academic learning. You will be asked to participate in a 45- minute to an hour private interview held in the computer laboratory. An audio recorder will be present to ensure accuracy of your responses and for the purposes of transcription. You

will also be asked to complete a 10-minute online survey to provide your perception on PBIS strategies. The entire process should take 45 minutes to 1 hour of your time.

Risks: There are no known risks associated with participating in this study.

Benefits: Information you provide will help me in obtaining your perception about the relationship between PBIS and academic achievement. Your perspectives may help other educators understand how PBIS strategies affect academic achievement. You could benefit from this research as you reflect and analyze your classroom management practices based on the manner in which it affects your instructional time and academic achievement.

Confidentiality: All information about participants in the study will remain confidential. This information will not be distributed to any other agency. Your responses to both the interview and survey will remain confidential and protected at all times. Any information you provide will be coded, so it cannot be linked to you. You will be assigned a pseudonym for this study. When you and I review the data, none of the data will have your name or any identifying information. You will not be identified in any publication or report. The data will be stored in a secure file cabinet in the researcher's home office. Your information will be kept private at all times and all study documents will be destroyed 3 years after the conclusion of this study. The results of the study will be published, but the identity of each participant will remain confidential under the disclosures of the law.

Right to Withdraw: Your participation is greatly appreciated, but the researcher acknowledges that the questions asked could be personal in nature. You may at any point decide to stop participation within the study. You may skip any questions you do not wish to answer. This study is not required and there is no penalty for not participating or completing the study.

Contact Information: You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principle investigator, Tamalita Funches at email [Researcher email redacted]. If you want to talk with a participant advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the Director of the Institutional Review Board, Dr. OraLee Branch (email obranch@cu-portland.edu or call 503-493-6390).

Your Statement of Consent: I have read the above information. I asked questions if I had them, and my questions were answered. I volunteer my consent for this study. By signing below, I am agreeing to the terms and conditions described in the study.

_____	_____
Participant Name	Date
_____	_____
Participant Signature	Date
Tamalita Funches _____	_____
Investigator Name	Date
_____	_____
Investigator Signature	Date

Appendix C: Interview

The purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon associated with elementary school teachers' perceptions and experiences with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and its relationship to academic achievement. I will ask you a series of questions based on your perceptions of PBIS. Your answers will be recorded for research purposes only. All responses will remain confidential. There will be no identifiable attributes connecting your name and responses to this interview. You may withdraw from participation at any time and your responses will not be recorded.

Interview Questions

1. How many years have you been teaching? How many years have you been teaching at this school?
2. How many years have you been using the PBIS framework? What are your feelings about PBIS?
3. How has the PBIS coach or leadership team assisted in implementing and addressing PBIS in the classroom?
4. What procedures are in place for the implementation of a classroom management system?

   Explain your classroom rules, consequences, and rewards system.
5. How have you clearly defined expectations for appropriate behavior? Where are the expectations posted in the classroom?
6. How often do you model behavioral expectations for the students?
7. How often are behavioral procedures and responsibilities reviewed with the students?
8. What are your procedures for notifying parents about their child's daily behavior?

9. In your opinion, what are the strengths of the PBIS framework as it relates to your classroom?
10. In your opinion, what are the weaknesses of the PBIS framework as it relates to your classroom?
11. How often do staff members receive professional development on PBIS?
12. How often do you use the PBIS lesson plans?
13. The PBIS lesson plans consist of modeling and role playing. What affect has modeling and role playing the expectations of PBIS had on student academic achievement?
14. What impact has PBIS made on student behaviors, student learning, and academic achievement?
    a. Has PBIS decreased student behavioral problems? Explain.
    b. Has PBIS assisted in improving students' attitude towards school? Explain.
    c. How has PBIS impacted students' attitude towards peers?
    d. In your experience, how has PBIS affected student achievement throughout the school year? Explain.
15. How proactive are you with handling student behavioral problems? Explain.
16. How do you keep other students focused when there is a distraction or disruption in the classroom?
17. What specific behavioral management strategies assist with managing the classroom?
18. Can students be successful in a poorly managed classroom? Explain.
19. Does changing a student's classroom environment improve academic achievement? If so, how? If not, why? Explain.
20. What are two specific examples of students complying with PBIS interventions?

