Exploring Teachers' Perspectives of the PBIS Program in Fourth and Fifth Grade Classrooms

Norma Ferguson
Concordia University - Portland, sweetestsongbird@gmail.com

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Norma Ferguson
Concordia University - Portland

Concordia University–Portland

College of Education

Doctorate of Education Program

WE, THE UNDERSIGNED MEMBERS OF THE DISSERTATION COMMITTEE

CERTIFY THAT WE HAVE READ AND APPROVE THE DISSERTATION OF

Norma Elaine Ferguson

CANDIDATE FOR THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF EDUCATION

Edward Kim, Ph.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Aaron Deris, Ph.D., Content Specialist

John D'Aguanno, Ed.D., Content Reader

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Norma Elaine Ferguson

Concordia University–Portland

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Edward Kim, Ph.D., Faculty Chair Dissertation Committee

Aaron Deris, Ph.D., Content Specialist

John D'Aguanno, Ed.D., Content Reader

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Abstract

The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program is an evidenced-based framework with over 20 years of research and 25 years in addressing student misbehavior in U.S. public schools. The program utilizes a systems-based approach where schools can proactively document data in helping to make decisions toward promoting positive student behavior. As the need for effective resources for classroom behavioral management increases, teachers need support to ensure there is an alternative recourse that can be employed to assist with managing student behavior. The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. The primary research question that guided this study was: What are teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms? The data collection instruments from 10 teacher participants were initial semistructured interviews, secondary semistructured interviews, and documents (artifacts). The inductive analysis model was used to analyze the collected data from the initial and secondary semistructured interviews. Typological analysis was used to analyze the documents collected in the study. The key findings revealed that teacher participants experienced limited, inconsistent, or no teacher training in the PBIS approach. The teacher participants understood the importance of using the PBIS approach or other educational resources to teach positive student behavior and to assist them in learning pedagogical approaches in behavior management.

Keywords: teachers' perspectives, social interactions, positive behavioral interactions, classroom environment, behavioral classroom management, teacher efficacy

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all educators who believe that it is important to have a

well-structured behavioral classroom environment in order for students to receive new learning.

Behavioral classroom management is more than a skill. It is an art form that only a few master.

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v

Table of Contents

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction

Scholarly research on behavioral classroom management has been conducted since the 1960s and 1970s. Positive and negative strategies are used to establish a comfortable workspace for teachers in the classroom for productive ongoing student learning (Egeberg, McConney, & Price, 2016; PBIS, 2017; Rusk, 2016). Researchers and educators believe that classrooms should provide a welcoming environment where student learning is an engaging and ongoing process in a social and academic environment (Collins & Ryan, 2016; PBIS, 2017). The Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports ([PBIS], PBIS, 2017) approach originated in the U.S. school system during the 1990s to help address behavioral classroom concerns. The PBIS approach has experienced phenomenal growth over a span of 25 years in addressing student behavior in U.S. public schools (PBIS, 2017). The program has helped to improve school-wide behavioral issues at the K–12 grade levels and has been effective in accomplishing academic and social goals (Lane, Carter, Jenkins, Dwiggins, & Germer, 2015; PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 2002).

The PBIS program is now an integral component of public education and applied in many state schools (Noltemeyer, Petrasek, Stine, Palmer, Meehan, & Jordan, 2018). States have recognized many exemplar schools that have implemented PBIS with fidelity and have been successful (Noltemeyer et al., 2018). This study explores teachers' perspectives regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms.

Research on behavioral classroom management has been conducted to help teachers establish and maintain a positive environment for effective student learning (Collins & Ryan, 2016; PBIS, 2017; Rusk, 2016). A positive classroom environment is the goal many teachers strive to accomplish daily in their classrooms. However, this goal is not achieved in many classrooms. Unfortunately, there are times when student behavioral issues tend to arise in the classroom creating teacher concerns (Baker, Gentry, & Larmer, 2016; McDaniel, Kim, & Guyotte, 2017).

Some discomforts may be overcrowded classrooms, student talk back, and/or student-student rivalry (Shin & Ryan, 2017; Tyler, Burris, & Coleman, 2018). However, there are teachers who have created a positive classroom environment (Davis, 2017). Research explains why some educators find managing student behavior challenging while others do not (Abenavoli, Harris, Katz, Jennings, & Greenberg, 2014; Bailey, 2011; Dwyer, 2013).

Before a positive classroom environment can be created, it is important for teachers to first reflect on who they are and the attitude they bring into the classroom climate (Fallon, O'Keeffe, Gage, & Sugai, 2015). The mitigating factor is that classroom management is an area requiring teachers to have the mindset of wanting to create a positive classroom climate. A teachers' attitude towards the students in the classroom can help to determine the type of classroom environment that will be laid out or created from the first day of school (Fallon et al., 2015; Yasar, 2019).

Classroom disruptions can pose a daunting task for teachers. Therefore, classroom disruptions must be minimized in order to establish and maximize learning and a positive climate. Each day teachers display effective classroom management skills through instructional teaching and learning in the classroom environment regardless of how challenging it can be. How management is structured in the classroom is therefore essential. According to McDaniel et al., (2017), it is often a challenge for teachers to engage students in learning because of how management is structured and executed in the classroom (McDaniel et al., 2017). When behavioral classroom management is structured and executed effectively, teachers can use proactive strategies to de-escalate negative classroom dynamics and restrict unwanted student misbehaviors such as student back-talk, bullying, or student-to-student arguments in order to build and sustain a positive classroom climate (Banks, 2014).

Access to support from school administration, especially for first year teachers, can significantly help teachers maintain a positive attitude toward classroom management impacting

student behavior (Baker et al., 2016; McDaniel et al., 2017). Unfortunately, receiving adequate in-class support such as paraprofessionals who can assist with student behavior, is often limited based on school funding (Opoczynski, 2016). In addition, administrators tend to assume or conclude that teachers are able to manage student behavior while implementing the curriculum. As a result, teachers fend for themselves in a stressful classroom environment hoping for the best as it relates to managing student misbehavior (Fallon et al., 2015; Friedman, 2006; Karaj & Rapti, 2013).

Finally, professional development (PD) or training on managing student behavior is paramount in any school-wide system. Once training has been given, follow-up sessions with teachers who attended the PD sessions are encouraged to manage student behavior in order to determine the effectiveness of the training and to ascertain if additional assistance in the classroom might be needed (Abenavoli et al., 2014; Baker et al., 2016; Dwyer, 2013). Information gathered from the teachers to determine their perspectives about the discipline strategies presented will help to determine if teachers benefitted from the PD sessions and whether further training is needed. This study gave teachers the opportunity to share their perspectives about the PBIS approach and its effectiveness or lack thereof. Although research-based intervention classroom management strategies are available, many public school teachers continue to struggle to keep a well-structured classroom environment for learning (McDaniel et al., 2017; PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 2002).

Background, Context, History, and Conceptual Framework of the Problem

Background, Context, and History

Horner, Sugai, and Anderson (2010), PBIS (2017), and Sugai and Horner (2002) suggest that establishing a positive behavioral classroom environment for productive student learning has been researched. A positive classroom environment is defined as a healthy learning environment that is created by teachers in the classroom where students can communicate, learn, and achieve their academic goals (Patel, 2018). In this type of environment, the teacher's skills, personalities,

and educational abilities can create a safe space where students are valued, high expectations are encouraged, student behavior is established, and there is a positive teacher-student relation (Banks, 2014; Davis, 2017; Freeman et al., 2016; Hansen, 2014; Houchens et al., 2017).

Dwyer (2013) concluded that classroom climate initiatives can relate to and influence student learning. However, according to Berg and Aber (2015), Social and Character Development (SACD) programs did not directly improve academic outcomes, but instead show that intervention efforts can boost student social engagement through strong school climate leadership. The understanding from the conclusion of their research study is that having a strategic organizational plan that is attentive to students' individual experiences can also have a positive impact in the classroom (Berg & Aber, 2015). Therefore, discovering teacher perspectives on how a positive classroom climate is established using the PBIS approach can help provide a better understanding about how student behavior is managed and redirected toward the benefit of students' success. According to Dwyer (2013), having a positive classroom environment is the goal of many educators. Many of them endeavor to create and sustain a healthy climate for the benefit of academic achievement (Dwyer, 2013).

PBIS is a research-based approach that has a preventative framework to assist in establishing a positive school-wide climate (Bradshaw, Pas, Debnam, & Lindstrom, 2015; Simonsen, & Myers, 2015). This approach has helped to improve school-wide behavioral issues and has been effective in accomplishing academic and social goals (Collins & Ryan, 2016; PBIS, 2017; Sailor & Dunlap, 2010). In the United States, the PBIS framework has been implemented in over 1,800 schools (Swain-Bradway, Swoszowski, Boden, & Sprague, 2013).

A significant strategy of the PBIS approach is prevention. The school-wide system for student success is divided into two systems—academic systems (proactive, individualizing, high efficacy, etc.) and behavioral systems (preventative, small group intervention, procedures (Swain-

Bradway et al., 2013). This framework has tiered levels (Tiers I, II, and III) to assist with student behavior on different levels of severity. The Tier III level focuses on the individual at risk students (Horner et al., 2010; PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 2002). The multi-tiered behavioral support system is for all students. Even though most students follow school-wide expectations, not all of them are recognized for following the rules and expectations of the school system (Horner et al., 2010; McIntosh & Turri, 2014). Schools that have adopted the PBIS approach reward all students for their efforts, and see unacceptable behavior as an opportunity for re-teaching concepts and explaining consequences (Flannery et al., 2014; PBIS, 2017).

Schools that have used the PBIS program with fidelity have established positive behavioral school-wide ecosystems using data from their schools' annual behavior referral reports to restructure student behavioral management when necessary (Flannery, Fenning, Kato, & McIntosh, 2014; McIntosh & Turri, 2014). Referral report forms are written by teachers and staff members to provide data on student behavior that are submitted to the principal or administrator for analysis and school documentation. Student referral reports written-up by staff about student misbehavior have decreased in the more than 13,000 schools in the U.S. that use the PBIS program with fidelity (Flannery et al., 2014; McIntosh & Turri, 2014).

This study focused on a school district currently using the PBIS program to assist with managing student behavior. The school district is located in Virginia and is identified as HES to protect participant privacy. Adults in the district are typically in their mid-30s. Most of the population speaks English. Less than 15% of the general education classroom teachers in the district are in their first or second year of teaching.

Conceptual Framework: Constructivism

The conceptual framework is an argument that reflects the researcher's views about why the topic of interest was studied. Ravitch and Riggin (2017) stated, "a conceptual framework is an

argument about why the topic one wishes to study matters, and why the means proposed to study it are appropriate and rigorous" (p. 4). Behavioral classroom management in U.S. elementary schools is a topic of interest due to the pressing concerns about student behavior in the classroom setting impacting teacher efficacy and the overall environment (Stanton-Chapman, Walker, Voorhees, & Snell, 2016).

Constructivism is the conceptual framework that was utilized for this study. The constructivist theory comes from the fields of sociology and education and it postulates that knowledge is constructed based on personal environmental experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018; Dev, 2016; Stake, 1995). The theory posits that learning is a contextualized process where learners can construct knowledge and build on an understanding of the world around them based on their own interactions and lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018). Furthermore, all learners have a learning style that best suits their ability to construct new knowledge. By the way of this theory, this contextualized process of learning is tantamount to teaching and learning behavioral classroom strategies. Teachers and students can incorporate rules and classroom expectations to create and maintain a positive classroom environment for learning.

Teachers can employ the constructivist theory by combining preexisting knowledge with new knowledge toward behavior management strategies to promote a structured environment for learning (Stake, 1995). The PBIS approach is a behavioral management resource that supports the improvement of academic and social outcomes for learners (Horner & Sugai, 2015). When PBIS is understood and applied effectively, learners can construct new knowledge from their interpretation and belief of what is expected in the classroom setting. This approach can provide opportunities for active teaching and learning based on new knowledge that is constructed by teachers to improve student behavior (Stake, 1995). According to Piaget (1952), learners combine sensory experiences with existing knowledge in order to construct new knowledge for learning.

18

Furthermore, Stake (1995) indicates that learners construct knowledge through sensory experiences from external stimuli which provides interpretation and understanding. PBIS has external and intrinsic motives that can be combined with sensory experiences to correct student misbehavior. Children and adults can construct meaning from their understanding of life experiences based on what they interpret and believe in their world. Therefore, new knowledge can be acquired by learners through the combination of factual information, acquired skills from life experiences, and active engagement in centered learning (Piaget, 1952).

Teachers' beliefs or stance about the PBIS approach may limit their ability to maximize the benefits of the program. Those who choose not to implement the program with fidelity may stymie positive student outcomes. Constructivist theory suggests that if teachers actively use their new knowledge about behavior management via PBIS to adjust the ways they manage their classroom, then significant behavioral intervention progress can take place.

The PBIS approach may also be used by teachers to construct new knowledge for controlling student misbehavior. When applying the PBIS behavioral principles, it is possible that some teachers may continue to have a daunting task working with students who have significant behavioral challenges. However, teacher self-evaluation is an important tool along with active learning to construct new knowledge from classroom experiences to address the aforementioned challenges. This new knowledge can be used to construct a positive behavior model that may encourage and facilitate positive student conduct.

Constructivism can allow teacher-participants to utilize their own knowledge and then share distinct experiences of the effectiveness the PBIS approach has on student conduct. Teachers work in social settings, and each classroom environment has its unique culture. This uniqueness is due to the unique classroom relations between teacher and student personalities as well as the school's culture. Constructivism will focus on the school environment where teachers receive

19

knowledge, interpret student behavior, and expand their learning. This study will explore elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences using the PBIS approach to teach positive student behavior in fourth and fifth grade classrooms in an urban school district.

Statement of the Problem

The problem at HES[1], specifically, was not knowing what new understanding of classroom management was adopted by the teachers based on preexisting knowledge, professional training, and classroom implementation regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Currently, the PBIS approach has been implemented into the HES system to address the problem of student misbehavior, but there was limited knowledge about teachers' perspectives regarding its effectiveness in elementary classrooms. Student misbehavior is a concern that has impacted engaged learning in the classroom setting. When learning is impacted negatively, academic goals in the classroom can be challenging to reach. This research topic was selected because establishing a positive behavioral classroom environment for engaged learning is a task many teachers find challenging (Baker et al., 2016; Garrett, 2014; McDaniel et al., 2017; Simonsen & Myers, 2015). Although research-based intervention strategies are available for teachers to use in the classroom setting, it was not clear why HES teachers continue to face challenges with student behavior.

Researched-based intervention methods are available to assist with behavioral classroom management concerns, yet elementary teachers continue to experience challenges in creating a positive environment for learning in the classroom setting (Baker et al.,2016; PBIS, 2017). Such discomfort in the work environment brings about stress, teacher burnout, and lack of engaged learning (Karaj & Rapti, 2013). Teachers are expected to facilitate instruction in the classroom setting to accomplish engaged learning. However, there are times when engaged student learning does not take place because of how behavioral classroom management is structured (PBIS, 2017;

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[1] Pseudonym of school district to protect confidentiality

20

Simonsen & Myers, 2015). The PBIS framework was developed to reduce or eliminate poor student behavior and create a positive school climate (Houchens et al., 2017; PBIS, 2017; Spencer, 2015; Sugai et al., 2012). Research on the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade elementary classrooms based on teachers' perspectives was explored.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to explore HES elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences of the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. There was a desire to do research on the PBIS approach on behavior management to understand teachers' management style(s) toward student behavior. A qualitative instrumental case study design was used to gain insight into this topic. An instrumental case study is the study of a case to provide insight from a person or a specific group into a phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The data collection tools included digital recordings from semistructured one-on-one teacher interviews, follow-up semistructured interviews (member checking interviews), and analysis of artifacts (participants' journals) as the primary means of data collection. The research secured 10 teacher participants from fourth and fifth grade classes. It was important to have multiple perspectives using the PBIS approach so as to receive diverse views and develop a theme in the qualitative report (Creswell, 2013).

Behavioral classroom management and its impact on the classroom environment for effective student learning is a topic where researchers have shared their views (Baker et al., 2016; Simonsen & Myers, 2015). The benefit of this research will assist educational administrators in making informed decisions about the PBIS program when used with fourth and fifth grade students within the school district. Similarly, administrators, teachers, and students can also benefit from the research study. This qualitative case study explored the following research question about behavioral classroom management using the PBIS approach.

21

Research Question

The primary research question that guided this study on the exploration of teacher's perspectives about the PBIS approach was: What are teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms?

Rationale, Relevance, and Significance of the Study

The PBIS approach is a behavioral program that was developed to help address classroom behavioral concerns as well as to help improve school-wide behavioral issues (Sailor & Dunlap, 2010; Sailor, Dunlap, Sugai, Horner, 2009). According to research, implementation of the PBIS approach in addressing student behavior in public schools is favorable with educators in numerous states in the U.S. (Noltemeyer et al., 2018). The PBIS program has addressed difficult behavioral issues by improving the behavior of children with the most challenging behaviors (PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 2002). In this study, elementary teachers at HES had the opportunity to express their perspectives on PBIS practices in their classrooms.

Rationale

Providing teachers with the opportunity to share their viewpoints about using the PBIS approach to assist in managing student behavior in the classroom supports the desire for continued improvement in student conduct. Shared viewpoints can be incorporated into best practices for continued training in classroom behavior management. Student behavior can impact student learning negatively overall causing teachers to experience stress and teacher burnout in the classroom setting (Karaj & Rapti, 2013). Therefore, student misbehavior was a topic that was addressed because it impacts student performance.

Academic student performance is important to a school system because it serves as a gauge to determine how to address deficiencies (Egeberg et al., 2016; Rusk, 2016). Academic success helps determine whether there is a need for certain professional development sessions. Academic

achievement helps to maintain passing scores for state standardized tests and to encourage teachers

to remain in the teaching profession (Egeberg et al., 2016).

Relevance

This study will benefit many stakeholders such as paraprofessionals, educators,

administrators, students, and parents who are a part of the school community. When teachers share

their perspectives about a behavior reform strategy moving students towards exhibiting positive

behavior, teachers' feedback is necessary for continued progress (Frey, Lingo, & Nelson, 2008;

PBIS, 2017). HES teachers' perspectives about the PBIS approach in their classrooms will provide

findings which can be a basis for staff development practices at HES and more broadly in U.S.

public schools.

Significance

Previous researchers have not explored elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences

of the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. In this study, teachers' perspectives and

experiences were explored (Creswell, 2013). The results of the PBIS program have been successful

in many public schools. However, there are limited resources on this topic based on the population

and site of this study. The significance of this qualitative research study was to provide HES

teachers the opportunity to share their perspectives regarding the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth

grade classrooms. This topic had not been researched based on the population and site for the

study. The authentic exploration of new knowledge shared will provide educators with best

practices for managing student misbehavior effectively.

The PBIS approach assists with managing student behavior to achieve engaged learning.

As a behavior management classroom best practice, according to Kohn (2004, 2018), students

must understand the reasoning behind praise and rewards for effective student behavior, if not,

they may not show good conduct. This research contributed to the literature about strategies that

can guide informed decisions about how best to address school-wide topics on PBIS behavioral

practices in fourth and fifth grade elementary classrooms. In this study, elementary teachers at

HES had the opportunity to express their perspectives on PBIS practices in their classrooms and

expand the stakeholders' understanding of the teachers' experiences using this program.

Definition of Terms

The following phrases are defined terms used in this study. The terms are defined for all

readers to have a shared understanding of their meaning. The terms include:

Behavioral classroom management. More than managing student behavior, behavioral

classroom management is creating a positive learning classroom environment where students

establish self-discipline through character development (Davis, 2017; PBIS, 2017).

Classroom climate. A healthy learning environment that is created by teachers in the

classroom where students can communicate, learn, and achieve their academic goals (Patel, 2018).

In this study, classroom climate will also be referred to as either one of the following terms:

ecosystem, environment, and space.

Classroom culture. Emphasis is placed on positive classroom climate where teachers use

student support and classroom community to address matters or concerns (Davis, 2017).

Classroom management. Controlling the environment so that educational activities can

take place and students excel in a positive classroom environment (PBIS, 2017).

Constructivism. Constructivism indicates that learning is based on experiences from the

learner and guided in thought to develop new understanding (Stake, 1995).

Educators. In this study, educators are superintendent, central office administrators,

principals, assistant principals, teachers, and paraprofessionals (Sharp, 2014).

Fidelity. The implementation of an intervention program (PBIS) according to its precision

(PBIS, 2017).

HES. The school district in this study. To preserve confidentiality of the school, the acronym HES will be used to represent the school district in this study. The source for the online data provided from the district will be sited as 'HES, 2018.'

Knowledge. Information that is presented verbally, by text, or dramatized to a person in order to create understanding which is applied and validated through life experiences.

Management technique. A method used to achieve acceptable classroom behavior based on planned expectations in a positive learning environment (Davis, 2017)

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). An intervention program that addresses classroom behavioral concerns as well as school-wide behavioral issues (PBIS, 2017; Sailor & Dunlap, 2010; Sailor et al., 2009).

Positive learning environment. A safe and caring place where teachers and students have a working relationship while building a culture and community of learners (Davis, 2017).

Teachers' perspectives. A teachers' mindset of their own narrative of what is thought of and/or felt when dealing with behavioral classroom management experiences (Golombek & Johnson, 2017).

Assumptions, Delimitations, and Limitations

In this study, there were underlying aspects that were identified by me such as assumptions, delimitations, and limitations (Creswell, 2013). This section explored areas of possible weakness within the study. An assumption is a premise that I assume are true in the study without proof (Ellis & Levy, 2010). The limitations are indisputable truths which does not have any control over but must identify and report (Ellis & Levy, 2010). Finally, the delimitation deals with acknowledging the threat or risk of generalizing the results of the study (Ellis & Levy, 2010). These factors were identified in this study.

Assumptions

The elementary teacher participants were viewed as professional experts who provided information in their field of education. Their perspectives of the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade was seen as credible from life experiences and training at this educational level. I assumed that the teachers were honest because names will not be used in the study, and confidentiality was thereby assured. I also assumed that the teachers shared candidly their perspectives about the PBIS program in their school. The confidentiality created an atmosphere where the teachers answered questions without fear of repercussion for answers expressed.

I assumed that the responses given by the teacher participants during structured one-on-one interviews and follow-up interviews are PBIS management practices used in fourth and/or fifth grade classrooms. During the interviews, the participants focused on their personal challenges and successes using the PBIS approach. Other behavior management strategies are mentioned.

I assumed that all the teacher participants understood the interview questions as they were intended so that the data is valid. I allowed the interviewee to review the questions prior to beginning the interview session. After each question was asked by the interviewer, the teacher was given an opportunity to indicate if clarity was needed. If so, the question was clarified. Probing was also used to assist with clarifying teacher responses so as to establish a common understanding or theme in the study.

It was assumed that the teacher participants had a clear understanding of the PBIS program and were implementing it in their fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Each interviewee was provided with a hard copy of PBIS practices and protocol to assist with clarifying information about the program.

The information gathered from the case study provided a wealth of knowledge to the school district about how student behavior can be managed in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. It was assumed that the data would encourage educators to look at their strengths and weaknesses in

how they manage student behavior using the PBIS approach within the organization and it is hoped that would be made as it becomes necessary. As a result, the findings will help to assist and train teachers and staff members on how best to move forward in managing student behavior. This can be done during the continued annual professional development of the PBIS approach within the school district.

Delimitations

A delimitation of this study was that there was no discussion with the fourth and fifth grade teachers pertaining to the PBIS program prior the interviews. Terms associated with the PBIS program and its practices were provided through insightful description of behavior management used during the case study. Each participant had an opportunity to explain how he or she perceived their respective behavior management style worked in the classroom environment.

Another delimitation had to do with focusing on one school district in Virginia for the study. This type of setting provided an area for gathering data from elementary teachers about their personal views of the PBIS approach in the fourth and fifth grade classroom settings. I presumed that the teachers believed this study was done simply because of teacher concern pertaining to the PBIS student behavior referrals and how discipline was being handled within the district.

The district site and the samples were also selected as delimiters. The site was selected based on the demographics of the population. The number of participants were identified and chosen through purposeful sampling having had exposure to the PBIS program. This study provided a comprehensive view of the perspectives and experiences the elementary teachers faced teaching the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. The findings may not be transferable to other populations and states.

Limitations

A limitation to this study was that teachers may volunteer for the study yet have limited time to discuss or answer interview questions with clarity. Human fallibility is often a factor when collecting data for a qualitative case study (Yin, 2018). Therefore, because of time constraints, it was important for me to schedule time that was convenient for all teacher participants to ensure there was time for participants to elaborate and clarify responses.

The teacher participants were from the same school district. All participants had professional development about the PBIS program over the past three years. In addition, the 10 teacher participants, who were a part of this study, provided data about this topic that was limited based on their experiences with fourth and fifth grade students.

The information in this study was reflective of only the teacher participants in two elementary schools, not other fourth and fifth grade teachers in the school district. The sample size of 10 affords reasonable qualitative research saturation and was adequate to be represented in literature (Creswell, 2013). This number provided themes and analysis for the case study.

Summary

The dissertation proposal focused on the first three chapters of the complete dissertation. Chapter 1 provided information on the problem to be studied, the significance of the problem, and the conceptual framework with defining terms that was used in the study. In this instrumental qualitative case study research design, I explored elementary teachers' perspectives of the PBIS approach and experiences of the challenges and successes using the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. The rationale for this study was grounded in the reality that there are general concerns in public schools about how best to manage student behavior. Such discomfort in the work environment can bring about stress, teacher burnout, and lack of engaged student learning (Karaj & Rapti, 2013).

The PBIS (PBIS, 2017) approach is an intervention program that aims to address classroom behavioral concerns and guide school-wide behavioral issues improvement. It has been effective in accomplishing academic and social goals (Sailor & Dunlap, 2010; Sailor et al., 2009; PBIS, 2017). The PBIS program continues to grow within schools in the U.S. on the K–12 educational levels. I explored and gathered information from elementary teachers in fourth and fifth grades using the PBIS program through structured one-on-one teacher interviews, follow-up interviews, and analysis documents (artifacts). I interviewed the teacher participants so as to better understand their challenges and successes using the PBIS approach as a means to addresses classroom behavioral concerns.