21. What are two specific examples of students not complying with PBIS? What was your response to the behavior and student consequence or result?
22. What are the PBIS classroom rewards and incentives? How have students responded to these incentives and rewards?
23. When students realize their behavior is being tracked, how does it relate to their academic achievement level (students with frequent behavioral challenges, students with minor behavioral challenges, students with no behavioral challenges)?
24. How do you feel PBIS has affected student achievement? Explain.
25. What are the strengths of the PBIS framework as it relates to student academic achievement?
26. What are the weaknesses of the PBIS framework as it relates to student academic achievement?
27. What additional thoughts or concerns do you have about PBIS?

Appendix D: Computer Based PBIS Participant Survey

The purpose of this study is to investigate the phenomenon associated with elementary school teachers' perceptions and experiences with Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) and its relationship to academic achievement. Please answer the following questions based on your perceptions of PBIS, with answers ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Your answers will be recorded for research purposes only. All responses will remain confidential. There will be no identifiable attributes connecting your name and responses to this survey. You may withdraw from participation at any time and your responses will not be recorded.

Students with no behavioral problems experience high rates of academic success. Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree
The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework assist with managing disruptive behavioral issues in the classroom. Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree
Implementing the PBIS approach as a behavioral management intervention strategy allows more time for instruction. Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree
Implementing PBIS has improved the behavioral climate in the classroom. Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree
PBIS is an effective classroom behavioral management tool that supports teaching and learning. Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree
PBIS emphasizes effective academic instruction that leads to maximum success for all students. Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree
PBIS is the most effective and positive approach to address severe problem behaviors. Strongly Agree Agree Neither Agree nor Disagree Disagree Strongly Disagree

Most students will succeed when PBIS is implemented in schools.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PBIS provides informative and corrective feedbacks, promotes prosocial skills, and maximizes academic success.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am satisfied with the support given by the PBIS coach or coordinator.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am satisfied with the PBIS reward system at my school (parties, treats, dances, external vendors, PBIS store, etc).				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The school has PBIS procedures in place for severe and non-compliant student behavior.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PBIS has had a positive impact on student behavior.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PBIS provides the appropriate disciplinary consequences for students displaying negative behavior.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PBIS has helped to promote positive relationships among students.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I consistently teach PBIS expectations and consequences to my students.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I consistently model PBIS expectations for my students.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PBIS has assisted with students self-regulating their behavior.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The PBIS classroom tracking system is easy and effective (daily behavior charts, verbal and written warnings, parental contact, office referrals etc.).				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
PBIS provides teachers with tools to increase student academic achievement.				
Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree

Appendix E: Approval Letter

October 3, 2016

Dear Ms. Tamalita Funches,

The Research Review Committee for the _____ School District has approved your request to conduct research on the title, *"Elementary Teachers' Perceptions on How Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PRIS) Relate to Academic Achievement."* Please ensure that all information used in research activities pertaining to individuals' identity and facilities remain anonymous.

This letter certifies that your study will be conducted during the 2016-2017 school year and is limited to _____. Before beginning your research at selected site(s), you are required to present a copy of this letter along with your original IRB approval letter to the site's administrator; failure to comply with these requests will automatically nullify your research approval status. If you should need further assistance, do not hesitate to contact our office. Best wishes with your research activities!

Sincerely,

_____,

Director

Appendix F: IRB Approval Letter

DATE:	December 6, 2016
TO:	Tamalita Funches
FROM:	Concordia University - Portland IRB (CU IRB)
PROJECT TITLE:	[927818-1] Elementary Teachers' Perceptions on How Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) Relate to Academic Achievement
REFERENCE #:	EDD-20161004-Jimenez-Funches
SUBMISSION TYPE:	New Project
ACTION:	APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE:	December 6, 2016
EXPIRATION DATE:	November 30, 2017
REVIEW TYPE:	Full Committee Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this project. The Concordia University Portland IRB (CU IRB) has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/ benefit ratio and a project design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

Your project includes research that will be conducted within an institution that is not Concordia University. As such, you need to have that institution's approval to conduct research. You are responsible for contacting and following the procedures and policies of Concordia University and any other institution where you conduct research. You cannot begin recruitment or collection of data within that institution until you receive approval from that institution.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulations.

Attached is a stamped copy of the approved consent form. You must use this stamped consent form.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the project and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the project via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require that each participant receives a copy of the consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this committee prior to initiation. The form needed to request a revision is called a Modification Request Form, which is available at www.cu-portland.edu/IRB/Forms.