A literature review in Chapter 2 provides an overview of literature regarding the PBIS program, methodological issues, and the critique of previous research. The researcher provides research studies about the PBIS program and its impact on public education as it relates to student behavior. Creating a positive learning environment for engaged learning will help students excel in and outside the classroom setting (Davis, 2018; PBIS, 2017).

A literature review of behavioral classroom management practices used by elementary classroom teachers to create a positive environment was also addressed in Chapter 2. This chapter provides proof of relevant literature search on the topic that has been analyzed and synthesized. In Chapter 3, the justification for the qualitative case study design is discussed. It focuses on the methodology or the qualitative research design that was used to explain how the study conducted in order to gather data. Chapter 4 presents the results of the study from the collected data. This chapter also provides new knowledge for scholarly documentation as well as to answer the research questions that culminate the study. Chapter 5 discusses and explores further knowledge found from the study and possible suggestions for continued study on the topic. In light of the

opportunity teachers were given to share their perspectives about the PBIS behavioral management

program, knowledge about this research-based intervention program was extended.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The purpose of the study was to explore teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms as it related to the disposition of student learning in the HES district. This literature review provides educational research about the PBIS program in U.S. schools and its effectiveness on student conduct. Behavioral classroom management is a topic that resonates with many educators (Rusk, 2016). The PBIS program provides action steps through a multi-tiered behavioral support system to help teachers address behavioral concerns in the classroom environment (Fallon et al., 2015). Behavioral classroom management in U.S. elementary schools is a topic of interest because there is a pressing concern of issues that arise in the classroom setting impacting the overall classroom environment and teacher efficacy due to student behavior (Stanton-Chapman et al., 2016).

For this literature review, research was collected through online database, including ERIC (ProQuest) and Education Database (ProQuest). The key search terms used included *teachers' perspectives, social interactions, positive behavioral interactions, classroom environment, behavioral classroom management,* and *teacher efficacy*. Exploration of these terms provided research information pertaining to public elementary school teachers who have interests with how best to establish effective classroom behavioral management (Baker et al., 2016; Simonsen & Myers, 2015). Through analyzing and synthesizing research articles, reports, books, and other documents, it became apparent that very little research is available about teachers' perspectives using the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grades even though the approach is employed in elementary school districts as well as in health institutions across the U.S. (Hansen, 2014; Reynolds, Grados, & Praglowski, 2018). Chapter 2 contains six sections: (a) conceptual framework, (b) review of research literature and methodological literature, (c) review of

methodological issues, (d) synthesis of research findings, (e) critique of previous research, and (f) Chapter 2 summary.

Conceptual Framework: Constructivism

Constructivism is a worldview theory, which indicates that learning is based on guided learner experiences that lead to the development of new understanding (Stake, 1995). Constructivism is not clearly defined (Powell & Kalina, 2009). This theory proposes that knowledge is subjective, and humans develop their perspectives or opinions on a topic based on personal perspectives and experiences that synthesize meaning. As a result, insights given can allow one to draw conclusions and agree about what is truth (Hatch, 2002). Therefore, constructivism can be structured according to the assumptions, expectations, beliefs, and theories that support the research of student behavior in elementary schools (Ravitch & Riggan, 2017). This study was grounded on the concepts of constructivism which suggests that cognition is a construct of human knowledge or perspectives based on real world experiences.

There are two different constructivist perspectives, social constructivism, and cognitive constructivism, however, both perspectives focus on constructivist learning in the classroom environment (Powell & Kalina, 2009). This case study incorporated the cognitive constructivist perspectives of Jean Piaget (Illeris, 2018; Powell & Kalina, 2009) and Bruner (1990), and also included the social constructivist perspective of Lev Vygotsky (1978) as discussed later in this study.

Piaget's approach on constructivism focuses on cognitive development where humans can construct their own knowledge while learning or experiencing the world around them (Powell & Kalina, 2009). Bruner's (1990) role of structure in learning also emphasizes the cognitive learning theory, which is similar to Piaget. Vygotsky's approach on constructivism approach is understood through the sociocultural learning theory that purports learning takes place through social

interaction (Palincsar, 1998);human cognitive development occurs with the guidance of others (Powell & Kalina, 2009). For example, in a social setting, knowledge ensues through interaction with other individuals in the community, at work, or where they live (Stake 1995).

Historically, behavioral management strategies have been integrated into classrooms to help curtail student misconduct (Canter, 1989; Jones, 1987; Jones & Jones, 1990, Khon, 2004). Today, teachers are facing new challenges of how best to incorporate behavioral management practices in the classroom environment to suit their own pedagogy (Baker et al., 2016; Garrett, 2014; Simonsen & Myers, 2015). Professional development sessions are scheduled and presented where teachers take charge of their learning. Teachers become as students, taking on a lead learner approach by trying to fit their content learning with pedagogical experience. It is therefore imperative for teachers to have some understanding of behavioral classroom management in order to teach the content they have learned to their students. In this study, constructivism was a fundamental foundation for learning and teaching positive student behavior using the PBIS approach.

The PBIS approach is a research-based behavioral intervention program (Bradshaw, Pas, Debnam, & Lindstrom, 2015; Simonsen, & Myers, 2015; PBIS, 2017). In the 1990s, this approach was adopted in U.S. schools to help address behavioral issues with the most challenging behaviors (Bradshaw et al., 2015; Simonsen, & Myers, 2015; PBIS, 2017). The PBIS program, which is grounded in behavioral theory, has been used in schools to assist in changing misbehavior to positively manage student behavior.

This behavioral theory (1938) emanated from the work of B. F. Skinner whose theory on learning dealt with human behavior (Ricko, 2018). The PBIS approach came from applied behavior analysis in a social setting also based on Skinner's theory on behaviorism (Ricko, 2018). The constructivist theory is the foundation that was used in this study. The understanding was that

the teachers in this study have developed a knowledge base on positive behavioral strategies and have used it to help teach positive behavior in the classroom setting using the PBIS approach. The knowledge about PBIS that teachers have constructed from professional trainings and classroom educational experiences in fourth and fifth grade classrooms was shared during the first semistructured interview and also the follow-up semistructured interview sessions. I explored the themes of elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences teaching positive student behavior based on a conceptual framework of constructivist learning.

Constructivism in This Study

Teachers work in an environment where they interact with students and staff daily. Given the various grade levels and diverse curricula of elementary education, teachers must meet the professional credentials required. In addition to the years of teaching experience represented among elementary educators, these teachers also bring varied educational and social backgrounds and viewpoints to the profession. Consequently, the professional training and experiences of these educators afford the opportunity to explore teachers' perspectives or knowledge on behavioral classroom management. In this study, constructivism provided the foundation for understanding how teachers' perspectives and experiences, using the PBIS program, impacts their behavioral practices toward teaching and learning.

The desire for teachers to teach in a positive climate increased the necessity for teachers to receive training on behavioral management, apply it in the classroom setting, and then share the learning experiences for beneficial reasons. As such, the constructivist approach supports the understanding that teachers learn from shared perspectives about the PBIS behavioral management strategies. Given the abstract nature of constructivism, each teacher's perspective can play a significant role in expanding awareness about how to effectively use the PBIS approach to assist with classroom management. Based on teachers preexisting knowledge and new knowledge

34

learned from PBIS professional development, teachers can share their perspectives about how the effectiveness of their PBIS classroom implementation has positively impact learning. Teachers were interviewed for their perspectives using the PBIS approach in order to widen the scope of other teachers' perspectives in the profession. Educators who read this study aggregate further knowledge of how to implement the PBIS approach in a more effective ways for their own behavioral practice and classroom situation.

Student behavior should be a barometer to help the teacher evaluate the effectiveness of the PBIS program. When implemented, the PBIS program can affect behavioral changes that will effectively impact positive teaching and learning. If student behavior is not changing while using the PBIS approach, then it may well be for the following reasons. The PBIS approach may not be effective if the teacher is not properly implementing the strategies and may need more training. Also, the teacher may need to reflect on his or her own role or attitude towards the program. In addition, the teacher can make the PBIS strategies more malleable to his or her situation through constructivism to get the desired outcome. How the students respond and how their learning is impacted can help the teacher determine how to manipulate and implement the PBIS approach effectively.

Chapter 2 explores elementary teachers' behavioral management practices to help address the following research question: What are teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms? This guiding research question provided through literature the opportunity for the examination of behavioral practices employed by teachers using the PBIS approach. Constructivism was the framework for teachers assigning meaning to new knowledge that may contribute to teaching positive student behavior. The literature review discussed constructivist and classroom management theorists on human behavior from the 20th to the 21st century. The literature also highlighted information on PBIS professional

development (PD) or training programs needed for continued best practices which can benefit teachers and other educators (Collum, 2012; Frey et al., 2008; Postholm, 2013; Rew, 2013; Reynolds et al., 2018; Rusk, 2016; Sailor & Dunlap, 2010; Sailor et al., 2009; Sugai & Horner, 2010).

Review of Research Literature and Methodological Literature

Constructivist and Classroom Management Theorists on Human Behavior

Jean Piaget. Piaget (Illeris, 2018) focused on the study of child development. It was during the early 20th century when Piaget first developed his theory on constructivism, which later became known as cognitive development or cognitive constructivism (Miller, 1989). By the 1930's, Piaget contributed to the understanding of learning by indicating how individuals compound knowledge based on human development (Illeris, 2018; Powell & Kalina, 2009). Knowledge was acquired through four sequential stages of development: (a) sensorimotor stage (ages zero to two), (b) preoperational stage (ages two to seven), (c) concrete operational stage (ages seven to 11), and (d) formal operational stage (adolescence through adulthood) (Illeris, 2018; Miller, 1989). New learning is a part of human development that suggests different learning styles supported by change or reconstruction throughout the stages of development (Illeris, 2018; Miller, 1989). When the cognitive processes of development are combined with social setting, the construction of new knowledge takes place, especially during classroom interaction (Bozkurt, 2017).

Lev Vygotsky. Vygotsky's proposed a social constructivist theory which placed emphasis on logical learning as did Piaget. However, Vygotsky focused more on teacher-student interaction in a cultural and social setting (Powell & Kalina, 2009).Vygotsky's theory emphasizes how learning takes place through modeling, guiding, and explaining. According to Vygotsky, social interaction through participation in activities can internalize knowledge (Bozkurt, 2017; Vygotsky,

1978). When humans work collectively, it expands their intellectual capacity about the world around them.

Jerome Bruner. Bruner, an influential social psychologist known for being a part of the *cognitive revolution*, was born in 1915 in New York (Bruner, 1990). Bruner's constructivist theory focused on learning as an active process where humans construct new knowledge based upon present or past knowledge. In this manner, the learner has the ability to use cognitive structure or scaffolding to organize experiences that empower them to hypothesize, make decisions, and to transform information (Bruner, 1990).

Albert Bandura. Bandura, who was born in 1925, and originated his social cognitive theory research theory in the 1960s (Lefrancois, 2006). The social cognitive theory focuses on the developmental changes that occur during a person's lifespan. (Lefrancois, 2006). Over time, humans make behavioral adjustments based on existent lifelong developmental factors (Bandura, 1986). According to Bandura (1986), trying to change the development or psychological functioning of adults or even children is not wise nor is possible which is unlike to Piaget's theory. Bandura (1986) posited that understanding human development requires understanding differences in social practices. Substantial individual differences and capabilities reveal the diversity in people which is then characterized by certain types of behaviors exhibited (Bandura, 1986).

According to Bandura (1986), self-efficacy through human behavior is determined by believing that one has the capability of performing successful behaviors to attain specific goals in life. In order to reach the set goals, one must be motivated, acquire successes, and socialize in an environment of influence (Bandura, 1986). Bandura's (1989) social learning theory points out student self-efficacy though social media. This theory states the importance of social interaction, and its use among young people today through the interactive avenues of social media (Bandura, 1989). Deaton (2015) stated, when students are taught, social interaction should be a part of their

37

learning and class environment. Social learning provides stimuli (visual and auditory), attention, and student engagement, which are tools needed by teachers for effective instruction (Deaton, 2015). Cognitive, behavioral, and environmental factors are three components, which are a part of Bandura's social learning theory (1986). These factors focus on attention, memory, and motivation conducive to positive student management and engaged learning (Bandura, 1986).

Alfie Kohn. Alfie Kohn's (2004) theory on classroom management taps into students' curiosity and cooperation. Kohn's belief about classroom management focuses on how classrooms should function with students cooperating with each other and allowing their curiosity to encourage new learning (Kohn, 2004). Kohn (2004) stated, elementary teachers should allow students to explore topics of interest. When students are interested in what they learn and pursue their own interest, a positive learning environment can take place, and student conduct will improve (Kohn, 2004).

According to Kohn (2004), students should not receive rewards for positive behavior. Their actions in the classroom are contingent on receiving more rewards only to get a "goody" (Kohn, 2004). Students will exhibit good conduct as long as there is a reward (Kohn, 2004). Teachers should discuss with their students what makes a classroom a pleasant and smooth functioning environment, instead of conditioning the students with rewards.

Positive reinforcement is discouraged by Kohn (2004). Positive reinforcement will work, but only to a point. Kohn (2004) stated, positive reinforcement encourages students to want more positive reinforcements. Teachers should not provide positive reinforcements, but should discuss privately with the students their successes and weaknesses (Kohn, 2004). Students will exhibit good conduct without praise or rewards when they understand the reasoning behind positive or negative behavior (Kohn, 2018; 2004). Ultimately, students will behave appropriately and rewards or punishment should not be necessary. Theories on child development and educational practices

38

on behavioral classroom management have been explored to provide a greater understanding of a positive classroom environment.

Constructivism: Disposition of Student Learning in the Classroom

Classroom management is an action step many teachers understand they should do prior to imparting instruction (Egeberg et al., 2016; Rusk, 2016). Davis (2017) stated that teachers should have an understanding that the classroom is a complex space, which can provide a social, cultural, and relational environment for student learning (Davis, 2017). Establishing this type of learning environment can be challenging, yet an important task (Baker et al., 2016; Garrett, 2014; Simonsen & Myers, 2015).

Components of student learning dispositions are addressed in the philosophies of Piaget (Miller, 1989), Bruner (1990), and Vygotsky (Powell & Kalina, 2009). These theorists emphasize the importance of a teacher providing guidance by modeling and explaining information to their students about classroom behavior expectations. As a result, students can construct new knowledge about how to conduct themselves in the classroom setting based on their stages of development (Bozkurt, 2017; Bruner, 1990; Powell & Kalina, 2009). Establishing an environment for positive student behavior can be accomplished when teachers explain, model, and guide students into an understanding of how a welcoming and agreeable classroom environment is created and managed.

In order for students to exemplify positive student behavior in a constructivist setting, learning expected classroom behavior should occur when students are actively involved in the process. In a constructivist classroom, students can make meaning and knowledge when the teacher discusses and models expected behavior. For example, the teacher can demonstrate to students how to work and play in a safe manner, to listen when others are talking, and work quietly to avoid disturbing others. Through group discussions, the teacher can lead conversations about the importance of having trust and respect for others, a classroom of cultural acceptance, and good

39

teacher-student relations (Bruner, 1990; Davis, 2017; Marlowe & Page, 2005; Powell & Kalina, 2009).

Constructivism in the classroom setting can be used to transform student behavior (Bozkurt, 2017; Bruner, 1990; Powell & Kalina, 2009). Students can construct their own understanding of classroom expectations based on how knowledge or classroom instruction is presented by the teacher. Learning classroom rules and expectations enhance students' understanding about acceptable and unacceptable behaviors, and how each behavior has its own consequence. In this manner, students have a better understanding of consequences once they are applied in the classroom. As a result, students begin to construct their own meaning of classroom expectations based on behavioral experiences in their respective classroom environments. New learning allows students to adjust or conform to classroom standards of behavior. When new knowledge is gained, students will most likely comply to appropriate classroom behavior based upon their own individuality of self-awareness.

Teaching a student to follow the classroom rules and regulations establishes that classroom management is teacher and student directed (Davis, 2017). Creating an environment where teachers and students interact positively can influence student behavior (Davis, 2017). While teachers should hold students accountable for their actions and encourage them to learn self-control as a necessary tool for focusing in class, teachers also need to be active listeners. According to Davis (2017), in order for teachers to interact with students, they must first have a positive mindset. The classroom environment must be positive, focus must be on students' strengths, have knowledge of students' background or their diversity, and context of their lived experiences inside or outside the classroom setting (Davis, 2017). In addition, when teachers relate with students on a social level, they can fully understand the needs of students and their concerns in the classroom so that student learning can take place (Davis, 2017; Kendall, 2015; Manning &

Butcher, 2013).Social constructivism through classroom engagement can productively influence classroom management by allowing the student to analyze new information and self-correct behavior for positive behavioral growth (Powell & Kalina, 2009). Using effective management strategies by creating a positive environment can begin the process of addressing behavioral concern (PBIS, 2017).

Behavioral classroom management has been a topic of interest for many educators during the 20th century to the present. Behavioral classroom management is defined as having the ability to manage human or student behavior in order to instruct in a positive learning environment through character development (Davis, 2017; Kendall, 2015; PBIS, 2017). When effective behavioral classroom management strategies are in place, teachers experience less stress and can focus on building a positive classroom environment for learning (Karaj & Rapti, 2013; Ozorio, 2014).

Even though effective intervention programs are available to assist teachers with maintaining classroom order, establishing a positive classroom environment for engaged learning is a task educators still find challenging (Baker et al., 2016; Garrett, 2014; Simonsen & Myers, 2015). As a result, the evolution of classroom management theories and strategies aim to address how to positively shift student behavior (PBIS, 2017).

Positive Behavior: An Intervention Strategy (1960 to 1990)

In the early 1960s and 1970s classroom behavior management was accomplished through the use of positive and negative reinforcements to encourage the desired behavior (Egeberg et al., 2016). By the 1980s and 1990s, models were developed by Canter (1992) and Jones (Jones, 1987; Jones & Jones, 1990). Emphasis was placed on teachers using rewards and punishments based on classroom practices and expectations (Egeberg et al., 2016). However, in today's classrooms when teachers focus on student safety, academic support, and classroom management to create a positive

behavior environment so that adverse student behavior is curtailed (Egeberg et al., 2016). Egeberg et al. (2016) concludes that teachers are able to create a positive behavioral environment when they focus on the educational stimuli present in their educational setting, and redirect negative behaviors as needed to avoid excluding students from class (Egeberg et al., 2016; Lewis, Romi, Kate, & Roache, 2012).

By the 1980's, researchers studied classroom management and its practices in U.S. classroom (Brekelmans et al., 2011; Brok et al., 2004; Doyle, 1986; Reinke, Stormont, Herman, Wang, Newcomer, & King, 2014; Rusk, 2016). Postholm (2013) focused on classroom management through several article review studies. Doyle (1986) stated two purposes for classroom management. First, from a behaviorist perspective, the classroom is a place for establishing a quiet and calm environment for learning (Doyle, 1986). Second, classroom management helps in developing an environment for students' social and moral development (Doyle, 1986). Other research by Brekelmans et al. (2011) and Brok et al. (2004) indicated that when teachers have effective control over a class, students will attain higher achievements and will demonstrate a positive attitude towards the subject matter covered in the classroom.

In their qualitative study, Karaj and Rapti (2013) indicated that stress has been on the rise in the teaching profession since the early 1970s. A contributing factor has been pressure regarding schedules and time availability, lack of support from principals, and work overload resulting in teacher burnout (Karaj & Rapti, 2013). Furthermore, disruptive student behavior in the classroom setting has been one of the greatest contributing factors towards stress in teaching (Karaj & Rapti, 2013). The researchers also examined how the impact of disruptive student behavior in classrooms affected teachers' job stress when compared with various stress related studies experienced by teachers. Using the Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, the study showed that there were significant correlations of time pressure, workload, and relations with colleagues and with the

school principal. (Karaj & Rapti, 2013). Consequently, disruptive student behavior resulted just as impactful on teacher stress as other stress related experiences.

Lewis et al. (2012) stated in their qualitative study that behavior concerns in the classroom setting is one of the main reasons teachers feel disconcerted in the profession. Teachers used their own techniques to control misbehavior and promote student responsibility (Lewis et al., 2012). Students were excused from the classroom setting and allowed to reflect on the behavior. The goal is for the student to accept responsibility for their misbehavior and return to the class after having a follow-up conversation with the teacher (Lewis et al., 2012). A strength with this behavioral management method provides the opportunity for teachers to interact and possibly have a positive relationship with the students afterwards. Unfortunately, according to Friedman (2006), the greatest frustration that educators experienced was the inability to develop good relations with students, which could contribute to teacher burnout (Friedman, 2006; Karaj & Rapti, 2013).

How a teacher chooses to manage a class environment can help to determine student behavior, interest, concentration level, and attitudes towards their schoolwork. Coupled with job stress, a teacher's behavior towards students can determine student conduct and the overall classroom climate (Karaj & Rapti, 2013). It is understood that more research can be done on effective ways for preparing teachers to handle disruptive behaviors in the classroom environment (Lewis et al., 2012).

The PBIS framework. The PBIS framework is defined as a multi-tiered behavioral support system for all students (Fallon et al., 2015; McDaniel et al., 2017). This program identified and supported positive behaviors in the school environment (PBIS, 2017). Based on the Individuals with Disabilities Act (1997), the PBIS was authorized for individuals with disabilities, or students with behavior disorders (BD). However, researchers took this approach further and

applied it towards research studies and evaluation projects (Gresham, 1991; Sugai & Horner, 1999; Walker et al., 1996).

The PBIS program incorporates the constructivist theory by sharing employed effective behavioral intervention strategies for students who have behavioral concerns (PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 2002). Applied behavior analysis is the basis of PBIS in practice, and behavioral analysis is part of the constructivist framework (Horner & Sugai, 2015). Therefore, in this study, PBIS is used in the framework of constructivism. The constructivist theory can be applied to PBIS when exploring how teachers construct preexisting and new knowledge to learn. When there is new understanding about student behavior management and how best to implement it in the classroom setting, adjustments can be made by the teacher to improve student conduct. Constructivism helps to create a practical demonstration of employed analysis using the PBIS approach in the work environment of teachers (Horner & Sugai, 2015).

PBIS Tiered Levels are Tier I, II, and III with Tier III focused on individual at risk students (PBIS, 2017). Tier I, Universal or Primary Prevention, is designed to reduce problem behaviors school-wide. Approximately 80% of the student population in each school are not expected to move beyond Tier I (Fallon et al., 2015; McDaniel et al., 2017; PBIS, 2017). Tier II, Secondary Prevention, focuses on at-risk behavior. Specialized intervention takes place at this level. About 15% of students may struggle at this level (Fallon et al., 2015; McDaniel et al., 2017; PBIS, 2017). Tier III, Tertiary Prevention, focus on high-risk behavior. An individualized plan is created to address student behavior at this level. Typically, 5% or less of students may need intervention at this level (Fallon et al., 2015; McDaniel et al., 2017; PBIS, 2017).

Positive Behavior Support (PBS) reduces problem behaviors based on positive reinforcement in the classroom (Horner et al., 2010; Lewis & Sugai, 1999; Mayer, 1995; Sugai & Horner, 2002). Public schools in the U.S. have been moving more towards positive behavior

because negative punishment was not as effective. Using the constructivism theory in the classroom, teachers can explain and model the PBIS approach allowing students to analyze the information given and make adjustments in their behavior. Correspondingly, there has been improvement in disciplinary behavior, school climate, student bullying behavior, and academic achievement using the PBIS framework (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

The success of the PBIS program in many state schools have encouraged a widespread interest in its framework and behavioral practices (Lane et al., 2015; Noltemeyer et al., 2018; PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 2002). Educators are looking more closely at the successes of using the PBIS program in U.S. public schools to better understand how best to manage student behavior in classroom settings. The PBIS approach has a framework, which highlights research-based practices organized to support school-wide behavior (PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2010). The approach incorporates behavioral expectations with clear rules to follow as well as definitions for violation of those rules (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012). The PBIS program has defining characteristics based on student outcomes. The program supports classroom routines, teaching reminders, active supervision, high praise, behavior intervention, academics, and social skills instruction (PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

Public schools in the U.S. made the decision to implement the School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) approach (PBIS, 2017). A significant strategy of the PBIS approach as it relates to student behavior is prevention (PBIS, 2017). This approach is not an intervention, but considered a behavior reform strategy moving students towards exhibiting positive behavior on a regular basis in the school setting (Frey et al., 2008; PBIS, 2017). It is based on a behavioral-ecological perspective (PBIS, 2017) wherein unified discipline is key. In a school-wide discipline system, a statement of purpose, defined expectations, and encouraged expected behaviors help to

45

establish proactive behavioral routines for consistent school management and stability (Frey et al., 2008).

The school-wide system for student success is divided into two systems—academic systems (proactive, individualizing, high efficacy, etc.) and behavioral systems (preventative, small group intervention, procedures, etc.). Most students follow school-wide expectations, but not all are recognized for exhibiting positive behavior. Schools that have adopted the PBIS approach reward students for their efforts, provide consequences when needed, but also use the opportunity for re-teaching as a result of negative student behaviors (Banks, 2014; Betters-Bubon, Brunner, & Kansteiner, 2016; Fallon et al., 2015; Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2010). The PBIS program has been used in public schools each year to increase student learning for behavior and ultimately academic progress (Halliburton, 2015; Houchens et al., 2017; PBIS, 2017). The PBIS framework is structured to meet the needs of undesirable student behaviors in U.S. schools (Frey et al., 2008; Noltemeyer et al., 2018; Sugai & Horner, 2002, 2010; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

PBIS Research in the Classroom Environment

Establishing a safe controlled classroom environment for student learning is an educator's priority regardless of where or how they teach. A classroom environment without management and engagement can be perceived as a setting that may not facilitate learning. Ozorio (2014) stated that a well-managed classroom is a place where students are engaged and motivated to do their best, and learn. It is a place where students are encouraged to follow and adhere to classroom and school regulations.

Teacher-student interaction can be established in a social constructivist relational classroom environment to assist with student behavior (Abenavoli et al., 2014; Davis, 2017; Marlowe & Page, 2005; Vygotsky, 1978).The researchers, Abenavoli et al. (2014), examined how teachers' perspectives during the fall of the new school year to the spring term prognosticated

46

change in educators' self-reported efficacy with respect to student engagement, classroom management, and instructional practices. Teachers determined how they related to students based on their attitude in the classroom. An educator's mindset helps to determine well-being (Abenavoli et al., 2014).This study supports the PBIS approach, which promotes positive student-to-student and teacher-to-student interactions encouraging acceptable student behavior. Educators have reported that behaviors and needs of many students in U.S. public education have significantly changed (West, 2014). School districts find themselves needing new programs and curriculum that must address social, emotional, and behavioral needs of students (West, 2014). West (2014) and Blum and Libbey (2004) indicate that students do not have social-emotional competencies, and as a result, they do not progress well from elementary to middle school to high school. This lack of social-emotional competence has negatively affected the students' academic performance, behavior, and health (West, 2014). A positive behavioral climate is a place where respect and understanding for others help in leading the way towards academic success (West, 2014). When teachers have an understanding of the emotional feeling of their students, it can help them determine what strategies are effective to manitain a positive behavior environment (Kendall, 2015; West, 2014).

Educators recognize that students must have certain needs met that can be supported by an environment that is conducive for learning (Bergman, 2016; Ozorio, 2014). Building a positive classroom environment helps teachers address student needs and bring about student success. Ozorio (2014) states that when teachers have a positve disposition about their task coupled with a welcoming learning environment, academic success can be realized. A positive attitude creates a positive classroom environment (Ozorio, 2014). In addition, Ozorio's (2014) qualitative research supports teachers praising positive and productive student behaviors;when students are commended for positive behavior, they will most likely continue to engage in positive interactions

in order to receive continual praise (Ozorio, 2014). This reinforcement helps to build self-esteem among the children,which is important for student learning and development (Ozorio, 2014).

 Culture. Classroom culture is a cognitive factor that applies to this study on behavioral classroom management through the holistic approach of the PBIS program. Classroom culture influences student behavior through high student support given by teachers (Betters-Bubon et al., 2016; Davis, 2017). The PBIS program provides social and emotional practices of behavior management with student diversity at all tier levels. Regardless of the students' ethnicity, Boesch (2014) indicated how professors and/or teachers play an important role in establishing either a positive or negative classroom environment. Having a discernment of cultural diversity or student background at the elementary, middle, high school, or even among students at the college level will assist with understanding student behavior and create a classroom culture where students can interact with teachers, and everyone is accepted and respected (Boesch, 2014; Davis, 2017).

 Based on their qualitative study, Betters-Bubon et al. (2016) stated that cultural awareness and practices should be a part of the PBIS program. Such cognitive practices will help in reducing school discipline referrals and support an environment conducive to student learning. The case study examined how a school team incorporated cultural practices within the PBIS program to meet social and emotional needs of students. After five years, cultural practices were built into the school's PBIS intervention program, which improved student behavior (Betters-Bubon et al., 2016).

 In 1954, the Supreme Court's ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* equalized educational opportunities for all U.S. children regardless of their culture. A child's race, color, or national origin was not to be discriminated against (Skiba et al., 2011). However, disciplinary disproportion for African Americans increased from 1970 to 2002 (Skiba et al., 2011). In addition, in many U.S.

schools, students of color are often disciplined disproportionately based on their attendance in the student population (Skiba et al., 2011).

There are significant differences in the current literature regarding how the PBIS program has influenced the cultural norms and behaviors of students especially when comparing white students to students of color. A correlational research study was conducted at the State Department of Education in a Midwestern state using full-time PBIS consultants to assess students' achievement in reading and math (Reno, Friend, Caruthers, & Smith, 2017). Teachers' perceptions of the PBIS program was explored. The findings highlights that there was no statistically significant relationship between PBIS Tier II behavior and academic improvement (Reno et al., 2017). Yet the findings showed substantial percentage differences for male students, students of color, and students from high poverty being identified as needing Tier II by middle class White, female teachers (Reno et al., 2017). For school culture to support academic achievement for all students, educators must understand students' cultural norms and behaviors (Reno et al., 2017).

School discipline researchers have studied the ways in which the PBIS approach can assist in reducing racial disparities (Cregor, 2008; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002; Skiba et al., 2011). There are disparities between discipline for White students and students of color. Studies show that Latinos are disciplined disproportionately as well Black students (Skiba et al., 2002; Skiba et al., 2011). African Americans and Latino students are generally eligible for special education instructional services yet are underrepresented for gifted and talented programs (Reno et al., 2017). When teacher referrals were examined prior to implementing PBIS, Black and Latino students were sent to the office for incidents that had no basis for an office referral. However, when teachers implemented the PBIS approach, the numbers decreased (Skiba et al., 2002, Skiba et al., 2011). There are still gaps in literature exploring ethnic disparities especially for

Hispanics/Latino students. The data pertaining to school discipline is limited and inconsistent (Skiba et al., 2002, Skiba et al., 2011).

Russell Skiba is the director of the Initiative on Equity and Opportunity at Indiana University. He stated, how PBIS has assisted in reducing school exclusion of certain students. Appropriate consequences fit the disciplinary incident. However, while school exclusion is reducing, Skiba still found that students of color were more likely to receive harsher punishments for similar misbehavior than their white peers in PBIS schools (Skiba et al., 2002, Skiba et al., 2011).

Skiba's et al. (2002) research team from The Equity Project of Indiana University examined discipline data from an urban school. It revealed that both white and black students received office discipline referrals (ODR's) for unacceptable behavior (Skiba et al., 2002). White students were sent to the office for "smoking, vandalism, or obscenities". Black students were sent to the office for "disrespect, excessive noise, threatening behavior, and loitering" (Toll, 2018, p. 19).

More than 7,000 schools nationwide have adopted the PBIS approach in order to improve student behavior (Cregor, 2008). Cregor visited three of those schools. Blossomwood and Lincoln Elementary schools both use the PBIS approach as a common language to control student behavior, and the students score well on state testing. The major difference between the two schools is the demographics (Cregor, 2008). Lincoln Elementary has about 80% of students receiving free or reduced lunch, 70% of those students are African Americans and 30% are White. Whereas Blossomwood Elementary has about 15% of the students who receive free lunch are African Americans, and about 81% of the students are White (Cregor, 2008). Despite the major difference in enrollment with students of color at each school, the teachers at Blossomwood and Lincoln Elementary Schools are proactive. Using the PBIS program, teachers address issues before

they become a major problem, and students continue improve socially and academically. Research has shown that the PBIS program works with all students helping to prevent student dropout and grade retention which is often associated with students of color (Cregor, 2008). The PBIS program has made a difference in changing some of the statistics pertaining to improvement in student behavior based on student of color.

Toll (2018) places emphasis on the fact that disparities among Black students have been a problem for decades preventing schools from achieving positive outcomes for all students. In research studies, it was revealed that Black elementary students received higher suspension rate for minor behavior and an increased risk for expulsion than their white counterparts. Studies also found that there was a high percentage of Black males placed in special education (Losen & Skiba, 2010; Skiba et al., 2011; Toll, 2018). Toll (2018) stated that the School-Wide Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (SW-PBIS) program has been able to assist in reducing disparities of high school students creating a larger percentage of student graduates. However, research studies show that elementary schools disproportional disparity rates have been overlooked (Toll, 2018). Toll's (2018) research dealt with investigating the SW-PBIS program as it relates to discipline disparity rates in elementary schools among Black students in a Florida district. The goal was to see what components of the SW-PBIS program was successful in helping to reduce disproportional disciplinary rates especially among Black elementary male students. The study involved 55 elementary schools and 20 of those schools had disproportionate discipline rates of Black students (Toll, 2018).

Findings showed that when early intervention of the SW-PBIS program is implemented, disparity rates among students of color are lowered. It was also noted that students misbehave when they are disengaged from the instructional lesson. When students are engaged, misbehavior decreases. Student should be taught acceptable school behavior and social skills in order to

succeed in the classroom. Findings in the Florida district also indicated that when teachers have knowledge of the SW-PBIS program and apply it with fidelity in the classroom setting, disproportionate discipline rates among students of color decrease (Toll, 2018). Establishing a classroom culture using a positive approach to student behavior is effective. The intervention of the SW-PBIS program has assisted with addressing and improving elementary and middle school student behaviors (Freeman et al., 2016).

The knowledge of constructing a classroom culture affords guidance to teachers and students about behavior expectations in classroom setting (Boesch, 2014). Educators are becoming aware of the need to have classroom culture as well as cultural awareness in the classroom setting. Culture awareness can create a positive classroom climate for teachers managing their classrooms for student learning (Abenavoli, Harris, Katz, Jennings, & Greenberg, 2014). Understanding student backgrounds and creating a classroom culture.in the classroom setting matters. Having a knowledge of cultural culture in the classroom can determine the impact of a positive environment (Abenavoli et al., 2014; Boesch, 2014; Davis, 2017; Delano-Oriaran & Parks, 2015). It is important for teachers to understand the role classroom culture and diversity play in the classroom setting, and how it can influence a positive and successful behavioral classroom management environment.

In a qualitative case study, Rusk (2016) explored how cultural classroom management practices influence classroom disruptions. His PBIS related study explored behavioral management practices in a private school from Pre-K to Grade 8 in central Oregon. Rusk (2016) explored the differences in specific classroom management strategies between teachers who had high numbers of PBIS discipline referrals versus teachers who had low numbers. The phenomenon was to understand how the classroom management practices and classroom culture that the teachers developed influenced the management of the students (Rusk, 2016).

Rusk's (2016) findings indicated that a few teachers used traditional practices based on cultural discipline, while other teachers used a holistic behavior practices (Rusk, 2016). The holistic behavior practices consisted of positive behavior support approach, social-emotional feedback, class routines, PBIS intervention strategies, and a teacher-centered classroom environment to manage classroom disruptions (Rusk, 2016). There were many teachers who used traditional practices in the classroom to address classroom behaviors that centered on the use of teacher authority. According to Rusk (2016), the traditional approach had been seen as a weakness in classroom management. Other educators used a more progressive or holistic approach where students were active participants and problem solvers. The teachers were more facilitators who guided and fostered thinking, promoting a positive behavior practice approach (Rusk, 2016). Cultural practices were incorporated into the classroom environment strengthening classroom management while establishing a positive student behavior holistic approach.

Academic achievement. Quantitative studies of the PBIS program have provided a greater understanding of how the holistic approach towards student behavior and student constructing knowledge and meaning can bring about achievement (Collins& Ryan, 2016; Halliburton, 2015; Houchens et al., 2017; Marlowe & Page, 2005; Palincsar, 1998). Ryoo, Hong, Bart, Shin, and Bradshaw (2018) used the School-wide Positive Behavior Intervention Support (SW-PBIS) program to examine the longitudinal effect of elementary and middle school students who have behavioral problems and academic achievement growth. In the quasi−experimental design, the findings were inconclusive because of cross-sectional data. They did not find any significant statistical effects on student behavior or academic achievement among the educational levels of the students. As a result, there were questions raised about the effectiveness of the SW-PBIS when used with a scaled up statewide achievement test. Further research is needed to have a better understanding of the longevity effect of the SW-PBIS program (Ryoo et al., 2018).

Houchens et al. (2017) concludes that the PBIS program can reduce behavioral referrals and out-of-school suspensions improving the school's academic environment when implemented with fidelity (Houchens et al., 2017; McDaniel et al., 2017; Noltemeyer et al., 2018). The analysis of the study concluded that PBIS can also bring about improvement in teachers' perspectives of organizational health, which could possibly improve student learning. According to Houchens et al. (2017), research does not provide any existing documentation of whether or not the PBIS program contributes to student achievement. The Teaching, Empowering, Leading, and Learning (TELL) Kentucky survey was given to teachers at PBIS and non-PBIS schools. The survey was used to analyze teachers' perspectives of their working conditions between schools as well as among schools with different levels of PBIS implementation with fidelity or refinement. The study examined PBIS implementation at the schools and the outcome of students' test scores. Findings show there was no significant difference in academic achievement of the students between PBIS and non-PBIS schools. However, the analysis also revealed that academic outcomes were higher at high PBIS schools with fidelity and medium fidelity PBIS schools (Houchens et al., 2017).

While it is important for teachers to place emphasis on achievement goals in their classrooms, they vary on the level of emphasis. In their study, Shim, Keifer, and Wang (2013) focused on teachers who used the achievement goal orientation theory**.** Classroom mastery goal structure and the classroom performance goal structure were used. The classroom structure resulted in higher student performance (Shim et al., 2013). Emphasis was placed in the classroom setting on developing competence, mastery of learning, and personal progress. The results indicated that students who were in mastery goal focused classrooms were more motivated to achieve (Shim et al., 2013). They had high persistence, challenged themselves, applied effort, and used learning strategies based on need. This type of academic environment brought about low disruptive behavior and cheating in the classroom (Shim et al., 2013).

As presented in literature, McDaniel et al. (2017) presented a qualitative case study on the stakeholders' perspectives about the PBIS program from high-need schools who have had experience in implementing the PBIS program. McDaniel et al. (2017) wanted to have an understanding of how the PBIS program was perceived and implemented by the stakeholders. There was a purposeful selection for participants in the focus group, which was semistructured. It consisted of former employees who worked at the high-need schools, teachers from the K–12 grade level spectrum, school professionals, and administrators. Results from the high-need schools varied based on fidelity, grade level, buy-in, and the support of administrators. McDaniel et al. (2017) concluded that high-need schools require alternative discipline, which the PBIS program provided. Schools that implemented PBIS reported lowered rates of suspensions, special education referrals, and it improved the school's environment. It is also believed that the PBIS program could improve academic performance once it was executed effectively (McDaniel et al., 2017).

PBIS Professional Development and Training

The PBIS program highlights the importance of continuous professional development for teachers and those in leadership positions (Sugai & Horner, 2009). The PBIS model is a process for establishing school wide environments that are effective for accomplishing academic and social goals. The intervention approach supports continued positive behavior practices where teachers can monitor successes or challenges with the program. There is continuous progress monitoring while making decisions about classroom rules and procedures. Data is collected on a regular basis pertaining to student discipline referrals. The data is essential for several PBIS purposes in order to provide clarification and priority, match intervention practice, evaluate research-based practice with student responsiveness, practice fidelity, social and ecological validity, and implement efficiency, effectiveness, and relevance (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

In a quantitative study Stanton-Chapman et al. (2016) evaluated the effectiveness of the PBIS program, which consists of a Tier III model framework. This framework reduced student classroom behavior, in 10 Head Start (HS) classrooms, where behavior problems among children in preschool have been the teachers' main concern. The externalized behaviors are the ones most problematic (Snell, Berlin, Voorhees, Stanton-Chapman, & Hadden, 2012). Carter and Norman (2010) stated that evidence-based practices should be implemented at the early childhood educational level in order to address challenging behaviors. Individualized interventions programs are short-term and insufficient in teaching proper behavior and social skills to preschoolers. In addition, teachers lack the training to implement effectively research-based strategies to preschoolers (Carter & Norman, 2010). The PBIS Tier III support system met the needs of the preschoolers and was effective in connecting intervention methods to classroom practices (Carter & Norman, 2010; Stanton-Chapman et al., 2016). Workshops were provided for teacher and student training. Tier I classroom practices encouraged all preschoolers to focus on academic engagement through consultation. Tier II targeted preschoolers who needed intervention with social skills. Tier III interventions were individualized and required a behavior support plan (BSP) based on data from a functional behavior assessment (Dunlap et al., 2010). The PBIS implementation for Tier I was a four-week period, Tier II for 10 weeks, and Tier III for four weeks. Results indicated that the PBIS Tier III program improved the overall classroom quality (Dunlap et al., 2010). The preschoolers' social skills based on the Social Skills Rating System increased from the pre- to post-assessment, and problem behaviors decreased based on the Child Behavior (Dunlap et al., 2010; PBIS, 2017; Stanton-Chapman et al., 2016).

In a qualitative case study, Collins and Ryan (2016) used an A-B-A-B research reversal design. It was an experimental design that included an initial baseline phase, intervention phase, a withdrawal phase, and a reintroduction of the intervention phase (Barlow, Nock, & Hersen, 2009).

According to Collins and Ryan (2016), the implementation of the PBIS program was often executed in a holistic environment with emphasis on improving academics and social behaviors.

Collins and Ryan's study extended the PBIS program to school bus drivers. The goal was to reduce student behavior during the times when students were in transit to and from school each day with school bus drivers using PBIS strategies. The drivers received one hour of PBIS implementation training a week for eight weeks. The training consisted of acknowledging appropriate student behavior, using positive reinforcement to encourage positive behavior, providing clear expectations to students, understanding how to respond to negative behavior, using the ratio of 4 to 1 of positive to negative student interaction, understanding student perspectives, and making professional as well personal connections with the students. Following the training, small group meetings were held with the bus drivers to discuss progress and to develop new strategies as needed to address specific student behaviors on the bus. Based on the PBIS data results from this quantitative study, during the first intervention phase, the mean number of daily bus referrals were reduced from 0.9 to 0.2 referrals per day, and from 0.8 to zero during the second intervention phase. Overall, procedural fidelity for this study was 93.5%. The administration believes that the professional development for the drivers was the best part of the PBIS program (Collins & Ryan, 2016).

Another PBIS quantitative study was conducted in a youth psychiatric partial hospital program where there had been limited research in this area (Reynolds et al., 2018). The purpose was to examine if a modified version of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (M-PBIS) would reduce seclusion/restraint among the youth psychiatric patients. The study took about 26 months with a pre and post design. The PBIS program featured positive behavioral expectations, reinforcement of expectations, positive staff recognition, and full support from stakeholders. As a result, there was a decreased from 33.3% to 12.9% in medication for

57

agitation/aggression. The study concluded that M-PBIS is a natural intervention that can be used with in psychiatric partial hospitals services to reduce and/or eliminate seclusion/restraint among the youth psychiatric patients. Such an intervention can assist youth psychiatric patients greatly with improving mental health (Reynolds et al., 2018).

Fidelity. Successes of the PBIS approach is often accomplished when implemented with fidelity at the tier level(s) assigned within the school system. Implementation with fidelity in PBIS has three principles, which provides meaning (PBIS, 2017). Fidelity in PBIS is:

- Fairness—Each student must be treated the same with recognition and attention and rewarded for positive behavior in the same way.

- Reporting—A reporting system is used to determine how teachers are using the PBIS program to reward students as well as to report student conduct. It also allows teachers to determine their successes and challenges using the program by setting and meeting classroom management goals with their students in their classrooms. Accurate reporting helps to provide fidelity of the program.

- School Store—Staff and teachers are to make student rewards attainable and available (PBIS, 2017). Reward items should be provided in the school store for the student body as a motivator for students to achieve academic or social goals.

According to this literature review, when the PBIS program is implemented with fidelity, success of the program academically and socially are realized in U.S. public schools (Noltemeyer, et al., 2018). This review also has limited research on the challenges or barriers to the PBIS program. There is a gap in research on teachers' challenges with the PBIS program. Carter (2017) stated in his qualitative action research, there can be barriers when implementing PBIS: (a) inconsistent incentives necessary to encourage continued student rewards, (b) lack of effective yearly staff buy-in towards the PBIS approach through PD sessions which is necessary to sustain the fidelity of the

program, and (c) effective staff implementation of the PBIS program with fidelity (Carter, 2017). Schools that implement the PBIS with low fidelity can struggle with operational challenges within the program (PBIS, 2017).

Support. A supportive administration is necessary for all teachers implementing the PBIS program within the school system. Administrators have high expectations of teachers as it relates to classroom management. As a result, when challenges arise in the classroom setting, teachers question their capabilities and effectiveness in the profession, which in turn induces many of them to (Postholm, 2013). According to Postholm (2013), there has been much research on effective classroom management, but very little research on how teachers apply or use behavioral management practices in the classroom setting to assist with student learning. Unfortunately, many educators out of frustration with classroom disruptions choose to leave the profession because of ineffective management within the educational school system (Rusk, 2013).

The research of Rusk (2013) and Wong and Wong (2005) indicate that successful classroom teachers had an understanding that good class management takes place by creating an active learning environment in the classroom (Wong & Wong, 2005). Through his research study, Rusk (2013) concluded that using a holistic, PBIS approach towards classroom management by incorporating students' opinions and ideas during instructional lessons might reduce the number of classroom disruptions (PBIS, 2017; Rusk, 2013; Sailor & Dunlap, 2010; Sailor et al., 2009). Rusk (2013) and other researchers Clunies-Ross, Little, and Kienhuis, (2008) postulate that, when effective classroom management practices were identified, teachers' stress level were reduced, positive classroom culture for students were established (Schein, 2010), and having proactive discipline strategies amended the classroom environment (Partin, Robertson, Maggin, Oliver, & Wehby, 2010). The PBIS approach incorporates a social constructivist perspective on student learning by creating new meaning and knowledge of how best students can conduct their behavior

positively. Ongoing professional development and having a supportive administration team may help make a difference in behavioral classroom management.

Review of Methodological Issues

The literature review on behavioral classroom management to explore student behavior in the classroom environment focused on both qualitative, quantitative, and one mixed-methods research was also used in the studies presented. The researchers theorized as well as analyzed behavioral classroom management practice and its effectiveness in the classroom environment. The strengths and weakness of the research gathered will assist with setting the stage for justifying the method of this qualitative study.

Much of the literature in this review focused on qualitative case studies, which provided information on how the PBIS approach is used in U.S. schools to address disruptive student behavior (Berg & Aber, 2015; Collins & Ryan, 2016; Dwyer, 2013; Halliburton, 2015; Houchens et al., 2017; McDaniel et al., 2017; Rusk, 2016; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012; PBIS, 2017). These qualitative studies are exploratory in nature gaining insight from opinions, perspectives, and experiences of the participants. These studies provide a repository of sources through interviews and observations that illustrate positive outcomes from the implementation of the PBIS program. The review supports the use of the PBIS approach in many school-wide systems noting improvements in student behavior after intervention strategies were implemented (Banks, 2014; Betters-Bubon et al., 2016; Bradshaw et al., 2015; Collins & Ryan, 2016; Freeman et al., 2016; Halliburton, 2015).

It is important to note that qualitative studies have methodological limitations that can impact the findings on behavioral classroom management among fourth and fifth grade teachers using the PBIS approach. For example, these limitations include having a small sample size of 10, and identifying variable definitions, which are not easily measured requiring extensive time for

data collection in the field as well as data analysis for the effectiveness of the study (Creswell, 2013). In addition, qualitative studies are a form of social and human science where guidelines or procedures change based on information gathered from participants' perspectives. Therefore, participants' individual differences shared during interviews can complicate how the study is planned, executed, and judged once completed (Creswell, 2013).

There was limited literature on quantitative studies about the PBIS approach. Quantitative research allows the investigator to use claims to develop knowledge through inquiry through experiments, questionnaires, and surveys. Data is then collected on the predetermined instruments for statistical data and analysis (Creswell, 2003). A quantitative methodology would not completely capture the problem of teachers' perspectives using the PBIS approach in classrooms.

The mixed method approach to research is mixing qualitative and quantitative strategies when collecting and analyzing data in a single study (Creswell, 2003). Mixed methods consist of combining observations and interviews (qualitative) with surveys and/or questionnaires (quantitative) during data collection. Knowing that all methods have some limitations, using the mixed-method approach can help to neutralize bias and provide insight that can be gained at different levels during analysis (Creswell, 2003). Mixed-methods are used in research today, but not used often in social and human sciences (Creswell, 2003).

One study in this literature review dealt with a mixed-methods framework that accounts for lived experiences (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). Sieberer-Nagler (2016) indicated how teachers shared their views on the importance of having a positive classroom climate through effective classroom-management and having positive teaching when relating to students (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). Questionnaires, surveys, and classroom observations were also used in the study. Of the teachers surveyed from the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), 17% stated that they lost four or more hours of teaching during each week due to disruptive classroom behavior (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016).

Through observations as well as questionnaires, the study pointed out findings in classroom management practices, teachers' views on student behavior, the importance of praise to motivate students, and much more (Sieberer-Nagler, 2016). Using the mixed-method approach was informative and beneficial to an unbiased study. There were no studies found using a mixed methodology dealing with using the PBIS approach towards improved student behavior in the classroom setting.

Synthesis of Research Findings

Research has demonstrated that when teachers establish a well-structured classroom, student behavior is better managed, which may result in high student performance (Yi & Lee, 2017). Lewis et al. (2012) stated that behavior concerns in the classroom setting is one of the main reasons teachers feel disconcerted in the profession. The greatest frustration that educators experienced was the inability to develop good relations with students (Davis, 2017; Freeman et al., 2016; Friedman, 2006; Hansen, 2014; Houchens et al., 2017; Kagan, 2014). Establishing good relations with students, may allow teachers to experience less stress and teacher-burnout in the classroom (Friedman, 2006; Karaj & Rapti, 2013).

The components that justified this study were defining behavioral management using the PBIS approach, the impact the approach has on student behavior in elementary classrooms, and the importance of continued PBIS training and professional development for educators and community members (Reynolds et al., 2018; Stanton-Chapman et al., 2016; PBIS, 2017). Sources were combined or integrated the sources from the literature review to form a cohesive whole, which identified the patterns among subtopics (Machi & McEvoy, 2016). This process facilitated the discussion of strengths and weaknesses of sources, compared and contrasted methods, approaches, and findings of researchers (Machi & McEvoy, 2016).

The PBIS approach defines behavioral classroom management as a well-managed classroom environment through behavioral routines known as the behavioral law (McDaniel et al., 2017; Reynolds et al., 2018; PBIS, 2017). This is not a traditional approach. According to Rusk (2016), the traditional approach, where teachers were the authoritarians in their classrooms, was seen as a weakness in classroom management. The traditional approach in addressing student behavior was understood as a weakness in classroom management (Davis, 2017; Rusk, 2016). Rusk (2016) learned from his research on behavioral classroom management that teachers used traditional management practices to control behavior. The author stated that the traditional practices used in the classroom to address disruptive behaviors pointed out that teachers were the authority as well as the sources of information, and students were the passive absorbers of information (Rusk, 2016).