All UNANTICIPATED PROBLEMS involving risks to subjects or others (UPIRSOs) and SERIOUS and

UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported promptly to this office. Please email the CU IRB Director directly, at obranch@cu- portland.edu, if you have an unanticipated problem or other such urgent question or report.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to this office.

This project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the appropriate forms for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of November 30, 2017.

You must submit a close-out report at the expiration of your project or upon completion of your project. The Close- out Report Form is available at www.cu-portland.edu/IRB/Forms.

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years after the completion of the project.

If you have any questions, please contact Dr. OraLee Branch at 503-493-6390 or irb@cuportland.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Concordia University - Portland IRB (CU IRB)'s records. December 6, 2016

Appendix G: Survey Results

Survey Statements	Number of Teacher Participants Responses				
	Strongly Agree	**Agree**	**Neither Agree nor Disagree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly Disagree**
1. Students with no behavioral problems experience high rates of academic success.	3	4	3	0	0
2. The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) framework assist with managing disruptive behavioral issues in the classroom.	4	4	1	1	0
3. Implementing the PBIS approach as a behavioral management intervention strategy allows more time for instruction.	3	4	0	3	0
4. Implementing PBIS has improved the behavioral climate in the classroom.	4	2	2	2	0
5. PBIS is an effective classroom behavioral management tool that supports teaching and learning.	4	3	2	1	0
6. PBIS emphasizes effective academic instruction that leads	5	3	1	0	1

to maximum success for all students.					
7. PBIS is the most effective and positive approach to address severe problem behaviors.	1	3	0	4	2
8. Most students will succeed when PBIS is implemented in schools.	5	2	2	1	0
9. PBIS provides informative and corrective feedbacks, promotes prosocial skills, and maximizes academic success.	3	4	1	2	0
10. I am satisfied with the support given by the PBIS coach or coordinator.	4	0	3	1	2
11. I am satisfied with the PBIS reward system at my school (parties, treats, dances, external vendors, PBIS store, etc.).	3	5	0	2	0
12. The school has PBIS procedures in place for severe and non-compliant student behavior.	1	4	0	2	3
13. PBIS has had a positive impact on student behavior.	3	4	1	2	0
14. PBIS provides the appropriate disciplinary consequences for	3	3	0	4	0

students displaying negative behavior.					
15. PBIS has helped to promote positive relationships among students.	3	2	2	3	0
16. I consistently teach PBIS expectations and consequences to my students.	5	3	2	0	0
17. I consistently model PBIS expectations for my students.	5	4	1	0	0
18. PBIS has assisted with students self-regulating their behavior.	3	3	4	0	0
19. The PBIS classroom tracking system is easy and effective (daily behavior charts, verbal and written warnings, parental contact, office referrals etc.).	5	3	1	0	1
20. PBIS provides teachers with tools to increase student academic achievement.	3	3	1	2	1

Appendix H: Codes

- How do teachers perceive Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) as a behavioral management tool that assists in improving academic achievement?

Open Codes	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
Effective and positive approach Attainable goals Effective Management Disruptions Common practice Non-compliant behavior Self-regulating Teacher and student regularities Maximizes academic instruction Academic success Behavioral management Appropriate discipline consequences Tracking system Reward system Academic and behavioral chart Academic success Tools to increase achievement Attitudes and lack of motivation	Effective instruction that will engage challenging students Using PBIS will assist teachers with setting behavioral management goals that will positively affect student growth Regular occurring disruptive behaviors Communication with administration and parents about behavior and academic levels Student Accountability (behavior and academics) PBIS team, administrative, and teacher support/training for teachers managing students with challenging behaviors and improving achievement levels for all students when disruptions occur More strategies are needed to assist teachers with raising the academic achievement levels for challenging students	The PBIS framework provides teachers with classroom management practices to improve student academic achievement by reducing classroom disruptions.

Resources Behavioral Patterns Academic Achievement Teaching and Learning Student Resistance	Motivating non-compliant students to improve behavior and achievement	

Appendix I: Statement of Original Work

I attest that:

1. I have read, understood, and complied with all aspects of the Concordia University-Portland Academic Integrity Policy during the development and writing of this dissertation.
2. Where information and/or materials from outside sources has been used in the production of this dissertation, all information and/or materials from outside sources has been properly referenced and all permissions required for use of the information and/or materials have been obtained, in accordance with research standards outlined in the *Publication Manual of The American Psychological Association*

Tamalita Samara Funches
Digital Signature

Tamalita Samara Funches
Name (Typed)

November 27, 2017
Date