Researchers have discovered that some educators used a more progressive or holistic approach when defining behavioral classroom management (Collum, 2012; Kohn, 2018; Rusk, 2016; Sugai & Horner, 2010). The PBIS approach is a holistic approach where students are active participants and problem solvers in the classroom limiting student misbehavior (Kohn, 2018; Rusk, 2016; Sugai & Horner, 2010). Collum (2012) posited that the classroom environment is a place where everyone had some degree of knowledge, and no one was seen as all-knowing. The holistic approach suggested that students must exhibit the desire by establishing ownership and student conduct (Collum, 2012; Kohn, 2018).

A positive classroom climate promotes a holistic approach to learning as well as positively influenced teacher/student social relations while improving teacher efficacy, which can enhance job performance and teacher satisfaction (Postholm, 2013; Rew, 2013). Rew (2013) asserted that principals played an integral part in enhancing teacher efficacy by promoting instructional practices that were supportive in behavioral classroom management. In contrast, Postholm's

(2013) study from research articles contributed knowledge in the area of classroom management and showed that classroom management was more about the teacher understanding the classroom as a social system. As a result, teachers and students related in the classroom setting, this interaction positively impacted teacher efficacy. Therefore, a teacher's behavior in the classroom was just as important as a student's behavior.

The PBIS approach has impacted student behavior in elementary classrooms. Similarly, Frey et al. (2008) stated many schools in the U.S. (over 5,300) made the decision to implement a positive classroom climate approach into their educational system, known as the School-wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBS) approach. According to the authors, this approach was considered a behavior reform strategy that moved students towards exhibiting positive behavior on a regular basis in the school setting. It was based on a behavioral-ecological perspective (Frey et al., 2008). Unified discipline is key so that students take charge of their learning. In a school-wide discipline system, a statement of purpose, defined expectations, and encouraged expected behaviors helped to establish proactive behavioral routines for consistent school management and stability (Collum, 2012; Frey et al., 2008). According to Sugai and Horner (2010), the establishment of a PBIS approach in schools, aided with the development of effective behavioral classroom management for effective student learning (Fallon et al., 2015; Sugai & Horner, 2010). In addition, Sugai and Horner (2010) have provided behavioral management classroom intervention strategies using the PBIS program in a school-wide setting for educators to improve student behavior and relieve teacher stress and challenges in the classroom environment (Karaj & Rapti, 2013; PBIS, 2017).

Professional development (PD) sessions on a positive classroom climate to improve student behavior are important and essential. There has been an understanding that teachers should have more professional development and training programs in order to support students with behavioral

issues (Reinke et al., 2014). The PD sessions brought about better classroom management through coaching within the classroom management program (Reinke et al., 2014). Teachers received support in the classroom to implement universal practices that supported students with disruptive behavior (Reinke et al., 2014). As a result, there has been decreased rates of disruptive behavior in the classroom setting resulting in an increase of prosocial behavior (Reinke et al., 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2010).

Critique of Previous Research

The review uncovered studies of theories on classroom management, positive behavior classroom management, traditional practices vs. the holistic approach, and the importance of teacher training that can lead to improvement in overall classroom behavior (Banks, 2014; Betters-Bubon et al., 2016; Bradshaw et al., 2015; Collins et al., 2016; Frey et al., 2008; Hansen, 2014; Houchens et al., 2017; McDaniel et al., 2017). The review also provided clarity of research for educators to use positive classroom management strategies to improve the effectiveness of behavioral management. In contrast to the literature that supports a positive classroom environment, some research disputes the practice (Canter, 1992; Carter, 2017; Davis, 2017).

A quantitative study took place with preservice teachers and their educational beliefs about classroom management based on teacher interactions with students compared with other educators in other groups (Okut, 2014). Data analyses were made using descriptive statistics. However, the study did not determine if the beliefs held by the preservice teachers on classroom management were supportive of classroom management than other veteran educators. This study could have used a mixed-method approach using interviews, classroom observations, or group discussions to find out what beliefs preservice teachers have that may need to be altered or changed to improve student behavior in the classroom setting. Combined methods are lacking in classroom management research.

Ozorio (2014) examined how teachers used the understanding of social and emotional needs to develop a positive classroom environment instead of excluding students because of behavioral issues (Lewis et al., 2012; Ozorio, 2014). The case study methodology dealt with two teacher interviews. Open-ended questions were asked which related to the topic of meeting the social and emotional needs of students. In addition, the researcher observed 26 students in third and fourth grade classrooms and gathered data on students' and teachers' interactions (Ozorio, 2014). The data analysis used answers the six preselected open-ended questions, which were reviewed, compared and contrasted with observation notes. Afterwards, common themes were coded. This provided the researcher with similarities and differences of daily activities from the observations and the responses to the interview from the teachers (Ozorio, 2014). The researcher learned that teachers needed to focus on the positive angle of student behavior instead of the negatives. If there was disruptive behavior in the classroom, it was observed that teachers would take the student aside and start with a positive comment and end the conversation with a positive comment as well. According to Ozorio (2014), it was understood that positive behaviors and attitudes from teachers and students created a positive classroom environment. Therefore, a positive classroom environment fostered student learning while keeping the class in order (Ozorio, 2014). This study imparted knowledge for continued practices creating a positive environment to minimize student behavior. The study does not point out what practices can be used when positive attitudes from the teacher does not work. Other positive behavior management approaches (if any) could have been explored in the study and noted as an effective alternative.

In a qualitative case study, Rusk (2013) provided further clarity of successful classroom management practices by having a knowledge of the importance of student engagement in classroom instructional practices, and the role culture plays in managing classroom disruptions. His study explored management practices in a private school from Pre-K to Grade 8 in central

Oregon. The qualitative methodology of this study explored the differences in specific classroom management strategies between teachers who had high numbers of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS) discipline referrals versus teachers who had low numbers. The researcher observed six teachers during instruction time, and afterwards they were interviewed. The researcher collected and reviewed photographs of the classrooms, and analyzed the PBIS classroom discipline referral forms. To determine the influence classroom management strategies had on classroom disruptions, the researcher analyzed the interview responses, management practices, classroom photographs, and the number of PBIS classroom discipline referrals. Rusk (2013) learned from the data that teachers used traditional practices, social-emotional feedback, class routines, PBIS intervention strategies, and a teacher-centered class climate to manage classroom disruptions (Rusk, 2013).

There were many teachers who used traditional practices in the classroom to address classroom behaviors. These practices indicated that the teachers were the authority as well as the sources of information, and students were the passive absorbers of information. According to Rusk (2016), the traditional approach had been seen as a weakness in classroom management. However, other educators used a more progressive or holistic approach where students were active participants and problem solvers. The teachers were more facilitators who guided and fostered thinking, promoting a positive behavior practice approach (Rusk, 2016). A quantitative methodology would have also provided insight from the teachers about their perspectives on a holistic approach. Questionnaires could have provided additional data to determine if traditional practices were used more than holistic practices to manage student behavior.

Professional development and teacher training are essential parts of keeping up with best practices in the teaching profession. However, there are limited sessions on classroom management. Reinke et al. (2014) discussed the importance of scheduling professional

development sessions relating to student behavior. Teachers have experienced challenges providing instruction while trying to manage classroom behaviors. The researchers' study support the idea that teachers need to have more professional development programs in order to support students with behavioral issues. Classroom management through coaching within the universal classroom management program is vital (Reinke et al., 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2010). The qualitative study discussed how teachers received support in the classroom in order to implement universal practices that help to support students with disruptive behavior. Based on the study, there have been decreased rates of disruptive behavior in the classroom setting resulting in an increase of prosocial behavior (Reinke et al., 2014). However, a limitation is that further research could be done to discuss the perspectives of teachers after training for continued administrative support with improvement in student behavior. If included, teachers could have had the opportunity to share their viewpoints on the importance and need for continued effective behavioral classroom management training sessions to assist with student discipline. It is important to sustain intervention programs that improve student behavior. The analysis could benefit other teachers and administrators in helping to improve student behavior based on teachers' perspectives. Major weaknesses in the studies dealt with the limitation of findings associated with the PBIS approach directly impacting student behavior in classrooms based on teachers' perspectives of the program, and the future direction for sustaining effective implementation of PBIS intervention (Pinkelman, McIntosh, Rasplica, Berg, & Strickland-Cohen, 2015; Yeung et al., 2016).

In conclusion, high expectations and demands regarding student behavior and achieve rest on teachers. Educators must understand that they play a vital role in the education of students, and should put forth their best to educate students for academic success (Collum, 2012; Reinke et al., 2014; Postholm, 2013). According to Karaj and Rapti (2013), even though there has been a decrease in many classroom disruptions based on intervention strategies to assist with teacher

management, there are still concerns. The desire for a solution to student disruption in the classroom should be addressed because it has been the greatest cause for stress among teachers in the educational profession (Karaj & Rapti, 2013). Expected behaviors from a school wide proactive approach should be encouraged and practiced on a regular basis (Frey et al., 2008). The desire for behavioral routines for consistent school management and stability can still be argued (Frey et al., 2008).

Summary

In Chapter 2, the literature review focused on behavioral classroom management in the 20th and 21st century classrooms. The scholarly research presented, critically discusses the findings of researchers and theorists in the field of education who believe teacher and student behaviors have affected the classroom climate (Bandura, 1986; Collum, 2012; Postholm, 2013). The chapter provides information on behavioral classroom management while sustaining a positive environment for learning (Bandura, 1986; Deaton, 2015). In addition, the literature review contained research studies on behavioral classroom management practices using a positive approach (Collum, 2012; Ozorio, 2014; PBIS, 2017; Postholm, 2013; Rew, 2013). This review of literature provides information to support the idea that even though there are disruptive students, behavioral classroom management intervention strategies are available through professional development and teacher training programs that can be used by teachers to instruct positive behavior and develop a favorable classroom climate.

Teacher attitudes toward students, and how they create and sustain a productive and positive classroom environment can determine student behavior. Understanding how to create a comfortable environment for students to learn should be a daily task that teachers can seek to accomplish. It is important to have a clear understanding of the human mindset through positive

social interaction in the classroom setting (Bandura, 1986). In Chapter 3, the researcher will justify

the research design and methodology that was used in the study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

A qualitative case study was the design selected to explore elementary teachers'
perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth- and fifth-grade classrooms.
The teacher participants at a rural school district in Virginia, despite efforts with the PBIS
intervention program, continued to experience challenges with student behavior. For data
collection, semistructured one-on-one teacher interviews, follow-up semistructured interviews
(member checking interviews), and analysis of artifacts (participants' journals) were utilized to
provide a better understanding of how the PBIS approach is implemented in fourth- and fifth-grade
classrooms.

The following qualitative methods were not chosen for this study. Grounded theory
research is when an inquirer generates an abstract theory of a process or an action that might help
to explain a practice (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). This study does not explain an abstract theory
about the PBIS approach or a certain aspect of its practice. Ethnography research focuses on the
study of people and cultures in society or in their natural setting (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995).
While these methods were used in studies from the literature review, they were not appropriate for
the context of this study.

Using the exploratory method in this study, I utilized a qualitative case study. Case studies
provide an analysis into a case, program, or an event consisting of more than one individual and
should focus on the research question(s) (Creswell, 2013; Stake 1995). It is used as a tool to
investigate, explore, or describe the lived experiences from human beings in context of the real
world (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). Qualitative research places emphasis on an in-
depth exploration of perspectives and experiences (Creswell, 2013). This study provided an
understanding of the perspectives and experiences of elementary teachers who use the PBIS
approach in a small school district to assist with managing student behavior. Qualitative case

studies help support best practices for teachers who strive to manage student behavior for effective teaching and learning in the classroom setting. The case study approach was used to gain insight of elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms.

PBIS is a behavioral management approach that many teachers use in the U.S. public school system to help establish classroom management. A case study design was an appropriate methodology for exploring this study. A qualitative researcher can use the case study design to explore and find issues or concerns about an existing problem that has not been researched (Creswell, 2013). This exploratory qualitative methodology of the interview and narrative process is flexible and will provide an opportunity for the participants to voice their perspectives and experiences about the PBIS approach explain their thinking and experiences using the PBIS approach (Creswell, 2013).

Chapter 3 consists of the following components: research question, the purpose and design of the study, research population, sampling method, instrumentation, data collection process, and identification of attributes. I discuss the data analysis procedures, limitations of the research design, validation procedures, expected findings, and ethical issues. The chapter concludes with ethical issues and a chapter summary. The components of this research methodology, design, and justification are explained in the chapter.

<div align="center">

Research Question

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The exploration of teacher's perspectives of the PBIS approach was conducted using one primary research question that guided the study. The research question that this research study explored was: What are teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms?

Purpose and Design of the Study

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative case study was to explore teachers' perspectives and experiences of the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms in a Virginia school district. This study has added knowledge to literature that is conceptual pertaining to the life experiences of the teacher participants who were interviewed. Elementary teachers are the individuals who have experiences related to this study. The teacher participants provided their own perspectives of the PBIS approach, and how its implementation contributed toward addressing student behavioral issues or concerns in the classroom (Baker et al., 2016; Davis, 2018; McDaniel et al., 2017). This case study provided information about the PBIS approach in context.

According to Dwyer (2013), an extensive amount of research has been examined on the topic of behavioral classroom management in books, articles, and media presentations. There are studies where researchers examine behavioral techniques or strategies used in the classroom setting (Curwin, 2013; Woolfolk Hoy, 2000). These studies are older and a timely reexamination might be in order. Hansen (2014) and Spencer (2015) point to more updated research on the PBIS intervention program and its implementation in classrooms.

Research has provided much attention to the PBIS program and its impact on behavioral management practices in classrooms, but little qualitative research is available on fourth and fifth grade teachers' perspectives of the program (Fallon et al., 2015; Hansen, 2014; Spencer, 2015; Sugai & Horner, 2010; PBIS, 2017). There is a need to extend previous knowledge about behavioral classroom management using the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms to provide literature with an understanding of viewpoints of the approach on this educational level (Hansen, 2014; Spencer, 2015). The goal is for teachers to have a greater understanding, as a result of this study, about the PBIS approach that can impact current implementation. Findings will help

the district with PBIS implementation and provide recommendations for professional development, training, or some type of support system at both grade levels. By understanding teachers' perspectives of the PBIS approach, further insight will be discovered thus impacting overall student behavior at this level in a single school district.

Design

According to Creswell (2013), in this qualitative case study design, the researcher focuses on the views and/or perspectives of the teacher participants. This method was used to explore and understand the case of elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences in their educational roles using the PBIS approach to assist with student behavior (Stake, 1995). The case study design was selected in order for the researcher to do an in-depth analysis of this case involving the PBIS program with fourth- and fifth-grade teachers within a school district in Virginia (Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). Using a case study approach allowed the researcher to glean how individuals create meaning from their experiences using interviews and analyzing relevant documents (Creswell, 2013; Merriam, 1998; Stake, 1995). This study used semistructured interviews and artifacts to collect data to better understand teachers' perspectives using the PBIS approach. Interviews allowed the researcher to present a descriptive narrative explaining teacher viewpoints on the topic for a deeper understanding of perspectives and experiences from this educational institution.

This study used digital recordings from semistructured one-on-one teacher interviews, follow-up semistructured interviews, and analysis of documents. The interview process provided the researcher with insight about the problem. This process allowed the researcher to probe further during interviews for a clearer understanding of teachers' perspectives of how student behavior is managed in the classroom. Follow-up interviews generated a new set of questions for further analysis, which helped to identify the challenges and successes behavior in the classrooms. It is the research questions that drove the study. Artifacts, another source of data, was used as analysis

documents to assist with credibility, validity, and reliability (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009). In addition, structured interviews from fourth and fifth grade teachers helped to reveal best practices that are a part of the PBIS program relating to student behavior. Teachers who willingly expressed their perspectives about using the program provided additional educational insights about whether or not the practices of the PBIS approach were helping in improving student behavior on this educational level.

Research Population and Sampling Method

Site and Population

This case study took place at a rural public-school district located in the state of Virginia. The school district for this study is located within an hour of a major suburban city in Virginia. The district population consists of approximately 4,000 students with a high percentage qualifying for free or reduced lunches. Student diversity consists of African American, White, and Hispanic with half of the district population being African American. Based on student gender, the percentage is about 50/50. The school system has three elementary schools, one middle school, one learning center, and one high school. This research study was conducted at two elementary schools with a combined population of about 1,600 students from kindergarten to the fifth grade. General education classroom teachers who work for the school district have a Bachelor's or Master Degree and are state certified. This site and population of elementary school teachers were selected for this study because the school district uses the Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (PBIS) approach to assist with student behavior and academic management during each school year. Elementary teachers from fourth and fifth grade classrooms within the district were invited to participate in this study (see Appendix I).

Sampling Method and Size

The researcher secured a letter of permission from the superintendent, which specified the parameters for researching the school district. The researcher also made a request, in writing, to the school district and received documented permission to conduct the study. This information was requested and made available to the researcher for state law protection. It was important to make known the nature of the case study to the district office, schools, teachers, and sponsors (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). The authorized letter requested from the school district is included in the record (Stake, 1995; Creswell, 2007).

Sampling Process

The selection process for teacher participants focused on fourth and fifth grade teachers at both elementary schools as a source for purposeful sampling. (Creswell, 2007). This type of sampling focused, reduced, and simplified the interview process (Creswell, 2007). Purposeful sampling allowed the researcher to have specific subsections of teacher participants whose knowledge on the topic was required for an in-depth study (Marshall & Rossman, 2011).

The 10 participants were selected from a target population of 24 teachers from the two schools in the district. Each participant had some knowledge of the PBIS approach and had used it in their classrooms for at least one school year. A sample of 10 teachers for the interview sessions was deemed as an adequate sample size to potentially achieve saturation during data collection and to identify themes and answer the research question (Creswell, 2013). A detailed criteria for selecting teacher participants is available in Appendix H. Once the names of the participants were gathered, an email was sent out indicating when a meeting would convene. All participants, agreed to be a part of the study by signing the IRB Consent Form with the knowledge that they have protection rights through Concordia University. A letter of request (see Appendix B) with written permission is included in the record (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995).

<center>**Instrumentation**</center>

This qualitative research case study design utilized multiple forms of instrumentation. This research study consisted of three data sources: semistructured one-on-one teacher interviews, follow-up semistructured interviews, and analysis of documents. These instruments were used to triangulate the data and provide validity to the study (Cresswell, 2013; Stake, 1995).

First Semistructured Interviews

Qualitative research provides the opportunity for teachers to present valuable insights and experiences through the interview process. Interviews are generally used in case studies and can help with explanations for the "hows" and "whys" when participants reflect their perspectives (Yin, 2018). According to Merriam (2009), the interview process can be executed in the form of highly structured (intensive interview), semistructured (in-depth interview), or unstructured interview (Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2018). This researcher used semistructured interviews consisting of questions created in advance to guide the session, yet provided the option for further inquiry or probing when the opportunity was presented to explore unexpected topics that were not related to the scripted questions (Yin, 2018). Semistructured face-to-face interviews allowed participants to share their thoughts candidly about the PBIS approach—thoughts that are not directly observable (Creswell, 2013). The interview process provided the opportunity for participants to present valuable insights and experiences. They provided information based on their educational experiences with the PBIS program and its impact on student behavior in their classrooms. Interview protocol and interview questions are located in Appendix D.

Follow-up Semistructured Interviews

After the first interview, the I analyzed the data and then follow-up with more questions providing an in-depth study for validity. The researcher will meet with the teacher participants a second time. The second interviews or follow-up interviews (member checking) will be reviewed

<center>77</center>

in order to verify the accuracy of the teachers' first interview responses that were initially expressed. Clarification of interview responses will be addressed. According to Yin (2018), it is important for the researcher to rely on other sources of data that will provide insight for understanding, clarity, and validity. It is also a good opportunity to build rapport or friendly relations with the teacher participants (Yin, 2018).

The follow-up interview sessions will allow teachers to have an opportunity to reflect on answers given during the first interview session and subsequently provide clarification or additional information. It is possible that the responses to the interview questions may not be consistent. However, this session can provide an opportunity to probe further and follow the researcher's own line of inquiry to validate the study (Yin, 2018).

Documents (Artifacts)

In this study, documents (artifacts) was another form of instrumentation. Artifacts are insightful features, items, or materials the teacher participants developed and used in their environment (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). They were gathered in a variety of forms (Creswell, 2103). Documents were used to assist with credibility, validity, and reliability (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). I used and maintained artifacts as supporting evidence to justify the study. Collected artifacts from teachers for this study included classroom tickets, teaching charts, and teachers' notebook or journal. These were items that teachers made and/or used in the classroom, items deemed appropriate for the research study in that they assisted with managing student behavior. Artifacts were collected and stored to establish ongoing PBIS implementation in fourth and fifth grade classrooms for stable credibility to the case study. However, the teacher participant interviews were the main source of instrumentation for the study.

Data Collection

Data collection is an important part of qualitative research (Creswell, 2013). It is during the data collection process where I gather information systematically from the research site (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995). Yazan (2015) and Stake (1995) stated that a qualitative case study has three data collection techniques that are often used: interviews, observation, and analysis of documents. In this qualitative case study, there were three types of data collection: first semistructured interviews, follow-up semistructured interviews involving member checking for credibility, and triangulation by the analysis of documents (artifacts).

The data for this qualitative research was collected from elementary fourth and fifth grade teachers who were using the PBIS approach in their classrooms. The PBIS approach has been used in many classrooms to assist with behavior management and aligned well with this case study. The circumstances for this research allowed for what was currently happening in the classroom setting. According to Bernard (1995), there are four goals for qualitative research: exploration, description, comparison, and testing models. This study qualitative research was exploratory and collected data in multiple ways. In this case study, the tools were documents of analysis (artifacts) and two interviews.

Following Institutional Review Board (IRB) approval, I informed the Superintendent of Schools. Afterwards, the two principals were also informed and contact was made to all the teacher participants to schedule a meeting to go over the research and provided the opportunity for questions to be asked about the study. During the first meeting, all participants received informed consent forms (see Appendix A). Interview appointments were arranged with participants who agreed to be a part of the case study; timing and locations were based on participants' preferences. In addition, to the collection of data through two sessions of interviews, each teacher participant was asked to share relevant documents for the case study.

The data collected reflected the emic-perspective of the participants. Yin (2010) states, "an emic perspective attempts to capture participants' indigenous meanings of real-world events" (p. 11). It is data that was collected from the perspectives of those in the culture being studied. In this case study, the scope of culture was based on a small group of individuals who share the common characteristic of using the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms.

First Semistructured Interviews

During the first interview session, I met with the teacher participants to gain a deeper understanding of their experiences using the PBIS approach. All interviews were scheduled at the selected site to accommodate the participants, and one hour was reserved for each interview. (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2009). A list of the interview questions was presented prior to the interview session, this provided the participants the opportunity to reflect and consider their responses (Gibson & Brown, 2009). This process was essential in creating and maintaining a comfortable environment for the participants.

I asked each participant the initial interview questions (see Appendix E). The list of interview questions are in sections. Section A, the use of PBIS program in the classroom setting, lists questions that allow me to gain a better understanding of how the PBIS program has been implemented in the school district and executed in the classroom setting. Section B, the knowledge of PBIS Program for effectiveness, are questions that gave teachers an opportunity to share their year(s) of teaching experiences in the district using the PBIS approach or using other behavior management strategies to manage student behavior. Finally, Section C, teacher efficacy using the PBIS program, asked questions about working in an educational environment with diverse students and required time and dedication needed for the task. This section allowed the participants to provide additional insight into their experiences using the PBIS approach that were not uncovered by the previous questions.

During the interview sessions, while the participants shared their experiences using the PBIS approach, I recorded all interviews via a password-protected mobile recording device. The audio interview files were then uploaded to a private Google Drive account and downloaded to a password-protected external hard drive in order to secure multiple duplicates of the original content. Audio files were transcribed using the NVivo software's auto transcription process. The transcripts were then coded in NVivo using the NVivo coding methods. This process proved helpful in highlighting the voices of the participants' specific words or phrases in their interaction during the interview that could not be understood using other coding devices (Manning, 2017). Immediately following transcription and the IRB policy, I deleted the recordings on the Google Drive account and kept the transcriptions on a password-protected external hard drive which was stored in a locked cabinet at my home office. These documents will be deleted 3 years after this study's completion.

Follow-Up Semistructured Interviews

The secondary semistructured interviews followed the same protocol as the initial interviews. Each interview accommodated the schedules of participants. The questions during the follow-up semistructured interviews allowed teachers to share how their experiences may have changed during the study. During the recorded interviews, the same data collection protocol was utilized from the first interview sessions and as well as the password-protected mobile device for voice recordings, in vivo coding, transcribing, and data analysis. The IRB policy specifies destroying recordings after saving it for 3 years. Collected information from the data sources helped to provide understanding and build coherence to the study.

Documents (Artifacts)

For this study, an attempt was made to collect multiple document sources that were used to assist with the PBIS program such as teacher journals, posters, charts, classroom reward tickets,

etc. In addition, I requested teacher-created documents. A reminder via email requesting the documents prior to the first interview was sent to remind participants to share the said documents. At the conclusion of the first interview, participants were informed that they could provide additional documents in the follow-up interview.

For the duration of the study, additional types of documents were collected between interview sessions. Attempts were made to collect other documents such as lesson plans, curriculum guides, rubrics, and other artifacts the participants deemed important to the case study. These documents were shared through the school district's mail as well as by email. At the initial interview, participants were informed that they should use a large inter-department mail envelope to send and receive district mail that was relevant to the study. Mail between school sites were delivered internally through the district and proved to be an effective way for participants to share documents with me.

Finally, I looked for school and district records specific to PBIS professional development, training, and or programs that were available through public domain. These documents were also available on the district website. In addition, I secured information from the PBIS district coordinator who was able to provide data relevant to the study.

Identification of Attributes

The attributes that guided this study were elementary teachers' usage of behavior management strategies in fourth and fifth grade classrooms, professional development in the PBIS program to aid fourth and fifth grade teachers in managing student behavior, and perspectives and experiences of teachers regarding the PBIS approach. The teacher participants used the PBIS approach as well as their own behavior management strategies to address student behaviors in the classroom setting. Using the PBIS approach to teach positive behavior was an option for some teachers because PBIS training was lacking. How effectively teachers instruct positive student

behavior in fourth and fifth grade classrooms was based on the training received to teach and monitor students' behavior. The purpose was to understand the behavioral strategies used to manage misbehavior as well as the type of training teachers received or were lacking in order to address student conduct.

The perspectives and experiences of fourth and fifth grade elementary teachers using the PBIS approach was the focus of this research. The teachers shared behavior management strategies used in the classroom to instruct positive student behavior. However, not all teachers used the PBIS approach to manage student behavior. The teachers expressed concerns about effective PBIS trainings and school leadership support. The participants interviewed were state certified and had at least one full year of teaching experience in the school district. Participants were encouraged to share detailed information about their perspectives and experiences with the PBIS program by being honest, straightforward, and outspoken. The attributes contributed to a greater understanding of teachers' point of view concerning effective instruction to bring about positive student behavior. This case study attempted to explore how elementary teachers were prepared to teach the PBIS approach as a behavioral student management intervention tool in fourth and fifth grade classrooms.

Data Analysis Procedures

In this qualitative study, three forms of data were collected as evidence for analysis. The sources were first structured one-on-one teacher interviews, follow-up interviews, and analysis documents. It was necessary to have evidence from multiple sources creating triangulation and a stable foundation for the case study. In qualitative research, I should not rely on just one form of data source (Creswell, 2013). The data analysis procedure included triangulation to analyze the data sources so as to find commonalities within the information gathered. Denzin (1978) and Patton (1999) identified four types of triangulation: (a) method triangulation, (b) investigator

triangulation, (c) theory triangulation, and (d) data source triangulation. In this study, data source triangulation involved the collection of data from different types of elementary teachers to gain multiple perspectives and validation of data (Carter, 2014; Denzin & Lincoln, 2000; Patton, 1999; Yin, 2009).

The data analysis process is a spiral interrelated process which continues cyclically and simultaneously throughout the research (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative research does not have firm guidelines (Creswell, 2013). There was a constant analysis of data taking place to identify patterns and themes from teacher interviews (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002). The analytic circle engaged me in an ongoing process of data collection, which were then coded, organized, and stored in computer files or large databases.

I processed the transcripts from the interviews using the inductive analysis process in a five step-by-step manner. To begin, it was important for me to:

1. Read and reread carefully the transcripts to identify frames of analysis.

2. Next, relevant pieces of the transcript were labeled according to differences or anything that I believed was important to the study by creating domains. This step was referred to as coding or indexing.

3. Then, I decided which codes were important and supported by the data. This was followed by the creation of categories or themes for them by searching across domains. The categories can be of different types.

4. Afterwards, the categories were labeled with a heading by deciding which ones were important or relevant. A master outline of the categories was made expressing connectedness or a relationship in some form across the domains. The connection of information are the results of the study.

5. Finally, I decided if one category was more important than another, and summarized the results. (Creswell, 2013; Hatch, 2002)

First Semistructured Interviews

The interviewer guided the first semistructured interview process with conversation about the topic through a series of questions (see Appendix C). During the first structured interview process, teacher participant responses were transcribed from digital recordings. Teachers were able to express themselves candidly in a private setting about issues or concerns knowing their viewpoints would be confidential (Yin, 2016). To fully understand teachers' perspectives about the behavioral classroom management practices, structured open-ended interview questions were utilized and the time frame was for approximately an hour in a single sitting. According to Ravitch and Riggan (2017), using interviews with open-ended questions, I would be able to go beyond typical experiences and understand better the teachers' perspectives in their own words.

Tailored questions were asked during the initial semistructured interviews (see Appendix E) in order to collect data (words/texts) from the participants with different perspectives based on their management experiences in the classroom setting. It was necessary to gather as much data from the participants during the interview process while exploring the effectiveness of the PBIS practices used to manage student behavior in the classroom. The data analysis rendered key categories for coding this information. By focusing on key categories the case study helped with refining the validity of the data collected during the thematic analysis. I used strong interaction and collaboration among the teacher participants to assist with the analysis process. The narrative texts were analyzed for patterns and themes from the teacher interviews followed with thematic analysis for interpretation of the study (Creswell, 2013).

Follow-Up Semistructured Interviews

Follow-up interviews (member checking) guided the second interviews for this case study. The texts from the recordings were coded for similarities of information as well as themes that align with the research question. Inductive analysis was used to organize the data collected from a bottom up process building patterns, categories, and themes. The inductive process was used to get an understanding of the themes, and was mainly used during the follow-up interviews (member checking interviews) or second interviews to assist with the consistency of comprehensive themes.

Analysis of Documents (Artifacts)

Artifacts, which consists of participants' journals, lesson plans, curriculum guides, rubrics, and other artifacts used in the classroom to support the PBIS approach was another part of the data analysis process. Artifacts are classroom items or materials the teacher participants develop and used in their environment to aid with student behavior (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2018). To support the data analysis acquired from the study, collected materials such as PBIS charts and other items were used to refine and link together a clear description of the theme understudy. The concepts and themes were then put together to build an explanation through the narrative process, which was then interpreted through theories presented in the theoretical framework (Rubin & Rubin, 2012; Stake, 1995; Yin, 2009).

Throughout this case study, procedures were organized in a clear, precise, and logical manner. Field notes from structured one-on-one interviews and follow-up interviews were written into descriptive narratives for coding and data analysis (Creswell, 2013). The narratives were analyzed through NVivo output, and the exact transcript has been provided with an experiential understanding of the teacher interview sessions (Creswell, 2013; Stake, 1995).

Limitations and Delimitations of the Research Design

It is important to note that there were limitations and delimitations that may restrict the case study. The limitations are indisputable truths that I did not have any control over but must be identified and reported (Ellis & Levy, 2010). The delimitations deal with me acknowledging the threat or risk of generalization of the results of the study (Ellis & Levy, 2010). Delimitations are characteristics that demonstrate the scope of the study. (Simon, 2013).

Limitations

Limitations must be acknowledged in a study help maintain reliability and validity. In this study the potential limitations are: (a) teachers may volunteer for the study yet have limited time to discuss or answer interview questions with clarity, (b) the teacher participants are from the same school district, and (c) all 10 participants in this study provided their own experiences with fourth and fifth grade students regarding the PBIS program. This study provides experiences from a group of teachers in a southeastern state of the Unites States.

Upon examining the research and comparing findings of teachers' perspectives on behavioral classroom management, there was limited research of how teachers view the importance of the PBIS approach, and how they use innovative strategies including the PBIS program to manage the classroom setting. Postholm (2013) points out in her article, that The Dutch researcher, Wubbels (2011) stated, there had been limited research on the teachers' perspectives on classroom management. It was important to find out how effective the PBIS program is working in this school district. Acquiring teachers' viewpoints about their systematic plan of action on behavioral classroom management has provided a wealth of information for administrators and teachers.

Delimitations

The delimitations arise from limitations in the study (Simon, 2013). Delimitations are boundaries that I created within the study. The delimitations for the study are: (a) teacher participants are from the two elementary schools, (b) have received some knowledge or training of the PBIS program, and (c) shared information from their perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS approach to validate the study. The experiences discussed during the interviews using the PBIS approach were based on the participants' own practice(s) of how student behavior was managed in the classroom setting. Teacher professionalism through classroom management helped to determine how well the PBIS approach was being used in fourth and fifth grade classrooms.

Another delimitation was the understanding of the study. The PBIS program is being evaluated based on teachers' perspectives and experiences using the PBIS approach in the fourth and fifth grade classroom environment. I concluded that the teachers believed this study was being done simply because teacher may have concerns pertaining to the PBIS student behavior referrals, and how discipline was being handled within the district. The PBIS program was often used in educational environments where student behavior was a major concern (PBIS, 2017; Sugai & Horner, 1999).

It was inferred that not all teachers in grades 4 and 5 wanted to participate in the study. As a result, the sample was small. Also, there could have been bias on how the interview questions were heard and understood by the teachers, which is why I first piloted the questions. It was important to note that there was no discussion with the teachers pertaining to the PBIS program prior to the interviews. I did not define any terms associated with the PBIS approach for the teachers. Each teacher participant had an opportunity to explain his or her perspectives and experiences with the PBIS program as to how it was working in the classroom environment.

Validation

According to Bloomberg and Volpe (2012) the qualitative study must be trustworthy. When qualitative research is trustworthy, then it is recognized as credible, dependable, confirmable, transferable, and authentic. To increase reliability and validity, it is important to note that the case study consisted of enough data from teacher interviews and artifacts to conclude the study. Credibility derives from sufficient research results that correctly reflect the study, and dependability refers to the stability of data (Creswell, 2013). Transferability specifies that the findings can be transferred to other contexts (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2018). I transferred or generalized information from interviews of the teacher participants based on the information shared to provide meaning to the study during analysis. Authenticity refers to when I can plainly describe the teacher participants' experiences (Creswell, 2013; Yin 2018).

Credibility. When information is credible, it refers to believing that the data presented has truth in the findings. The validity of the study establishes credibility as to whether the results from the study reflects the supported data gathered. The strategies that were used to increase validity and credibility are data triangulation, the examinations from the interviews, member checking, and document (artifacts). During interviews, member checking took place on a regular basis to avoid too many inaccuracies in transcriptions. The process of member checking ensures that the participants' perspectives and experiences are accurate and transparent.

External validity strategies were limited in that teacher participants using the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms represented a school district. Therefore, the conclusions of the study may not be valid to different populations of fourth and fifth grade teachers using the PBIS approach. However, a researcher may consider transferability if the teacher participants are similar in other school districts with like conditions. Generalizations and

transferability are limited to a case-by-case basis because of individual circumstances and

uniqueness to the study.

Dependability. The understanding of dependability means that there is stability of the data

presented over time even in different conditions. Reviewing the findings with other researchers for

accuracy and meaning confirms the objective of the study. The dependability in this study

consisted of the descriptive report(s) of the teachers' perspectives and experiences using the PBIS

approach, triangulation of the first interviews, follow-up interviews, my position, and conclusions

of the effectiveness of the PBIS program. My position was included to point out the seriousness in

maintaining the highest ethical standards with integrity, which can help to justify accuracy and

confirm the interpretation of findings (Yin, 2018).

Expected Findings

The expected findings in this case study showed several factors and conditions that

influence behavioral classroom management using the PBIS approach. A few expected findings

could be for a better understanding of the PBIS program used with fourth and fifth grade students.

Through the first interviews and follow-up interview sessions, teacher participants potentially

obtained a greater understanding of how best to interact with their peers, staff members, and with

fourth and fifth grade students. The teachers may also have a greater understanding of the

successes using the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms, and why there could be

challenges with behavioral classroom management practices, techniques, or strategies used by the

program to monitor and control student behavior.

The experiences shared by the teachers encompassed student behavioral concerns in the

classroom setting. I provided an analysis of research data from the study to add insights to

literature. Based on teachers' perspectives and experiences of the PBIS program, findings could

help teachers consider student behavior management approaches. Further examination can promote

continued ongoing learning about the PBIS program as it relates to behavioral classroom management. When I am ready to report the findings of the qualitative data, it will be presented so that the stakeholders will understand the process and the results. (Stake, 1995).

Ethical Issues

Conducting this case study, I considered certain ethical issues to reduce questions of credibility. It was important for me and the teacher participants to take into consideration integrity as well as prejudices and/or biases. The tendency of bias shown by me could question the analysis of how the study was conducted. Reporting preliminary findings to a few colleagues helped to minimize bias (Yin, 2018). Colleagues offered alternative suggestions for data collection and this helped in diminishing bias (Yin, 2018). The interviewer also avoided bias by taking precautionary measures. In doing so, I ensured accuracy and professional competence in addressing the study as an investigator to find information that will benefit literature (Yin, 2018).

Conflict of Interest

This researcher is an educator who explored the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms with other educators for their perspectives on this management tool. Many of the teachers were not known personally by me. However, I do have professional associations with the district in this study. This case study design was for teachers to share their views about a positive behavior program designed to assist with behavioral classroom management to improve student learning. This research had no knowledge of the teachers' perspectives. All management strategies were known and practiced by each teacher in their own classroom environments.

Each year, the school district has a professional development session for their teachers. The goal is to improve student behavior with the hope of improving academics. Annual PBIS sessions suggested more information was to be presented to teachers based on the evaluation of student behavior in the district. This study only explored fourth and fifth grade classrooms to determine

how the PBIS approach professional development sessions have impacted the two grade levels. Therefore, there was no conflict of interest in this study.

Researcher's Position

According to Yin (2018), it is important for a case study researcher to devote serious effort towards maintaining the highest ethical standards while doing research and to finish the project with integrity (Yin, 2018). Such standards require having responsibility, honesty, avoiding deception, and falsifying information (Yin, 2018). Even though this was expected of me, teachers were not required to abide by these ethical standards during the study.

As an effective Christian leader it is important to have organization, communication, knowledge, and vision in accomplishing a vision. Teaching is a profession that is admired, and has the trait of leadership. Positive classroom management is the goal of many educators who believe in academic success (Rusk, 2016). Therefore, when teachers and administrators collaborate for the good of excellence in students, great things can be accomplished.

Deductive disclosure was prevented during this case study. It was important for the teacher participants' identity to remain unknown and protected. During each interview, the participants' privacy was preserved. Each teacher participant was assigned and identified according to letters of the alphabet. This information was shared with each participant before signing the IRB consent form to be a part of the study. Teacher names or other personal direct identifiers were not used. Instead, I assigned a letter of the alphabet to each of the 10 participants at the beginning of each interview session. Further in the study, the letters were changed to pseudonym names. In addition, a locked safe deposit box was used to keep collected artifacts and recoded data until the documents were no longer needed for the study. This process assured identity protection.

Privacy was established for all teachers involved in the research process to protect confidentiality. Trust was established and fostered with all parties in order to facilitate the research

success. Also, there was no personal or financial connection from me to others that would have created a conflict of interest. The researcher avoided any influence in the research. It was important that the researcher be herself/ himself. Stake (1995) stated seven role choices that researchers make during a case study: (a) how much to participate personally in the activity, possibly the interview; (b) how much to pose as an expert, and how much comprehension to reveal; (c) whether to be a neutral observer or an evaluative, critical analyst; (d) how much to try to serve the needs of anticipated readers; (e) how much to provide interpretations about the case; (f) how much to advocate a position; and (g) whether or not to tell it as a story (p. 103).

Ethical Issues in the Study

I secured a letter of approval from the superintendent authorizing the qualitative case study. The IRB Board at Concordia University provided the authorization to use teacher participants (human beings) in the study. The sample comprised of 10 elementary teachers from fourth and fifth grade who participated in the first interviews and follow-up interviews (member checking) sessions. The participants completed an informed consent form, which explained the guidelines of the study, the interview process, and the overall procedures of the case study.

Deductive Disclosure Risk

Deductive disclosure is when an individual's identity is compromised based on known unique personal characteristics of that person. The risk of deductive disclosure was of significant importance to this researcher. It was my responsibility to ensure that the privacy of all teacher participants was not disclosed. Therefore, several steps were taken to ensure that the risk of deductive disclosure was reduced or alleviated.

Each participant well-informed about the purpose of the study, what it was about, and how their responses to the interview questions would be used. All teacher participants were given the opportunity to remain confidential or not and a consent form was signed. The consent form is a

document allowing a participant to withdraw from the study for any reason. It is an ongoing process. It was up to my creative ability to find a population that would have certain nuances of teaching skills and educational performances in order to provide meaning and depth to the research.

I protected the participants' confidentiality by limiting the demographic information reported in this study and by using pseudonyms or codes to conceal identities. I also considered a request to the Superintendent of Schools to have an independent person read the case study report before the data was released to ensure that identities from the school district are not compromised. Privacy protection was vital to this study and were not compromised.

Summary

In summary, I used a qualitative research case study with thematic analysis to explore elementary teachers' perspectives of the PBIS approach and their experiences narrating the challenges and successes using the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Sugai and Horner's (2002) PBIS model and Bandura's social cognitive theory (1986) are two models that support the conceptual framework of this study. This framework creates a cohesive report of the behavioral practices around the PBIS approach.

Structured one-on-one teacher interviews, follow-up interviews or second interviews (member checking interviews), and analysis documents (artifacts-participants' journals) were the primary means of data collection. The transcripts were processed for an analysis of data through a five-step process for a summary results analysis report. I will present the report to stakeholders who will read and benefit from the research study. The necessary steps for conducting this research were conducting a literature review, establishing a theoretical and/or conceptual framework, selecting a research problem, developing research questions, and deciding on the participants to

conduct the research (Stake, 1995). These steps led to a strong, effective, and ethical study. I

prepared for the collection and analysis of the data, which will be discussed in Chapter 4.

Chapter 4: Data Analysis and Results

This case study was designed to explore teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms in a suburban school district. The study allowed for me to identify the experiences elementary teachers had implementing the PBIS approach to classroom management (PBIS, 2017). Ten elementary teachers participated in this study. They provided input about their teaching experiences using the PBIS approach through interviews and documents. This study addressed the research question: What are teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms?

In this chapter, a complete description of each participant for the qualitative case study is presented as well as the research methodology. The description provides context into the participants' teaching backgrounds. Chapter 4 continued the study with the research methodology and analysis data. The data for the study was collected from Semistructured Interviews, Follow-up Semistructured Interviews, and documents. The data results are presented, and the chapter concludes with a summary of the findings.

Description of the Sample

In this qualitative case study, 10 elementary teachers from the HES were invited to participate. The PBIS approach is utilized in this school district. All participants have been exposed to the PBIS approach through staff meetings, staff or professional development, and/or district training sessions during the previous school year. The teacher participants are authorized to teach all subject areas at the elementary level. The total years of teaching experience by the participants ranged from one to 15 years.

Description of Participants

This section of the study provides a description of the teacher participants. The recruitment of participants at HES was done through flyers, emails, and individual outreach to elementary

teachers. There were 12 teachers licensed in grades K–6 who responded by emails, text messages by phone, or face-to-face communique. These avenues of communication were used to make sure there was a common understanding of willingness to participate and the requirements for the study. Of the 12 participants who showed interest in the study, 10 were randomly selected based on email responses. Table 1 presents an overview of the pseudonyms, the grade level taught, and number of years teaching experience. All participants are licensed to teach at the elementary level, K–6.

Table 1

Overview of Teacher Participants

Pseudonym	Current grade level	Years of teacher experience
Rose	5th	17
Sarah	5th	1
Andrea	5th	9 (*4)
Kimberly	5th	8 (*2)
Janet	4th	8 (*5)
Brenda	4th	1
Phillip	4th	1
Mary	4th	11 (*3)
Ivette	5th	12
Millie	5th	24 (*9)

(*) = Years Taught in School District

Rose

Rose has been teaching for 17 years. All 17 years have been at the elementary level in the same school district. This teacher has taught in third, fourth, and fifth grades. This participant also has a BS in Interdisciplinary Studies & Emotionally Disturbed, and a MA in Special Education. This classroom teacher's perspective is that behavior management is essential in the classroom. However, the PBIS approach is not emphasized in the classroom. Instead, other teacher-made

behavior management strategies are taught to the students. In addition, the resource, The First Day of School by Harry K. Wong is used and referred to as needed. Rules and expectations are created during the first days of school. Class choices determine consequences or infractions. A discipline chart is created by teacher and students, homework passes distributed, extra recess given, and teacher-student relations are emphasized in the classroom to manage student behavior. Rose also has the designation of mentor to new teachers as assigned by the administration.

Sarah

Sarah has been teaching for one year at the elementary level with student teaching experience at a private school. At the time of this study, Sarah was in the second year of teaching. This teacher has taught only fifth grade. The participant believes that classroom management benefits student learning, classroom structure, and student behavior in the classroom. The participant uses the PBIS approach in the classroom setting to reinforce positive behavior. She believes that the PBIS program works, if it is utilized well. For this educator, consistency with the program is important. Sarah has received some PBIS approach hand-outs through staff training PD sessions, but reported that the information received was not enough. As a result, this educator uses the resource, Whole Brain Teaching by Chris Biffle, to assist with classroom management strategies.

Andrea

Andrea has been teaching for nine years at the elementary level. This participant also has a MA in Elementary Education and has taught fourth and fifth grades. Andrea uses the PBIS approach in the classroom setting combined with the resource, Whole Brain Teaching by Chris Biffle. This teaching professional believes that all students should be acknowledged for their behaviors whether it is negative or positive. PBIS training has been received through staff development. However, the belief is that the PBIS approach would work better if there was more

consistency with the program throughout the school building. Reward incentives may or may not

work depending on the student. Andrea created an intervention behavior plan with students who

had challenging behaviors. It helped students reflect on their negative behaviors while trying to

reach the daily set goal(s).

Kimberly

Kimberly has been teaching for eight years at the elementary level. This teacher has taught

fifth and sixth grades. The teacher participant has used the PBIS approach in the classroom setting

for the past three years. To address student conduct using the PBIS approach in the classroom,

incentives/rewards are given in hopes of receiving the desired outcome. If not, parent(s) are

contacted as needed and a behavior referral given to address matters. This teacher believes in using

the PBIS approach and other strategies of her own to address student behavior. Using a positive

STAR Chart helps with monitoring behavior.

Janet

Janet has been teaching for eight years and enjoys working with kids. The participant has

been employed with the current district for the past five years. Janet uses the PBIS approach in the

classroom setting to help students learn classroom routines and what to expect when positive

behaviors are followed. This participant believes that classroom management is extremely

important and children should be held responsible for their own behaviors. As a result, the

interview focused more on how the teacher organized and implemented behavior management

strategies learned from past educational experiences in the classroom setting.

Brenda

Brenda has been teaching for one year and has always wanted to work with kids. Family

members are a part of the educational profession which created the attraction to become a full-time

elementary teacher. The family members serve in Special Education and in Early Childhood

Education. This participant believes that using the PBIS approach can work well with all students regardless of culture or ethnicity. The perspective is that community involvement and love for the school environment can help to sustain positive student behavior for student success.

Phillip

Phillip has been teaching for one year. The decision to go into teaching was based on the desire to help children. This participant wants to be a shining light to all school age children. Based on PD sessions, Phillip uses the PBIS approach from the beginning of the school year to the end. The belief is that this approach helps to build a teacher-student relationship with emphasis on "big positives" which are known as connections in the classroom. Phillip is planning to teach for as long as possible or until retirement because the educational profession is seen as a life calling.

Mary

Mary has been teaching for 11 years at the elementary level. This teacher has taught third, fourth, and fifth grade students and believes that professional growth is essential to good teaching. The PBIS approach has been used in the classroom and consistency with rewards has been found to be essential to the program. Mary does not use any other classroom management strategy in the classroom. For this educator, consistency is key with all management strategies. This participant loves the process of learning. The desire for wanting to become a full-time teacher began as an English Student Learner (ESL) tutor. The belief is that building a relationship with each student is indispensable in order to get to know them well so that they can succeed regardless of student background.

Ivette

Ivette has been teaching for 12 years at the elementary level in the district. This participant was a social worker before joining the teaching profession. Ivette has taught fourth and fifth grade students. This participant has a knowledge of the PBIS approach, but does not use the PBIS

approach in the classroom setting. The belief is that students today are privileged with teachers and administrators using the rewards approach to address student behavior which does not work with 5th graders. In addition, the participant believe that schools as they are currently constructed are setting students up for failure in society because a rewards approach is not the reality of life. This participant's love for teaching is waning, but will remain in the educational profession because it provides family stability.

Millie

Millie has been teaching for 24 years at the elementary level in the district. Prior, this participant also taught at the preschool level for about 15 years. Millie has some knowledge of the PBIS approach, but chooses not to incorporate the approach in the classroom. Instead, other teacher-made behavior classroom management strategies are used to address student behaviors. The perspective is when it comes to managing student behavior, the teacher must be direct and to the point while observing and monitoring student conduct.

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Research Methodology and Analysis

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In this intrinsic study, I utilized a qualitative case study design to explore and gain a deeper understanding of elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms (Stake, 1995). The case study was designed to describe the experiences and perspectives of elementary teachers who are implementing the PBIS approach within the context of real life (Yin, 2018). The research question that guided this research study was: What are teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms? The data from this study comprised of responses from primary semistructured interviews, secondary semistructured interviews (Hatch, 2002), and artifacts collected from the individuals interviewed, the school, and from professional development training, staff meetings, as well as from classroom management materials.

Analyzing the semistructured interviews in this study, the inductive analysis model was used moving from specific data to a search for patterns and then themes (Hatch, 2002). The interview sessions were recorded digitally to assist with this process. Afterwards, teacher participants were given the opportunity to review interview transcriptions, the analysis report, and to ask questions for clarity in regards to the data collected. The participants did not find any need for revisions. Typological interpretive analysis was used to analyze the documents collected in the study (Hatch, 2002). All data collected were coded using the Nvivo software to assist with data analysis for identifying themes.

Data Collection

In this study, data was collected in three phases during an eight week period. First, I conducted semistructured interviews with the teacher participants by phone during a two-week period. Second, data from the interviews were analyzed along with the documents (artifacts) collected from the participants interviewed. Third, I conducted secondary semistructured interviews with the teacher participants by phone as a follow-up based on the analysis of the first round of interviews.

Initial Semistructured Interviews

I contacted the school's administration by email (see Appendix B) and received approval to do a study on the PBIS approach in two elementary schools within the district. Recruitment flyers, emails, and phone contacts assisted in identifying potential teacher candidates in fourth and fifth grades. There were 10 teachers selected from the recruitment process. All 10 teachers responded by phone, email, or in person that they would be interested in participating in the study. I forwarded the Concordia consent form (see Appendix A) to sign and email back, indicating their agreement to participate in the study. I received all signed consent forms. A signed copy was emailed to each participant for their records.

One week before conducting the interviews, I emailed the participants' initial interview questions so they had time to prepare and reflect on the questions. When dates and times were scheduled and confirmed, participants were contacted at the appropriate time for the initial interviews. All participants consented to having digital phone conference interviews and were informed that journal notes also would be taken during the sessions to assist with accurate documentation.

The initial interviews for this study was conducted over a two-week period because this allowed me to explore the teacher participants' perspectives and experiences in a thorough manner (Hatch, 2002). I collected interview data from the 10 teacher participants during an allotted 60-minute interview session. Each interview was conducted over the cellphone during a scheduled time and location where teachers were comfortable in their own personal spaces and candid in their responses.

I digitally recorded each interview. My cell phone was set on speaker so that the voice recorder could easily record each participants' responses. I also took notes in my own recording journal to assist with accuracy of responses by member checking, and to follow-up with questions which I added to the Interview Protocol/Guide and Questions section in Appendixes D and E. I asked each participant 18 questions. Questions 1 through 10 focused on use of PBIS program in the classroom setting. Questions 11 through 15 focused on knowledge of PBIS program or training for effective transition in the classroom setting. Questions 16 through 18 dealt with teacher efficacy using the PBIS program. Follow-up questions were asked as needed based on the responses.

After each interview, the recording was uploaded on my computer, and I transcribed them. I used Nvivo Transcriptions to transcribe all saved digital recordings. Each transcribed interview was then converted to a PDF document. The transcripts are saved documents on the computer. I

spent a couple days reading through the transcriptions and listening to each recorded interview a second time to ensure that the transcriptions were accurate. After completing the transcriptions, I shared the transcripts with the participants via email to confirm accuracy and to give the teacher participants an opportunity to make additions or corrections. Each participant responded that the transcriptions were accurate and no corrections were needed. Using the Nvivo software, each transcript was coded providing assistance with structuring secondary semistructured interview questions.

Documents

After the initial semistructured interviews, I asked each participant to share documents that assisted them with incorporating the PBIS approach in their classrooms. I requested by phone and email for documents that I thought would provide information on the steps the teachers used or were currently using to assist with instructing the PBIS approach to fourth and fifth grade students (see Appendix J). I requested behavior referral forms, School-Wide PBIS Expectation format, teacher journals, and printable reward incentives. The participants followed-up on my request via email and submitted documents in this manner throughout the study. The participants chose to scan and send files through their district email accounts. I also went to the district's website to collect information pertaining to the research question.

All participants provided me with documents. However, not all the documents requested were received. Therefore, documents were requested from the administration in order to gain a better understanding of the PBIS program. I also went to the district website in search of publicly available documents to collect that were related to the research question. I found documents and resources pertinent to PBIS expectations and behavior referral reports which were submitted for all the schools. The additional documents provided a clearer understanding of how the PBIS approach has been implemented in the district and supported the teachers' experiences using the approach.

104

Secondary Semistructured Interviews

Following the initial interviews, I analyzed the data by looking through all the transcripts. After analyzing the data, I noticed a two trends related to the PBIS reward practices in the classroom as well as consistent school-wide support of the program. I used these two trends to assist me in developing seven additional questions (see Appendix F) to ask each participant during the secondary semistructured interviews. The additional questions were created to support the information already collected, clarify and elaborate on the findings from the initial interviews, and to provide additional information from the first initial interview on teachers' perspectives and experiences of the PBIS program (Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2009).

Notes were taken in my writing journal to record impressions, gestures, and additional comments as the participants were speaking. The teachers elaborated further on the trends I noticed during my analysis of the initial semistructured interviews (Hatch, 2002; Yin, 2009). Questions 1 and 2 asked the participants to confirm their years of teaching experience, years of experience in the school district, and the credentials they hold. Question 3 asked the teachers to discuss how using the PBIS approach and/or their own classroom management strategies assist with effectively teaching student behavior based on student ethnicity or culture using the reward system. Question 4 dealt with teachers sharing their perspectives of how best to teach positive student behavior. Question 5 asked the participants to share their opinion of additional support that would benefit them in effectively addressing challenging student behaviors. Question 6 allowed the participants to address the importance of teachers, administrators, and parents understanding the implementation of the PBIS approach with fidelity. Question 7 encouraged the participants to share any additional information that was not included in the interview sessions.

The interview questions were prepared and shared with each participant prior to both the initial and secondary scheduled interviews. In this way, the teachers were able to prepare mentally

by reflecting on the questions and their possible responses. It also allowed for responses that were reflected upon and thought through. The secondary semistructured interviews occurred six weeks after the initial interviews. The interviews took two weeks. They were conducted over the cellphone with a digital recorder during a scheduled time and location by the participants. The secondary semistructured interviews lasted between 14 and 40 minutes. Following the completion of the interviews, I transcribed them on the Nvivo transcription, read through the transcripts, listened to the recordings, and made editing corrections on the transcripts to ensure accuracy. The transcripts were emailed to all teacher participants to confirm accuracy and to make clarifications. All participants confirmed that the transcripts were accurate.

Data Analysis

Steps for the inductive analysis procedure was used to analyze the collected data from the initial and secondary semistructured interviews (see Appendix J). Steps for the interpretive analysis (see Appendix K) was used in order to analyze the documents received from the teacher participants, the school, and the district website (Hatch, 2002). The collected documents included PBIS charts, School-Wide PBIS Expectation format, printable reward incentives, and public available documents related to teaching, and implementing the PBIS approach in the district.

Based on the data collected, I was able to categorize the information received and began the inductive analysis approach (Hatch, 2002). While condensing the varied data, I was able to establish clear links which identified patterns and frequent emergent themes. The following section will present the inductive steps to explain how the patterns and themes were inherent in the raw data collected (Thomas, 2006).

Initial Semistructured Interviews

Hatch's (2002) inductive analysis model was used to analyze the data collected from the initial semistructured interviews. I began with the reading of all transcriptions to get an idea of the

106

content the participants shared while checking for accuracy. Afterwards, I emailed the transcripts to the participants in order for them to check for any information that might be inaccurate or missing. The participants noted that there were no corrections needed to the transcripts. This allowed me to proceed with the data analysis. The transcripts were read again in order to identify frames of analysis that could be easily analyzed. Upon review, I was able to identify semantic relationships in the preliminary frames of analysis that lead to creating three domains: (a) experiences teaching PBIS, (b) motivation for teaching the PBIS approach based on in-service training, and (c) support from school administrators and parents. This was done while marking the entries in accordance with the frames of analysis that were related to the domains (Saldaña, 2016).

During the inductive analysis process by examining and comparing data, each domain was coded by assigning a color to text segments that had similar concepts, differences, or opinions which lead to patterns, relationships, and generalizations (Saldaña, 2016). It was necessary to reread the data while refining the three domains. This was done by keeping a record of where the patterns and relationship were found and to decide if the transcripts had examples to support the domains. First, I used "lumper" coding in order to create codes that focused on categorizing the data in a holistic manner (Saldaña, 2016). Using this method of coding, I identified 16 codes that were code related. While coding, I reread the transcripts and separated the relevant codes. Next, I analyzed each code and labeled them to a category to further reduce the data. The categories created were revised and refined to create specific categories. In this way, I was able to get the meaning or essence of the participants' text segments. Afterwards, I identified patterns and relationships within the data that were meaningful (Hatch, 2002). Finally, after reducing the collected data, one-sentence generalizations were created with support from selected data excerpts. The next step was to find emergent themes.

Documents

Documents from the initial semistructured interviews were collected and analyzed using Hatch's (2002) interpretive analysis model. Artifacts were received from participants, administrators, and the district's website. The items collected for analysis were word documents from teacher journals, PBIS PowerPoint pdf from in-service school training, positive behavior referral forms, classroom behavior posters, lists of reward incentives, pages from the school's website describing the PBIS program at each elementary school, School-Wide Expectations Matrix as Positive Behavior Intervention Supports documents from the district website, and transcripts from the participants.

The interpretive analysis approach began with collected documents. I identified impressions to be analyzed. After three or four readings of the documents, I identified four interpretive patterns. The four interpretations I identified included: (a) PBIS program description, (b) consistent documentation, (c) rewards and incentives, and (d) student behavior expectations. After identifying the interpretations, I assigned each interpretation a color and highlighted each document by its interpretation to identify the differences between the data of the collected documents. Each document was read by interpretation and the main ideas recorded on a summary sheet. Patterns, relationships, and themes were found within the interpretations from which a summary was written. Patterns were identified and coded using Saldaña's (2016) coding process. Then, I looked for data to support the patterns. I found relationships among the patterns, and then wrote one sentence generalizations based on the patterns. Afterwards, I selected excerpts from the data to support the generalizations.

Secondary Semistructured Interviews

To analyze the data collected from the secondary semistructured interviews, I continued to use Hatch's (2002) inductive analysis model. All transcripts were read for accuracy to have an

understanding of the content the teachers shared and to check for accuracy. Afterwards, the transcripts were emailed to each teacher participant to check for editorial corrections. The participants stated that there were no corrections needed to the transcripts. Then, I proceeded with the data analysis. The transcripts were read again to identify frames of analysis that could be analyzed. After further review, I was also able to identify semantic relationships in the frames of analysis that supported the three domains aforementioned: (a) experiences teaching PBIS, (b) motivation for teaching the PBIS approach based on in-service training, and (c) support from school administrators and parents. These semantic relationships were confirmed while marking the entries with the frames of analysis that were related to the domains (Saldaña, 2016).

Examining and comparing data during the inductive analysis process, each domain was coded by assigning a color to text segments with similar concepts, differences, or opinions leading to patterns, relationships, and generalizations (Saldaña, 2016). I reread the data while refining the three domains by keeping a record of where the patterns and relationship were found and confirming examples to support the domains. "Lumper" coding was used to create codes that focused on categorizing the data holistically (Saldaña, 2016). Using this method of coding, I confirmed the 16 codes that were code related, analyzed each code, and labeled them to a category. Upon reducing the collected data, one-sentence generalizations were created with support from selected data excerpts. The next step was to identify the emergent themes.

In this study, four themes filtered through overlapping categories. The emergent themes were: (a) overwhelming dissatisfaction with administrators' implementation of the PBIS approach with fidelity in the schools, (b), no training, or inadequate PBIS training has been offered to teachers especially as it relates to handling students with challenging misbehaviors, (c) the PBIS rewards given to manage student behavior at the Tier I level is relatively effective, but not effective at the Tier II and Tier III levels, and (d) more support from school officials and parents

are needed to assist teachers in managing student misbehavior when utilizing the PBIS approach in the classroom to meet the social and academic needs of fourth and fifth grade students.

I searched for additional evidence that supported the themes. The themes justified the patterns, relationships, and generalizations in the study. An outline was then created to identify all the relationships within the domains to assist with a written summary of the study.

Documents

Documents from the secondary semistructured interviews were collected and analyzed using Hatch's (2002) interpretive analysis model. Artifacts were received by email from teacher participants. The items collected for analysis were additional positive behavior school referral and conduct forms used as documentation of student conduct. These collected documents were added to the first set of collected documents and analyzed. Most of the requested documents in Appendix G were provided.

The interpretive analysis approach continued with the collected documents from the secondary semistructured interviews. I identified impressions to be analyzed. After three readings of the documents, I assigned each document interpretations, each interpretation a color code, and highlighted the document with its interpretation to identify the differences between collected data. The documents were read by interpretation and the main ideas recorded and included for a complete written summary of patterns, relationships, and themes. One sentence generalizations were written based on the patterns and selected excerpts were used from the data to support the generalizations.

Reducing the data process brought about three themes: (a) different approaches to classroom management, (b) consistent documentation of student behavior in the classroom, and (c) student expectations taught in an organized, caring, and supportive environment with teacher incentives. Reviewing the collected documents, I continued to search for evidence to support the

themes as well as evidence that did not support the themes. One-sentence generalizations were written to support each theme. Then, I created a flow chart to show the relationship between the themes and the written data examples that provided clear evidence to support the findings (Hatch, 2002).

Summary of Findings

Based on the findings, this study revealed that elementary teachers experience challenges to teaching and implementing the PBIS approach effectively to fourth and fifth grade students. Some of those challenges come from negative student behavior. However, significant challenges come from the school and district administration. It seems as though external barriers have prevented teachers from instructing and implementing effective management to their students. The teacher participants described their perspectives and experiences of their in-service PBIS training, the inconsistency with the behavior management program of the schools, and the school leadership support.

The educators shared their experiences of the in-service PBIS training. Although eight of the 10 elementary teachers indicated receiving in-service PBIS training within the district, one of the eight teacher participants who received PBIS training does not teach or use the program with their students. The teacher taught her own behavior management approach in the classroom setting. In addition, two of the 10 teacher participants have not received in-service PBIS training, but have been given informative materials about the PBIS approach. In addition, the two teacher participants who did not receive PBIS training do not teach or use the approach with their fourth and fifth grade students in the classroom. They are not comfortable with the reward incentives. The eight elementary teachers who have attended the in-service PBIS training shared how the information received is limited and does not address challenging student behavior in a timely and effective manner. The participants addressed how the in-service PBIS training provided more

paperwork for teachers to complete when addressing poor student conduct in the classroom. Teachers are instructed to address challenging behaviors using a management process that requires a school's strategic plan. This involves a few steps of continued written documentation to justify the removal of a student from class. Unacceptable student behavior must be written down and discussed with the misbehaving student two to three times before an office behavioral referral is written. The teacher must complete all required steps to correct student behavior before the principal or assistant principal is informed. The participants mentioned that each year professional growth opportunities are provided by the administration. However, more professional growth opportunities involving or relating to the PBIS approach should be provided specifically relating to behavior management strategies. In this way, positive student behavior management can be effectively taught, implemented, and managed in fourth and fifth grade classrooms and in the school district.

The participants shared their perspectives on the importance of consistency when addressing student behavior. The teachers stated that there is inconsistency with the implementation of the PBIS approach within the schools, impacting fidelity. The participants noted that the school administrators are not consistent with how behavior is handled. If a student is sent to the office for misconduct, most often the student will return to the classroom without an effective consequence for his actions. When a behavioral situation becomes unsafe for teachers and other students in the school, then administrators will execute a punishment such as in-school or out of school suspension. Administrators expect teachers to address challenging student behavior in the classroom. However, school officials do not provide the consistent support needed to assist the educator in alleviating the problem or change the student behavior. Inconsistency with immediate consequences for poor student conduct is severely lacking. Teachers also shared how they rely on each other through teamwork to assist with combating student behavior in a consistent

112

manner. Teamwork is executed through grade team meetings, through teachers observing other classroom teachers noting student behavior strategies that are effective, and through student "time out" where a student is placed in another classroom or grade to prevent continued in-classroom disruption.

The teacher participants also addressed school leadership support. According to the participants, more support from school administrators and parents is needed to manage student behavior. Teachers use their own creative strategies to combat the misconduct of students because of insufficient administrative PBIS training for teachers, misunderstandings of the PBIS approach, and student management disagreement with the PBIS approach. Of the documents collected, more than half of the data revealed information on teacher-made artifacts including behavior charts, graphs, and posters that teachers used to teach student behavior management. Teachers also noted that parents should provide support in the classroom and at home. If parents are also knowledgeable of the PBIS program, then there is a better home and school connection through collaboration with addressing student behavior. The teachers acknowledged trying to provide a positive learning environment through teacher-student relations. The strategy of establishing a teacher–student social interaction has assisted greatly in curbing unwanted behavior.

Despite challenges in curtailing student misbehavior, teacher participants felt empowered while teaching discipline, self-control, and responsibility to their students daily. The data received from the interviews and the collected documents revealed themes that were able to support the research question. The emergent themes will be discussed.

Presentation of the Data and Results

This study included data from two sets of semistructured interviews and collected documents. The inductive analysis steps were used for the initial semistructured interviews and the

secondary semistructured interviews (Hatch, 2002). The interpretive analysis steps were used for the collected documents.

Semistructured Interviews

Using Saldaña's (2016) reference to assist with coding during the analysis process, I was able to gain a better understanding of the data which revealed patterns and themes through the coding process. The data and analysis process resulted in 16 codes that emerged with four themes (see Table 2). In this section, the data and analysis of the findings are presented.

Table 2.

Overview of Themes and Codes

Theme number and developed theme	Code
Theme 1—There was dissatisfaction with administrators' implementation of the PBIS approach with fidelity in the elementary schools	Fidelity Leadership's understanding of PBIS Teachers' use of other behavior classroom management resources
Theme 2—No training, or inadequate PBIS training has been offered to teachers especially as it relates to handling students with challenging misbehaviors	More PBIS training is needed Monitoring student behaviors Use of PBIS sites
Theme 3—The PBIS rewards given to manage student behavior at the Tier I level is relatively effective, but not effective at the Tier II and Tier III levels	PBIS rewards Teacher incentives Ineffective behavior system Student culture Teacher-student relations PBIS documentation Parent support Teacher-to-teacher support
Theme 4—More support from school officials and parents are needed to assist teachers in teaching the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms in order to meet the social and academic needs of the students	School leadership and staff relations Recommendations to leadership with teacher support

Theme 1: Dissatisfaction with administrators' implementation of the PBIS approach with fidelity in the elementary schools.

The first theme focused on how teachers shared their perspectives towards the strong dissatisfaction with how administrators implemented the PBIS approach at the elementary schools in this study. The participants indicated that administrators are inconsistent with implementing the PBIS program. Administration must be consistent with what they say and do when correcting student behavior so that students understand that their misconduct is unacceptable. All of the participants agree that administrators need to receive effective professional PBIS training to establish fidelity in the program. The codes that support this theme are presented below.

115

Code 1: Fidelity. The implementation of the PBIS approach in the elementary school(s) lack fidelity. Based on the perspectives of teacher participants, administrators have not effectively implemented the PBIS approach school-side effectively. The rules and expectations of the PBIS program is outlined on each school's behavior expectation matrix. However, the concern is that students who demonstrate consistent positive behavior expectations are not rewarded or publicly recognized for their efforts in a timely fashion on a regular basis by the administration. Instead, emphasis is placed on students who misbehave. Therefore, Tier I students who follow the rules 75% to 80% of the time, only do so briefly. Then, Tier I students eventually become labeled as Tier II students. On the other hand, Tier II and Tier III students with repetitive disruptive behaviors are not given consequences immediately to abate misconduct. As a result, rewards and incentives are not effective tools to control student conduct, so teachers find the PBIS program ineffective at times.

Rose stated:

In the beginning before the district changed the name to Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS), the name was In-school Suspension (ISS). Just from the name alone there was respect. Now, they call it Positive Behavior Intervention and Support. That in itself gives a mixed message to a child. Because were so afraid to call it discipline, that it gives them an advantage because it is seen as positive behavior support. They don't even recognize that PBIS is a consequence. Now, it could be useful, but more so for K–2 because that's when you're instilling respect for the people in the building, respect for the routines in the building, and respect for the things that are in place in the building. By the time they get to grades three, four and five, if it has not been used properly, then it has lost its value. PBIS has a place, but I think we are so conditioned to not calling the misbehavior negative (or whatever), that it's all mixed because you're calling it positive behavior. So

116

the students say, "Oh I can do that." But they don't get it. We're not supposed to point out

negative behaviors. So, students believe that they can do anything. Then, Ms. Brown

(pseudonym for staff) is the only one in charge of the PBIS room, and I don't think it's a

one person's job. When you really have it, so that it's something more than just you got

kicked out of class, then you know that administration have to beef up what they do, and

how they do it. They have to organize things better. It's important. They have to organize

things better so that students understand that their actions are not acceptable.

Brenda was very passionate and reflective in responses. This educator mentioned that

core values should be taught in schools by teachers and administrators. Moral values get lost

between the expected positive behavior from the students and the rewards that are eventually given

them for proper student conduct. There is no connection or meaning of value taught. Brenda stated,

"I don't see the PBIS consequences preventing students from fighting. In fact, the students did not

get consequences for their negative behavior. The system is broken."

Millie pointed out that the PBIS program is not working. Administration must be consistent

with consequences. Millie stated, "The PBIS approach is not effective in our school and that is

why it is not taught in my classroom". Sarah mentioned that the PBIS program at the school is

50/50. There is no consistency with the program. The administrator(s) are not properly executing

the PBIS program effectively. Sarah stated, "I use my own behavior management. It is based on

what is expected at the beginning of the year, and the routines are set. I don't teach or use the PBIS

approach."

Code 2: Leadership's understanding of PBIS. Although administrators may have some

knowledge of the PBIS program, the teacher participants commented on how administrators,

school board, and even parents need PBIS training for a better execution of the program in the

elementary schools. It is extremely important for administrators to be well versed with the PBIS

program in order to reinforce positive student behavior. In addition, parents should also have a good understanding of the PBIS program so that they can continue to reinforce positive behavior of their children at home which can help to solidify positive behavior at school.

In summary, Andrea stated:

Administrators need to be out in the trenches. In other words, they need to be out of their offices walking around the school building. There is no reason for them not to be seeing the behaviors and understanding the behaviors of the students. If they are well versed in the PBIS approach, then they should reinforce what is happening in the classroom. They do need to take a step out of their offices and see what's happening instead of going straight to a referral or calling a parent saying that, "I can't deal with this today." Sometimes they simply look the other way and tell the teacher to handle it which just reinforces the negative behavior they are getting. When positive behavior is not reinforced, they get something else. Then, it just explodes. They get negative reinforcement from the negative behavior, or positive reinforcement for negative behavior. So, it needs to be a full circle. Parents need to be well versed so that they have an understanding of what the schools are doing. They need to know why we are praising the positive. There are times when I say something great about a student based on the little milestones they have reached from the struggle. Parents just rolls their eyes because it's not an A or a B the student has achieved. Parents don't hear me praising their kid because they have worked so hard. Parents don't understand that. Students are deflated by their parents when they go home after they hear us praising and pushing them even when they take baby steps, and then the student thinks, well, I thought I did well, but I guess I did not.

Code 3: Teachers' use of other behavior classroom management resources. Three of the 10 teacher participants in this study have used the PBIS approach on a regular basis to assist

with teaching students positive behavior. The remaining seven teachers draw from other resources other than the PBIS approach to assist them with instruction on teaching and modeling acceptable behavior. Andrea uses growth mindset and self-monitoring to teach and model good student behavior. Mary uses the program, Time to Teach, which consists of strategies by Andre Wong from the First Week of School. When these strategies are taught at the beginning of the school year and reinforced, students learn and adopt to the new classroom management style environment which encourages positive student behavior and promotes student achievement. Other teachers use teacher-made behavior charts with lesson plans, Cass Dojo, and stress the importance of having the trust of students. Sarah uses the PBIS approach to reward students. However, the Whole Brain Teaching method is used mainly for teaching positive behavior. This particular method helps in establishing routines in the classroom, and allows the routines to build throughout the school year for effective management.

Sarah stated:

I use the Whole Brain Teaching method for classroom management. It has helped. It goes through the procedure for the whole brain teaching. There are about five steps that you introduce and teach at the beginning of school the first day. It talks about raising your hand to speak, or raise your hand to get permission to get out of your seat. So they follow these procedures from the beginning of school throughout the end of the school year. You also use hand motion as well as talking to reiterate content and things. So they get use to patterns of things, and they use the whole brain method to learn it. So, they're engaged. It makes it a lot better when you are instructing so that the students are totally engaged in

119

what you are teaching. The other students can be doing something else like drawing or

coloring while you are providing instruction.

Theme 2: No training, or inadequate PBIS training has been offered to teachers especially as it relates to handling students with challenging misbehaviors.

In order to understand the need for PBIS training related to the positive behavior of

students, there was a need to first understand to what extent the teacher participants received

professional development training of the PBIS program. The teachers' knowledge of the PBIS

program helps to determine if the participants were prepared to teach the PBIS approach to their

students effectively. Seven out of 10 teachers indicated that there was inadequate PBIS training

provided to them especially for students with challenging behaviors. Three out of 10 teachers

stated that they did not receive PBIS training. All of the participants agreed that more PBIS

training is needed for teachers and administrators in the district. The following codes discussed

below support this theme.

Code 4: More PBIS training is needed. The PBIS approach is a program that requires

teachers, administrators, and other school officials to receive ongoing professional development

and training for the benefit of a positive school environment. PBIS training provides the

opportunity for the program to be executed with fidelity. Teacher participants pointed out how

there was not enough ongoing PBIS training in the school which encouraged teachers to use their

own resources to teach positive student conduct. Rose, Sarah, and Andrea received materials about

the program, but did not receive PBIS training. Rose stated, "I have never received training for

PBIS. I didn't know about it until last year. I still call it In-School Suspension (ISS)." Phillip

received no PBIS training, but is interested in receiving PBIS professional development. Millie,

Janet, Brenda, Mary, Ivette, and Kimberly indicated that they received a little PBIS training, but

ongoing training is needed, and the school should move forward in that direction. Kimberly stated,

120

"Even if it's an hour of training that can be given, telling teachers what to do and what type of awards are available, would be beneficial."

Sarah agreed and added:

There should be more PBIS training in our school especially for new teachers coming into the district. I didn't get any training. I remember maybe I had one session with papers given out to teachers, maybe, on this. So, I would say that there needs to be more wide-spread training, or anything to help and assist with student behavior. There definitely needs to be more training.

Code 5: Monitoring student behavior. It is important for teachers to monitor and document student behaviors. Three teacher participants in this study who do not teach the PBIS approach monitor student behavior based on teacher-made behavior charts, positive notes, and other teacher incentives such as extra recess. The other seven teacher participants who have a little understanding of the PBIS approach may use PBIS Red Card rewards for the school's red card store, PBIS Hedgie Dollars, positive referrals, and other rewards of their own creation in the classroom setting.

Rose stated:

I don't really use PBIS approach to monitor student behavior. The principal may give it to them, but very rarely do I write referrals or do PBIS. Most of my students will get referrals from having infractions on the bus or from a staff member in the cafeteria. For me, it is more of a choice and consequence system. At the beginning I let my kids know that every choice has a consequence, and I build that understanding from the beginning. I'm constantly consistent with it, and I don't react one way or the other. It is what it is. Whether it's a minor infraction or whether it's severe, consistency is the thing. So in my class it's a choice and consequence system, and I use those words. It's a choice or consequence. There

is no back and forth about it. Now, I'm not a teacher who call parents a lot. I don't use

parent calls, and I don't use the referral card. I deal with the issue inside the classroom

using the class. If a student did something in the classroom, I point out the effect it has on

the class, and I ask them what do you guys think? There are times when I ask the student to

give me their consequence. You have to decide what consequence you get. I recognize

whether or not they can match the consequence to the infraction. But if they give a

consequence that does not match like some wacky-dacky consequence when they know it

does not "fit the crime", then I'll come in and give a proper consequence. After a while

they learn to be honest and learn to choose consequences that match the infraction.

Mary stated:

I tried to use the PBIS approach. I used red cards to assist with monitoring behavior. Our

school had a store, and students can collect red cards for good student behavior. The cards

added up to be used at the red card store. That's the main way that I used the PBIS reward

system in our school to monitor student behavior. Those students who were motivated by

the cards looked forward to having them. However, some of my other students didn't care.

So, it works well for those who are motivated by it, and not for the ones who don't care.

Some students were motivated by the red cards and some were not. Consistency is key to

the PBIS program. There were times during the year when I was not consistent with using

the red cards because of being busy or because I felt as though I was not getting much from

the PBIS program. Looking back, regardless of what you choose to assist with student

behavior, especially if it's PBIS, if you're not consistent, it's not going to work. Close to

the end of December of that year, the red cards did not impact positive student behavior. I

stopped using the cards. They were no longer effective. I didn't see the need to continue to use them.

Code 6: Use of PBIS sites. All the teacher participants have not accessed PBIS information available online to assist them with teaching the approach to their students. The teachers would rather receive professional training on the program with effective implementation by the administrators. However, Rose, Millie, and Ivette do not use the PBIS approach even though they have some knowledge about it. Ivette shared that the program works well for the lower grades, Kindergarten to second grade, but does not work well for fourth and fifth grade students.

Ivette stated:

I am aware of the PBIS approach even though I do not execute it in my room. The school where I work have implemented them. My issue with the PBIS program in my opinion is, we shouldn't give rewards for what students are supposed to be doing. That's my philosophy. You are expected to do your work, and you are expected to behave. That's how I run my classroom. I am not comfortable with the reward system from the PBIS program. Students are expected to behave whether they receive a reward or not. Therefore, I have not accessed PBIS information online, nor will I do so. It does not work for my students, and I don't believe in it.

Theme 3: The PBIS rewards given to manage student behavior at the Tier I level is relatively effective, but not effective at the Tier II and Tier III levels.

The teacher participants discussed how the PBIS approach with reward incentives is more effective at the Tier I level. At this level, most students listen and follow school expectations with minimal resistance. When this is done, the students are rewarded for their efforts. All participants stated that at the Tier II and Tier III levels, the PBIS approach has not been effective. The rewards

and teacher incentives used in the program with students at these two levels have not transformed student misbehavior.

Code 7: PBIS rewards. Using the rewards system in the PBIS program to monitor behavior has been a challenge for the educators in this study who use it. The teachers expressed that they must be consistent with rewarding students for their efforts. If not, the impact of providing rewards may not be as effective to curtail student misbehavior.

Kimberly stated:

The PBIS rewards approach helps most of my students. However, some students it might help, but then it has to be adjusted because the students get tired of the same rewards. Within the school itself, the program works the same. For some students it works to improve behavior. For other students, it works at the beginning, and then it does not. It all boils down to consistency. How consistent we are makes a difference. I know sometimes that I may forget to give out rewards to the students. There are times when I may say to a student, I owe you this, or I owe you this ticket, but then I forget. So, that may hamper the PBIS rewards program a little bit. As a whole, I think it helps most of my students. I think it helps about 80%. You still have about 20% where it could go either way. As long as the program stays consistent, I believe it works. Some teachers think that the reward has to be candy or something that the students can eat or hold. I found out that giving other rewards can be just as effective. For example, I may give 10 minutes of free time, have a student pick a friend to sit with at lunch, and there are times when they can choose to eat lunch with me. I was surprised when several students preferred to have lunch with me or with another adult.

Sarah stated:

I would have to say that the PBIS approach working in the school district is half and half. I don't believe the PBIS approach is working in our school. There has not been enough consistency with the program for it to be completely effective to what it should be. I guess I would say, no. It's not working.

Code 8: Teacher incentives. Using teacher incentives to encourage positive behavior while teaching the PBIS approach to students is essential according to the perspectives of the teacher participants. The teachers used detention, timeout, and verbal reprimand in the classroom to control negative student behavior. However, the participants have also created and used positive incentives to encourage students to make smart choices as it relates to their conduct. A few positive incentives are Class Dojo, candy, positive behavior posters, charts, and extra recess to help teach and monitor positive student behavior in their classrooms.

Phillip stated:

Besides positive referrals, the thing that I do in my classroom to monitor behavior is to try to build connections. I do it a bit differently to where there are punishments and there are rewards, but I try to build often from the negative student behavior and make something positive out of it. In this way, the students can learn from the mistakes or the actions that they were doing. Some of the discipline consequences that I do for Tier I would be for the students to walk around the playground for recess or have silent lunch. These are consequences that can also be given when we are talking out in whole group or small group when we're not supposed to. For rewards, I would do parties, give treasure chest rewards, candy, positive red cards, and things like that. The big behaviors such as real fighting, not just a push, I would do behavior referrals or report to the principal or assistant principal. That's how I manage my classroom. There are little rewards and little punishments. The

big stuff I deal with, but I try to do everything in my classroom to manage student misbehavior as much as I possibly can.

Code 9: Ineffective behavior system. Monitoring student behavior can be challenging in any educational system. However, the teacher participants expressed their concerns of how they are not comfortable with the way in which school administrators manage student misbehavior using rewards especially at the Tier II and Tier III levels. The teacher participants expressed how the current reward system is not effective with student who have challenging behaviors. A behavior plan for a Tier III student is not always effective because there is inconsistency with expectations, and the students use this knowledge to their benefit. The students know the system. Ivette believes that the PBIS program works just a little better for the younger students in grades K–3 because are still learning the program. However, the PBIS approach does not work very well for students in fourth and fifth grade. In summary, some teacher participants believe that the program is more effective for the lower grades (K–2) rather than for third to fifth grade students.

Janet stated:

There is a major challenge with the PBIS program that I would like to point out. A challenge that I noticed with writing behavior referrals was that the kids knew exactly what to expect. If a student misbehaved, they knew the routine. The student knew that their parents would be called, and they would receive a behavior referral as a consequence. The student's thinking was they will get a referral and whatever consequence they get, they accept. There is no remorse for wrong doing because administrators do not follow-up with the student to encourage positive behavior in the future. Teachers are expected to do it. In-school detention was used mostly by administration. Sometimes when the student(s) returned to class after the in-school suspension, they would return to the classroom and go right back into behaving poorly all over again. So, my challenges is that some of those kids

126

are clued to it, and they know exactly what to say or what to do. They already know the routine for their behavior. But on the other end, for those kids who are not prone to get into trouble a lot, when they get that referral, it was almost like, okay. I'm not going to do this again. It was kind of like, you have some of those kids that would test you, but they don't go that far. When they get a referral, it's like, okay. The student decides to pull back and stop misbehaving. So, those who get the referral on that end has learned to behave, and conclude that they will not misbehave again. On the other hand, the challenge of those kids who are prone to misbehave, they already know what to do or what to say. Another challenge is when incentives are given to fourth grade students for behaviors they should already do in the classroom, such as listening when the teacher is talking. I have an issue with giving incentives for behaviors they should be doing. Because I'm sitting there like, I'm rewarding someone for their bad behavior when they should be doing what is expected anyway in the classroom. So, that was another issue for me when first starting off with their behavior. The students know exactly what they are doing to get a reward. Then it's like okay, after they get the reward, they go back to the misbehavior they were doing before. The students believe that once they get the reward, that's it. So that is my challenge with the program based on the repeated behavior. Once a student gets a consequence, something needs to be done so that the same negative behavior is not going to happen again. Maybe take it a step farther. What can we do to prevent it from happening again? Because they already know what's going to take place, but where is that "Wow" factor? How can we really do this? This is the problem. That is my challenge with the program.

Code 10: Student culture. Teachers were asked about whether or not a students' background or culture played a part in how classroom management is taught in the classroom setting. All the teacher participants indicated that classroom expectations were taught to all

127

students in the same manner and adjustments in consequences were only made based on the severity of the negative behavior. Student culture or ethnicity was deemed to be a non-factor. However, one teacher's perspective expressed that contemporary culture pertaining to music or language can help to define an individual's lifestyle, and how they choose to behave.

Rose stated:

I've only taught in poverty stricken, African-American culture. I don't take into consideration the race or poverty stricken culture of a child. The poverty from a black student is different from the poverty of a white student as well as the affluent black and white students. The skin color or ethnicity of a child does not matter in my classroom. Just like the "Hip Hop" culture doesn't include color, nor the "R& B" culture. A student's culture or ethnicity has nothing to do with how I go about disciplining a student. I basically teach student behavior based on expectations in the classroom. A student's culture or race does not matter. However, a poverty stricken student is a culture in itself.

Code 11: Teacher–student relations. Each teacher participant believed that having teacher-student relations in the classroom helps to manage student conduct. The teachers pointed out that when students are comfortable speaking with their teachers, it opens up a new world of understanding for the teacher. All the teachers expressed the importance of having good student-teacher relations with their students. Keeping students engaged, focused, and being consistent with consequences for student misbehavior has helped to curb negative student behavior. When teachers understand their students and know certain things about them, it helps the teacher to better prepare to meet their social and academic goals.

Mary stated:

Relationships are really important to me. So at the beginning of the year I make sure that I spend a lot of time getting to know the students personally, as much as possible. So during

the school year, I can fall back on that to help with student behavior. I also use Class Dojo. That's a good way that I keep in touch with parents, and it has a point system within it. So, I would use it for positive points only. The student like receiving points that would not be taken away. I found out that Class Dojo was definitely a motivator for teaching positive students behavior as well, and it helped to keep me organized.

Phillip stated:

The PBIS is very effective in my classroom. The program is effective because I have a variety of behaviors in my room and around the school. I know that I have seen other grade levels use the program as well, and it seems as though it runs very well in the whole school. The big positive that I see is the connections that happens in the program. The kids understand what their mistakes were, and why they should do better to help build a positive classroom climate. They understand why you don't want them to do a certain thing, or why they shouldn't act in a certain way, and it helps to build your connection together with the students as a whole. The teacher is connected with the student. Relationships have formed that I have built with the students.

Rose stated:

If teachers feel that classroom management is a one stop shop, it's not. A teacher needs students in order for a class to run smoothly. It becomes an even exchange actually of respect and courtesy. I feel like in order to have good classroom management you have to have a relationship with the students. You have to be honest. You have to be consistent. You have to be transparent. I feel like literally they have to understand that every day is a new day because they are children. If it feels like you're going to hold a grudge against a student, or if a child feels that he can't do anything right after they have done something wrong, and you choose to hold a grudge against the child, that's not right. Trying to have

129

relations with the student is not going to work. A student needs to have a clean slate every day. It's important for a student to know that my teacher understands, and I can change today. If I can't change today, I can change tomorrow. So just understand that every day is a new day, but also establishing respect. Not just the kid has to respect the adult, but the adult has to respect the student, where they come from, and what they come to the classroom with. There are students who are bad even at home. But I don't understand why they are bad. I don't understand their situation at home. So, whatever happens at home, I can't tell them what to do or how to behave at home. Students behave the way they do at home because maybe they have to behave that way. But when they are at school, it's important for them to understand that they are in a safe place. I've learned not to denounce what they come to me with, or to make them feel bad. The way they communicate could be the way people communicate with them. They may have to be rude sometimes at home, but the understanding should be that it's not good to do it at school. So, establishing an understanding of mutual respect and where they come from is important. It's a balancing act. When I respect them, they should respect from me. Then a teacher-student relationship can be effective.

Code 12: PBIS documentation. PBIS behavior documentation is used to track student behavior. Keeping track of student conduct through rewards, office referrals, consequences, intervention, and parent contacts can help a school to run smoothly. There is a PBIS software tool, Data Tracking, used by the school district to help track student behavior.

The tracking of PBIS documentation of student misbehaviors through office behavior referrals is often challenging for teachers because of the frequency of misbehaviors in the classroom or in the school. According to the participants, it is hard to keep up with documentation that is filed away and not used until a certain amount has been written up for a student. Depending

on the behavior, teachers pointed out that there is also a written process that teacher must follow

before a student can be removed from the classroom to see an administrator. These procedures are

seen as tedious and prolongs the follow-up time for a student to receive consequences for their

behavior. This delay appears to encourage inappropriate and unacceptable behavior. However, all

teacher participants believe that PBIS documentation requires too much paper work and is

ineffective at their school.

Rose stated:

I think that they are trying to change with the times, and I understand that. But I don't think

that the way they run it is effective. And I think it's because they are jumping through too

many hoops to get to the consequence. So, if a child does something, in Tier I, you have to

have a conversation with whoever . . . whatever the group or problem is. Then, in Tier II

you've got to make sure you've had this conversation before you can do a write-up on this

piece of paper. Then, in Tier III, you have to make sure that you have a conversation, write

it up on another piece of paper, and then contact parents. So you're creating too many

hoops to get to the consequence. By that time, the effectiveness is worn off. I understand

that they are trying to change with the times, because everything in old-school does not

apply to new-school. Positive choices has lost its effectiveness because you're doing too

much. Teachers are documenting too much and it affecting their teaching and not

improving student behavior.

Janet stated:

 I try to follow the protocol when it comes to filling out behavior forms. There are

conference forms to be completed with the student, ongoing documentation sheets to justify

that you are talking with the student and monitoring their behavior, and documentation of

phone calls to parents. In addition to that, I have to document three misconduct of the same

behavior. Then, I can write up a behavior referral form for an in-school suspension which has to be justified by an administrator before the child can serve the time. It's too much.

Code 13: Parent support. Parents are stake holders in the school system. It is important that they are aware of how their children are progressing in school on an academic and social level. However, communicating with parents about student(s) misbehavior can be a daunting task for teachers. As a result, parent contact by the teacher or administrator is often the final resort to help manage student behavior. All the participants shared that communicating with parents to solicit their support in the classroom setting is extremely important, yet can be challenging. Many parents work and are unable to give classroom support. Millie mentioned that it is extremely important for parents to give support and reinforce school expectations which can be done by talking to their child in a positive way. However, this can only be done when parents are aware of school procedures and involved in the school.

Andrea stated:

Parents need to be well versed, or have an understanding that we are using the PBIS approach to assist with managing student behavior. They need to know that this is what we are doing. They need to know why we are praising the positive. There are times when I say something great to parents about their kids based on the little milestones they have reached from the behavior struggle. Parents just rolls their eyes because it's not an A or a B that their child made on a test or report card. The parents don't hear me praising this kid because they have worked so hard. They don't understand that. And so it deflates the student when they go home after they hear us praising and pushing them at school (even if it's the baby steps they made). Then they go home and think, well, I thought I did well, but I guess I did not. Parents do not support the positive praises at home. Therefore, students

get mixed messages about expectations and return to school with the same negative behavior.

Code 14: Teacher-to-teacher support. Teachers are always in need of some type of classroom support when dealing with student behavior. According to all the teacher participants, the team-based approach is efficacious. They rely on each other for so many things when it comes to discipline especially when the support from administration is lacking. Kimberly mentioned that it is always good when a teacher gives support to another colleague. Grade team teachers also supported one another by sending students who misbehaved to each other classrooms for a time out period. Phillip indicated that his team of teachers would send boys and/or girls to his room, and ultimately the student(s) would have a better day. "We rely on one another as a team." Janet recalls assisting a colleagues in addressing a student issues in the hallway.

Janet stated:

I saw two girls having a little drama in the hallway. I addressed the matter, spoke with other students who saw the misbehavior, and wrote-up the two students. I eventually told the classroom teacher what had happened, and she thanked me. We need to look out for each other.

Millie stated:

The team-based approach is very good. The teachers look forward to it especially when they're having a hard day. The kids may bully each other, and they keep at it. Working collectively with my team of teachers is better. The team-based approach works better.

Rose stated:

So the way I approach it, or my perspective is a little different. The team approach would be helpful. I think the team approach would be helpful to support the teachers that are not comfortable with disciplining kids, or those teachers that are not knowledgeable, or those

133

teachers that just can't get it done right. Helping them out by having their students sit in my classroom is good, but another team approach may be better.

Theme 4: More support from school officials and parents are needed to assist teachers in managing student misbehavior when utilizing the PBIS approach in the classroom to meet the social and academic needs of fourth and fifth grade students.

To understand the need for more teacher support, I had to understand to what extend were they not currently given sufficient administrative support. There was a strong need for school officials, teachers, and parents to work together as one unit for the good of the students. The participants stated that unity was lacking and change was needed. The participants were willing to give recommendations to assist the administration with moving in a new direction when managing student misbehavior.

Code 15: School leadership and staff relations. The administration and teachers within the school district of this study have the same goal which is to address challenging student behaviors. How best to go about teaching and addressing student misconduct is where school leadership and staff relations differ. The participants pointed out that it is beneficial for the students when everyone, principals, teachers, and staff, are a part of a consistent well-structured discipline program. If the PBIS approach is to be effective, then effective training must be in place so that it can address all discipline concerns. Ongoing support from leadership is essential.

Millie stated:

It is important to have principal, assistant principal, and teachers on board. We need to
know how to utilize the tools of the PBIS approach effectively by working together.
Everybody needs to be on one accord. Also, the Parent-Teacher Organization (PTO) should
assist with explaining to parents what the school expectations are so that they understand as
well. If we need to make changes to manage our students better, then we should do so. I

134

also believe that incidents should be documented well before going to speak with parents. When the parents know what the expectations are, then they can reinforce it at home and help directly with the behaviors teachers see in the classroom.

Code 16: Recommendations to leadership with teacher support. The teacher participants provided suggestions or recommendations concerning how best to manage student behavior. The concern expressed is that there is a lack of consistency as it relates to behavior expectations. The PBIS expectations are written down, posted, and in place. However, the teaching and implementation of the expectations to the students in an effective manner needs improvement. Therefore, the teacher participants have made a few recommendations to leadership. All teacher participants believe that their recommendations will help with the support of PBIS implementation. Mary, Phillip, and Brenda believe that more classroom support is needed, additional school counselors are also needed to help deal with students who have physical aggression. All participants believe a cool-down space or area in the school should be provided where a human resource is available to speak with students. Additional suggestions were given to school officials, the school board, and parents.

Rose suggested:

The team-based approach that teachers use to help one another with student discipline, should also be for the students and not just for the teachers. The way I see it is when a child is expelled, they have to go before a disciplinary board, a team of teachers. I think the team approach would be effective if they use the team approach for the child. In other words, you have a disciplinary team of teachers that students have to go to and explain their wrong doing or actions to. So it's a matter of a team of educators or a team of teachers assisting with how to effectively discipline the child or to assist with the management of the child. If there is a discipline committee of teachers that the child has to go before, he knows he has

to tell what he did wrong and tell why he did it, as opposed to writing these letters, which will make the student accountable before the board of teachers. Let the child answer to the team. The team approach would work, but how you use that team approach will determine how effective it is.

Andrea suggested:

It is extremely important for administrators to be well versed with the PBIS program to reinforce the behavior. Parents must also have a good understanding of the PBIS approach so that they can reinforce what teachers do at school. A handbook can be given out to parents and guardians. The school board must do their part by informing parents about how we can all work together to minimize student misbehavior. Everyone should do their part. Also, there are students who are going through a lot at home and they bring their family issues to school which can cause them to act out. I believe that mental health classes should be offered to students at school in order to help to deescalate behavioral issues. Students need to be reminded that they can be frustrated over a matter, but what matters is how they choose to handle the issue. Schools are missing mental health. They don't realize that students have so much to cope with.

Kimberly suggested:

Teachers and administrators are a team working together towards the same goal. Kids need to have reinforcement to help them when they misbehave. They also need reinforcement from their administrators, not just from the teachers. Repeated misbehavior acts are done because the child doesn't get it. Having each other backs and support is what we need. It's not working for the child when we do not support one another. The PBIS approach may not work with every single child. Therefore, we need to find something that works. Here is another suggestion, it would be good to have a cool-down spot in the school. The school

136

needs some place where the child could go for a minute and cool-down from his or her

negative behavior for about 10–15 minutes or just to finish their work.

Documents

I used Hatch's (2002) interpretive analysis model to analyze the document data. The

documents provided by the teacher participants included the School-Wide Expectations from the

district website. These documents focused on each schools' expectations in all areas within the

school setting. Documented on the Elementary School-Wide Expectations were directives for

expected hallway, cafeteria, restroom, playground behavior, and other student behavior

expectations. Parent brochures for these school-wide expectations were posted on the school's

website. The teacher participants provided classroom documentations that were used to assist with

teaching positive student behavior using the PBIS approach. Teachers also provided their own

teacher-made posters that were used in establishing classroom expectations in the classroom

setting. These teacher-made posters and charts were not a part of the PBIS program.

I read through and analyzed the received documents to identify the differences in the

collected data. I created a matrix which helped to identify three themes. The themes were used to

refer back to the data in order to find and justify the evidence. A comprehensive review of the data

was completed. Examples were identified which helped to represent the findings. Table 3 provides

specific interpretive information, emergent themes, and supporting data collected from the

documents provided. The data and analysis process for collected document resulted in 23 codes

that emerged with three themes (see Table 3). In this section, the data and analysis of the findings

are presented.

Table 3.

Overview of Themes and Corresponding Documents

Emergent themes	Codes
Theme A – The schools provided School-Wide Expectations and Team Program K–5 School Discipline check list for its students and teachers.	Website: School-Wide Expectations "Be a HERO"-Honest, Exceptional, Responsible, Organized) Website: School-Wide Expectations Parent Brochure "Operation RED" (Responsible, Every, Day) Tier I, II, & III School Discipline Sheet
Theme B - School expectations are taught by teachers using the created lesson plans, forms, and posters in all areas of the school setting with additional teacher-made behavior charts.	PBIS Lesson Plans RED Expectation Forms Bus- "Follow directions, report bullying…" Arriving to School- "Walk quietly to assigned area, carry all belongings…" Cafeteria Line- "Wait patiently, speak quietly and politely, memorize lunch number…" Breakfast- "Take what you intend to eat, throw away all trash…" Assembly- "Attentive listener, show appreciation by clapping…" Restroom- "Respect the privacy of others, wash hands before leaving restroom…" Lunch- "Eat own food, clean your area, speak quietly…" Playground- "Take turns on equipment, include others when playing, report unsafe behavior…" Nurse/Office/Guidance-Bring pass, wait patiently, follow directions…" Hallway- "Walk quietly and directly to assigned area, follow safety patrol…" PBIS Student Mission Statement Teacher-made posters/charts

(continued)

Emergent Themes	Codes
Theme C - PBIS rewards and teacher incentives are used to help teach, implement, and manage positive students' behavior.	Students use PBIS RED Cards to purchase items at the RED Card Store. Students use PBIS Hedgie Dollars to purchase items at the Hedgie Store. Students are taught PBIS expectations where they earn rewards, teacher incentives, and learn that positive student behavior is always expected. Students receive weekly positive PBIS referrals from teachers. Teachers create their own class norms. Teacher-made positive behavior posters and/or charts to monitor behavior. Teachers give student incentives such as extra recess, lunch with the teacher or a friend, homework pass, or free time.

Note. Three interpretations: (a) program expectations of students, (b) program description of what is taught, and (c) program rewards and incentives for student management.

Theme A: The schools provide School-Wide Expectations for its students and teachers. The first theme that emerged and identified from the documents was teaching the School-Wide Expectations. The administration and teachers created these expectations for their schools. Each school had their expectations posted on the district website. Teachers created lesson plans at the beginning of the school year to teach the expectations of student behavior. The School-Wide Expectation lessons were to place emphasis on how the students would conduct themselves throughout the school year in all areas of the school and to and from school on the school buses. The lessons included teachers modeling to students in the classroom and in other areas of the school how they should show positive behavior. Students who followed the PBIS expectations of the school would be rewarded for their efforts. Administration, teachers, staff, and parents were expected to reinforce these expectations as needed.

Theme B: School expectations are taught by teachers using created lesson plans and posters in all areas of the school setting with additional teacher-made behavior charts. The

documents for teaching the School-Wide PBIS expectations were displayed on posters or charts in classrooms and around the school buildings. Teachers placed emphasis on the importance of following the expectations daily. Other teacher-made charts and posters were also created by teachers. These teachers did not use the PBIS approach in their classrooms to teach school expectations and routines. Three teacher participants in this study taught the students their own classroom management routine. Four teacher participants taught the PBIS expectations at the beginning of the year and then stopped. These teachers saw inconsistencies in the program as it relates to their students and resorted to teaching their own method(s) of behavior classroom management. Three teacher participants used the School-Wide PBIS expectations approach throughout the year believing they had no other recourse. All the teacher participants want to be consistent with the expectations of student behavior.

Theme C: PBIS rewards and teacher incentives are used to help teach, implement, and manage positive students' behavior. PBIS rewards are created and used to encourage students to comply with the created School-Wide PBIS expectations. The PBIS school stores provide toys or prizes to students who have collected enough positive cards or dollars to purchase these items on a weekly basis. The teacher participants in this study believe more in rewarding students when they follow school directives, not rewarding them to follow school expectations. The teachers also believe that student take advantage of the PBIS program. They know what they are doing. The participants who do not use the PBIS program believe that students only behave to get the reward(s). After the reward is received, the students return to their misbehavior knowing that they will be offered more rewards to behave. So, the reward strategy to improve student behavior does not have a great effect on fourth and fifth grade students regardless of their ethnicity or culture.

Summary

In this chapter, I revisited the purpose of the study and the research question that lead to tackling this qualitative study. I included a description of each participant and their educational background in teaching. The methodology was presented in a clear step-by-step process of how the data was collected and analyzed. The data from the interview sessions were organized by emergent themes, and the codes used to identify the themes were based on evidence from the interviews of the participants. The data collected from the documents were organized by emergent themes, and excerpts from the documents listed were described and supported the themes. Findings of the study from elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences using the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms revealed that there has been limited, inconsistent, or no teacher training in the PBIS approach. As a result, the teacher participants have expressed their desire to share with administration suggestions of how best to address student conduct in a more professional and consistent manner. The documents collected suggested that the school tries to maintain high standards for their students. The teacher-made artifacts that were not related to the PBIS program showed that teachers are willing to help administration establish an effective behavior management program that is consistent and effective for their school.

This chapter presented the data and the results of the study. In Chapter 5, I provide my interpretation of the results. I discuss the results as it relates to the literature. Recommendations for further research of the effects of the PBIS approach in elementary schools is provided along with a conclusion.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

The PBIS approach is a program that can significantly impact student behavior. Using the PBIS approach in a classroom setting requires teachers to have an understanding of the fundamental concepts related to behavioral student management. Students need to have the knowledge of how best to control and manage their behavior based on circumstances. In addition, students also need to learn self-discipline as well as how to problem solve issues or concerns through effective collaboration. In order to provide students with this knowledge, school staff need to incorporate a behavior management program to build students' confidence and self-esteem.

The teachers from HES district who participated in this study believe that administrators and teachers have the tools to help foster students' abilities in learning self-discipline. The purpose of this study was to understand the perspectives and experiences of elementary teachers teaching and using the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Data collected through two semistructured interviews provided insights from 10 elementary teachers who taught at two elementary schools within the HES district. The documents collected provided additional information into the teachers' perspectives and experiences of the PBIS approach as well as the teaching of other behavior management approaches and strategies.

Chapter 5 presents a summary and a discussion of the results based on the relation to the literature and the conceptual framework, constructivism, which guided this study. Key findings are presented in relation to the literature presented in Chapter 2. Limitations of the study are discussed as well as the implications of the results for practice, policy, and theory. Finally, the chapter presents recommendations for further research and the conclusion of the study.

Summary of the Results

For this study, the research literature provided background information on how public school teachers in the U.S. used the PBIS program to assist in teaching and managing student

conduct in order to educate pupils effectively. Teacher training in the PBIS approach is imperative for executing the program with fidelity. This study focused on understanding the effectiveness of the PBIS program at the HES district through teaching, managing, and implementing the approach for improvement in student behavior.

This study was guided by the central research question: What are teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms? This question was created to address the topic of behavioral classroom management using the PBIS intervention program. I utilized semistructured interviews to collect data from teacher participants who shared their perspectives and experiences teaching the PBIS approach in the classroom setting. The PBIS approach is a research-based behavioral intervention program (Bradshaw et al., 2015; Simonsen, & Myers, 2015; PBIS, 2017). The PBIS approach was adopted in the 1990s to assist U.S. schools to address behavioral issues with the most challenging behaviors (Bradshaw et al., 2015; Simonsen, & Myers, 2015; PBIS, 2017). The data revealed that for fourth and fifth grade elementary teachers, using the PBIS approach to teach positive student behavior in the classroom setting has been challenging and lacking in fidelity. The interviews provided descriptive information about the perspectives and experiences of the participants.

Teachers in the study experienced challenges to teaching the PBIS approach from students, administrators, and parents. Students presented challenges to teachers using the PBIS approach as a classroom management tool to assist with academic instruction. Positive classroom rewards and incentives were not effective for all three Tier level students. Based on teachers' experiences, most of the students, especially those at Tier Level II and Tier Level III, used the reward system to their own advantage. Administrators also presented challenges to teachers by requiring constant written documentation. Administrators required teachers to take care of classroom misbehaviors in their own classrooms using the action step of completing three written documentation forms of student

misconduct. Behavior documentation forms had to be completed by teachers prior to writing a student behavior referral. Based on the participants' experiences with administration, behavioral documentation was a challenge. In addition, parents were challenging as well. Many parents were not well-informed about the PBIS program within the schools. As a result of not understanding the PBIS approach and what it entailed, parental assistance for the program by speaking with their children at home to reinforce positive behavior was scarce.

The teacher participants applied many strategies in teaching the PBIS approach as well as other behavior classroom management resources. Teachers indicated the need of support from their colleagues and school officials in order to feel that they are effectively teaching the PBIS approach while developing their own competence to teach. Based on the 10 teacher participants, seven teachers are interested in an effective PBIS training for teachers and administrators to address student conduct, and three are not interested in the philosophy of PBIS program. All participants believed that the current process to address student misbehavior in the fourth and fifth grade classrooms has not been effective, and more knowledge or pedagogical perspectives on classroom management is needed.

The documents in the study revealed that the teacher participants are able to implement the PBIS approach as a part of their behavioral student management while students are matriculating. The teacher participants are committed to using PBIS teaching aids and documentations to teach the PBIS approach while using other behavioral classroom management strategies as a part of their instructional time to assist with student learning. Even though teachers feel overwhelmed, the use of classroom behavior documents and the time to teach positive behavior to all students is equitable. The participants believe that students should receive consistent valuable learning experiences which can positively impact their overall behavior.

Discussion of the Results

To answer the research question, I explored the perspectives and experiences of elementary teachers about teaching the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. The participants shared a wide range of perspectives related to using the PBIS approach and other classroom management strategies based on their experiences with student misbehavior. In the study, the teacher participants shared the following perspectives and recommendations:

- the school behavior management program lacks fidelity based on teacher dissatisfaction

- the school incentive program is ineffective especially for students with challenging behaviors

- more training is needed for teachers and administrators in student behavior management

- administrative support is needed in the classroom.

The participants shared their frustration with inconsistency of the PBIS program which lacked fidelity. The time taken to plan and teach PBIS expectations in the morning each day or as needed proved challenging and a waste of time because expectations were not reinforced with consequences in a timely manner. Instead of time allocated for teachers to model, review, and reinforce expectations with immediate student consequences if needed, teacher documentation of student behavior took precedence. Teachers were expected to have three consecutive documented conference sessions with a student about their behavior before a behavior referral could be written. Therefore, misbehaviors continued because it became overwhelmingly challenging for teachers to keep up with the paper work to document and manage student infractions on a daily basis without assistance while still teaching content or new curriculum. The participants' perspectives were administrators believed that when teachers complete misbehavior forms or referrals in the

145

classroom, it would help to alleviate or stop challenging behaviors. However, the time used to teach and model PBIS expectations was ineffective and lacked fidelity.

More PBIS training for teachers and administrators was needed. The participants expressed that school officials and teachers were not knowledgeable enough about the PBIS program. All teacher participants indicated that they were not well prepared as they should be to execute the PBIS approach effectively. Knowledge is power and can make a difference with how well a behavior program is implemented into a school district.

Teachers pointed out how the PBIS rewards system was ineffective especially for students at the Tier II and Tier III levels. The teachers experienced behavior challenges from students which at times were beyond their control. Students used the positive behavior reward system to receive prizes, gifts, or incentives from teachers for displaying positive behavior only to then change their behavior back to misconduct once rewards were received. Realizing this behavior strategy, the participants used other classroom management resources and strategies coupled with the PBIS approach which proved to be more effective when managing student misconduct especially at the Tier II and Tier III levels. As a result, teachers used their own classroom behavior strategies to address student misbehavior. Using rewards and incentives to assist with teaching the PBIS approach fourth and fifth grade classrooms to manage student behavior waned.

The participants stated that more administrative support to assist teachers in the classroom was needed. Reaching out to school administrators for classroom support was disappointing. The teachers suggested recommendations to help with the process. Most teachers felt they could increase and stabilize consistency in teaching positive student behavior using the PBIS approach if they had readily available support from administrators, school officials, and parents. All of the factors stated were teachers' perspectives and experiences teaching the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms with limited time, knowledge, and support.

Discussion of the Results in Relation to the Literature

The literature review related to teachers incorporating the PBIS approach as an effective behavior management program in the classroom setting. The PBIS approach in elementary schools is an emerging instructional behavioral program created to address and minimize student misbehavior. Participants in this study provided insight into the limited knowledge base of elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences teaching the PBIS approach. The available literature had limited research on elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. The review also had limited research on the challenges or barriers to the PBIS program which was experienced by the teachers in this study. According to Carter (2017), there can be barriers when implementing PBIS. The participants' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS approach will add to literature and provide insight for future research on this topic.

The literature revealed that helping teachers develop the necessary pedagogy for classroom management can be a complicated task. According to Davis (2007), teachers should have the understanding that the classroom is a complex space that can provide a relational environment for student learning. Establishing such an environment can be an important yet a challenging task (Baker et al., 2016; Garrett, 2014; Simonsen & Myers, 2015).

Participants understood the need to have an effective behavior management system in a learning environment. The literature stated how school districts find themselves needing new programs to address behavioral needs of students (West, 2014). The PBIS program was adopted by the HES district to manage student behavior in the classrooms and school-wide (SW-PBIS). The study supported the literature in four aspects: (a) the teachers are in need of effective in-service training to assist with instructing the PBIS approach with fidelity, (b) teachers are not receiving the training needed to instruct the PBIS approach effectively to students in fourth and fifth grades, (c)

147

teachers using the PBIS program, impacts their behavioral practices toward teaching and learning, and (d) teacher support from school leadership is foremost in helping to meet the social and academic needs of students.

According to Sugai and Horner (2009), the PBIS program stresses the importance of continuous professional development for teachers and those in leadership positions. Teachers are in need of effective in-service training to assist with instructing the PBIS approach with fidelity. When training is received, fidelity in the program is accomplished. Fidelity in PBIS is fairness for all students, reporting student conduct, and providing attainable rewards for positive student behavior. The participants expressed their dissatisfaction with the lack of PBIS training received by teachers and administrators. As a result, inconsistencies were found while the program was executed. The greatest concern was how teachers believed that students who misbehaved were not given consequences in a timely manner. Instead, more emphasis was placed on the process of at least three student documentation by teachers prior to the completion of one discipline referral. Teachers believed that the documentations that were required was excessive by administrators to the point where student consequences were eventually ineffective. Schools that have adopted the PBIS approach should reward students for their efforts, provide consequences as needed, and use the opportunity for re-teaching positive student behavior (Banks, 2014; Betters-Bubon et al., 2016; Fallon et al., 2015; Sugai & Horner, 2002; 2010). In addition, continuous progress monitoring of student behavior pertaining to classroom rules and procedures should be documented. Discipline referrals collected as data is essential for PBIS effectiveness, relevance, and fidelity (Sugai & Simonsen, 2012).

Teachers indicated that they are not receiving the training needed to instruct the PBIS approach effectively to students in fourth and fifth grades. Teacher training through professional development has been essential with best practices in the teaching profession. Researchers support

148

the idea that teachers need to have more professional development programs to support students with behavioral issues. Behavioral classroom management through coaching within a school is vital (Reinke et al., 2014; Sugai & Horner, 2010).

Constructivism provided the foundation for teachers understanding of how their perspectives and experiences using the PBIS program impacted their behavioral practices toward learning and then teaching the PBIS approach their students. Constructivism indicates that learning is based on experiences from the learner and guided to new understanding (Stake, 1995). In this study, the teacher participants were able to use their prior learning experiences of classroom management or resource information to guide them into how best to instruct positive behavior to their students. The teachers concluded that more learning is needed through professional development for better implementation and consistency of the PBIS program.

Teachers indicated that receiving support from school leadership has been beneficial in helping to meet the social and academic needs of students. According to Reinke et al (2014), teachers who received support in the classroom from school officials supported students with disruptive behavior which decreased rates of misbehavior. Reinke et al (2014) stated further that the decreased in student misconduct resulted in an increase of prosocial behavior. Administrators who are supportive to their teachers will create an environment where they willing to work, give of their best, and not ultimately quit or leave the profession (Postholm, 2013; Rusk, 2013). The teacher participants discussed how more support from administrators and school officials is needed as it relates to managing effectively student discipline in the classrooms and in the school building.

Recommendations were suggested to administrators to begin the process for change and school improvement of student behavior. The participants recommended classroom support for students with challenging behaviors, providing a counseling cool-down space in the school building where students can express their concerns as well as control their physical aggression in a

safe and productive way. The elementary teachers considered their beliefs about teaching the PBIS approach as impactful on their pedagogy and the lives of their students.

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

Limitations are constraints beyond a researcher's control that influence the outcome of the study (Hatch, 2002). Limitations and delimitations are weaknesses and conditions in the research that may affect the study (Creswell, 2017). This study provided the perspectives and experiences of a small sample of fourth and fifth grade teachers from two elementary schools in one school district. I identified five limitations of this study: (a) the study sample included 10 participants in a rural school district in Virginia, (b) the study design was a qualitative case study design which was limited by the interview questions asked and the documents shared with me by the participants, (c) the research method was limited to a qualitative case study, (d) the data collection depended on two semistructured interviews with collected documents from participants, and (e) time constraints were a limitation on the interview session of 60 minutes per session.

<div align="center">**Implications of the Results for Practice, Policy, and Theory**</div>

The conceptual framework that guided this study was the constructivist theory of learning. The constructivist theory of learning allows individuals to use previous experiences to develop knowledge and new understanding (Creswell, 2013). The implications of the findings from this study can help to guide practice, policy, and theory. This section presents the relation to practice and policy and how it links to the current literature regarding the PBIS approach used for instruction. I will conclude this section with a presentation of the results relating to the conceptual framework in this study.

Practice

The school district in this study could implement practice recommendations in this section in order to build an effective school-wide PBIS program. Implementing practice recommendations

could support teachers, stakeholders, and ultimately impact student behavior. When a change in direction is needed in any organization, an easy transition is recommended rather than too many changes occurring within the same span of time. Focusing on recommendations can allow for an easier effective implementation of the PBIS program.

Professional development training. A gap in practice was explored and presented in the lack of effective professional development or in-service trainings from the participants in the learning and practice of the PBIS approach. Administrators in the HES district should make the PBIS approach a focus of instructional daily practice and create professional development sessions for teachers, office staff, and administrators. Teachers understand the importance of establishing and managing a well-structured learning environment. The best way to do so is to have a consistent behavior expectation policy that is executed by all stakeholders with fidelity. Administrators, teachers, and staff members must be trained to assist with accomplishing student behavioral expectations. Even though teachers understand the importance of effective behavioral classroom management using the PBIS program or other educational behavior resources, there were barriers that would have to be removed, such as lack of administrative support, lack of professional development, and lack of consistency in the behavioral program of the school. It is the responsibility of school leadership to schedule the necessary professional development sessions needed to bridge the gap between what teachers are knowledgeable about and the skills needed to effectively instruct students with challenging behaviors in the classroom setting.

The results of this study indicated that although the fourth and fifth grade elementary teachers received undergraduate and graduate degrees that would address the average student's classroom behavior, no preservice training addressed excessive student misbehavior. Therefore, school districts are left to provide teachers with the proper training in order to meet the behavioral needs of all students. Evidence-based professional development can prepare teachers with the

knowledge to support the behavioral practice of teaching positive student behavior to students in order to encourage learning. On designated professional development days, trainings can be offered.

Professional development for teachers, staff, and administrators can be provided in a wide range of options. Trainings can be conveyed from traditional models of learning. Professional learning networks can be received informally through digital sources outside of schools or districts though online platforms. To keep teachers informed, many options of professional development can be presented. Professional development opportunities can be advertised through flyers, online sites, webinars, YouTube, Twitter, other school districts, and possible off-campus locations for continued professional growth. Professional development provides the opportunity for customized learning so that teachers can receive the experiences needed. PBIS trainings should include resources in the areas of hands-on elements, possible digital software, and the ability to explore how the PBIS program works with schools who have experienced successes.

Generate a mindset for change. Teachers are educators who have the mindset to adopt new learning as a part of their profession. Concerns in the classroom setting is often shared with other colleagues or administrators so that changes can be made for improvement. Listening to teachers who share recommendations for change or improvement is important because they experience how well behavior expectations are working the classroom setting. Teaching the PBIS approach to fourth and fifth grade students is a learning experience that requires teachers to have some level of understanding in how best to execute the process as well as how best to make adjustments as needed based on students' responses. However, no one is expected for teachers to fully mastery the PBIS approach before it is taught to students. The goal is for teachers to teach, facilitate learning, and have the mindset to help solve disruptive student behavior regardless of how challenging the task. Administrators and teachers seeking knowledge continually of how best

to establish a positive learning environment with students would be a step towards problem-solving and the beginning of change. Ongoing learning is an asset to any program with a mindset for change and improvement.

  Establish classroom community. Establishing a classroom environment for change requires having positive teacher-student relation (Banks, 2014; Davis, 2017; Freeman et al., 2016; Hansen, 2014; Houchens et al., 2017). Teachers should strive to encourage students to interact respectfully towards their peers and supervising adults. Teaching, modeling, and providing multiple learning opportunities for students to interact with others is paramount in building a safe and positive learning environment. Teachers should provide a classroom culture allowing all students to share their ideas as well as listen to others in a safe, inclusive, and comfortable environment knowing that classroom culture influences student behavior (Betters-Bubon et al., 2016; Davis, 2017). When teachers provide instructional knowledge for students to learn and model the required school behavior expectations, there should be a clear understanding that everyone ought to work together as a classroom community to build success.

  Establish effective communication. It is important for school administrators to provide a clear vision of expected student behavior in classrooms and in the school system to all stakeholders. Having a good understanding of the PBIS approach and why it was selected by the school district for implementation in all schools to assist mainly in managing student behavior is necessary. When there is a consistent message of the PBIS program across the organization, it will ensure coherence and proper implementation. Administrators and teachers can help stakeholders to better understand their role in its implementation and how they can assist with the process. It should be articulated and understood that administrators and teachers are building their knowledge through professional development learning opportunities in order to provide a consistent and effective implementation of the PBIS program. Encouragement is of all stakeholders.

Establish teamwork among administrators and teachers. In the study, teacher participants expressed how they support each other through working together as a grade team to address student misbehaviors. However, the teachers discussed having strong dissatisfaction with administrators based on how the implementation of the PBIS approach was executed in the school and classroom environment. Administrators did not speak personally with teachers about behavioral concerns. Instead, many were told to handle classroom behavioral situations through written documentation that required an action-step process before behavior referrals could be written, sent to the office, and followed by consequences given to the students. Teachers were not comfortable with the lack of support given by administrators to address classroom disruptions.

According to Reinke et al (2014), it is important for teachers to receive support in the classroom to implement practices to handle disruptive behavior. Based on his study, there have been decreased rates of disruptive behavior in the classroom setting and an increase in prosocial behavior (Reinke et al., 2014). Continued administrative support especially after educational training would be helpful to any teacher experiencing challenges with student behavior. Teachers expressed how they wish to be united with their administrators when it comes to student behavior. The process would have to begin with teamwork with a united vision for the future of the school.

Build community awareness and support. Disseminating information in the community through flyers and dispatch school news websites to families electronically on the importance of the PBIS approach could help to inform and bring community awareness. This type of engagement may require time and effort to educate families and encourage them to reinforce taught behaviors to their children at home based on what has been learned at school. However, the benefits could be very productive. Parents tend to want what is best for their child and any support from the school system can only help. When schools and the community create a partnership for the growth and well-being of students, effective learning can take place. Placing emphasis on the PBIS approach

154

by building a connection through a school-community initiative awareness program will provide an opportunity to increase positive student behavior and student engagement.

Policy

The results of this case study based on the sample of 10 elementary teachers in fourth and fifth grade indicated a need to receive professional development related to instructing the PBIS approach. When looking at policy, it would be best for school leadership at HES to provide enrollment for in-service training to their administrators, teachers, and staff that would specifically address how to teach and implement the PBIS program with fidelity. The PBIS approach is a systems-based approach used in U.S. schools to address disruptive student behavior (Berg & Aber, 2015; Collins & Ryan, 2016; Dwyer, 2013; Halliburton, 2015; Houchens et al., 2017; McDaniel et al., 2017; Rusk, 2016; Sugai & Simonsen, 2012; PBIS, 2017).

Provide preparation programs. There is a need to address attention to the gap between inadequate training related to the instruction of the PBIS approach. The teacher participants discussed improvement needs in the school. However, the most notable need was not having consistency throughout the school when teaching the approach to students. It would be in the school district best interest to look at the PBIS in-service training or preparation programs received by administrators and teachers at the beginning of the school term in relation to the execution of the PBIS approach throughout the entire school year. The district is responsible for monitoring educators' professional growth. If more knowledge and training in PBIS approach is needed in professional development sessions to teach the approach proficiently, then it would be wise to put aside funds to assist educators who are not adequately prepared.

In addition to the need to effectively train educators on a school-wide level, a change at the district level is also needed. Teacher participants discussed the need for administrators to leave their offices and walk around the schools on a regular basis to see how student behavior impacts

155

academic engagement. The PBIS program has its place in assisting with behavior management. However, administrators ought to have the vision to make adjustments as they see fit in their learning institutions when certain behavioral strategies are not effective for their school culture. When it comes to addressing student behavior, there are multiple strategies that can be effective depending on circumstances. Behavior policy can be adjusted to bring about the change needed for improvement within the program.

Designate funding to support the PBIS approach. Providing the needed financial support can help to address the consistency of the program for all students. Teacher participants mentioned how they use their own funds to provide gifts or prizes when rewards or incentives are used to assist with students displaying positive behavior. State funding for positive student behavior should be marked and allocated for professional development, positive behavior certificates, teacher support, instructional materials, and classroom rewards. The district can also seek out local agencies who provide educational funding which can aide in teacher training or who are willing to provide community support by helping teachers in the classroom. Providing support and guidance to educators can help to build teacher efficacy and longevity in the educational system.

Constructivist Theory

The results of this study suggests that elementary teachers build knowledge based on their experiences teaching the PBIS approach and other behavioral classroom management strategies. The participants experienced constructing meaning of their own learning and perspectives. The teachers were able to build their knowledge with an understanding of the PBIS approach through a combination of past experiences of behavioral classroom management, student interaction, and the current learning based on their own perspectives and lived experiences (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The teachers combined their preexisting knowledge with instructional practices in training and professional development to promote a structured environment for learning (Stake, 1995).

The constructivist theory states that individuals desire to have an understanding of where they work and live (Creswell, 2013). Teachers and students learn from previous knowledge that they have gathered in life. This is a contextualized type of learning that is active rather than instructed. The participants constructed knowledge with other teachers during grade team meetings for lesson planning as well as collaboration on the effectiveness of teaching the PBIS approach (Ferguson-Patrick, 2018). The elementary teachers were able to construct new knowledge, beliefs, or perspectives as they prepared and taught the PBIS approach to their students. Experiencing limited support from administrators, teachers were able to build a comradery among themselves by supporting one another with behavioral classroom challenges. They engaged with other educators through collaborative discussions on how best to address student misconduct. The findings support the constructivist learning theory that effective discourse with other learners can build and form knowledge.

When discussing constructivism, the role of the learner is important. The experiences of the learner in understanding as well as comprehending new information are essential elements. Teacher participants have the key information and experiences regarding the PBIS approach. The knowledge received is implemented into instructional practices towards teaching behavior classroom management in the classroom. In the study, the teachers were asked to share their own perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS approach. As learners, the teachers as learners were able to build knowledge from their own perspectives. This included having new viewpoints or opinions about their school. As a result, the study indicated that teachers have an ongoing process of how to make meaning based on their own experiences and the limited training sessions of the PBIS program which supports the constructivist concept of learning. Each teacher's

157

perspective in the study can play a significant part in expanding the awareness of how best to execute the PBIS approach to assist with behavior classroom management.

The findings in this study suggested that the teacher participants did not receive professional development effective enough to impact a positive change in student behavior. Creating effective professional training opportunities required an evaluation on the existing behavior plan which was yet to be completed. In the study, teachers shared their thoughts of not having enough content knowledge about the PBIS approach. Therefore, it was reasonable to adopt other educational resources and incorporate them in lesson planning in order to teach behavior classroom expectations to the students. The teachers became active learners by discovering new knowledge and felt content that they were doing what they could under current circumstances within the school to positively impact student behavior.

Recommendations for Further Research

Qualitative research places emphasis on an in-depth exploration of perspectives and experiences of participants in the study (Creswell, 2013). Case studies provide an analysis into a case or program consisting of more than one individual and should focus on answering the research question(s) (Creswell, 2013; Stake 1995). Qualitative case studies have a large sample sizes that gather enough data to adequately describe the phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, recommendations for further research includes expanding the number of participants, direct classroom observations, and video recordings.

Participants

This qualitative case study should be replicated by expanding the number of teacher participants from this district as well as including more public schools in Virginia who have adopted the PBIS program in their educational school system. This action could lead to a more detailed case study and add to the research regarding the PBIS approach. The study was limited to

158

10 teachers from fourth and fifth grades and most of the participants were females. The data

collected may be more diverse if more male participants are included in future research studies. A

larger sample would also provide reliable data that is more representative of the population. The

shared perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program would help to reveal additional

challenges teachers experience when teaching this approach. Increasing the scope of the study with

a larger sample could lead to additional themes that were not revealed in this study and help to

broaden the findings for a deeper analysis.

Observations

Direct classroom observations of elementary teachers teaching the PBIS approach in fourth

and fifth grade classrooms should be included in further research to add to this study. Classroom

observations can be added for further research which may provide a deeper understanding of how

teachers used the PBIS approach in the classroom setting. To guide the data collection and provide

accurate information of the elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences, a protocol for

observations can be utilized. It is important for teachers to have good teacher-student relations in

the classroom setting (Bruner, 1990; Davis, 2017; Marlowe & Page, 2005; Powell & Kalina,

2009). Teacher-student interaction established in a social constructivist relational classroom

environment can assist with maintaining positive student behavior (Abenavoli et al., 2014; Davis,

2017; Marlowe & Page, 2005; Vygotsky, 1978). A deeper understanding of elementary teachers'

experiences can be realized when observing the interactions between teachers and students during

PBIS instruction (Creswell, 2013). Researchers would be able to get a clearer picture and have

better understanding of how PBIS instruction can be executed effectively in the classroom

environment with valuable data gained. Direct observations can be used for further research to find

data that may not surface using only interviews (Hatch, 2002). Information that may be sensitive to

the participants could be revealed during an observational data session uncovering credible data to justify interview responses which would strengthen the study in future research (Hatch, 2002).

In this study, it is important to note that future researchers would need to consider that additional time would be required to include this form of data collection and analysis. The researcher would need to commit to scheduling observation sessions as well as observing the participants. Researchers would need to keep in mind that having observation sessions could bring about anxiety for some participants and create emotional changes in their responses. It is highly recommended that researchers create and maintain a comfortable environment for the participants during the process of an observational data session. In addition, even though it will require more time build a level of trust and commitment with the observation participants.

Videos

In this study, future researchers could also consider adopting an image-based approach towards this research. Video recordings would be a strong medium to add and capture collected data for a more detailed case study. Privacy is given to all participants involved in the research process to protect confidentiality. However, because of confidentiality concerns, video recordings have been limited in research even with technological improvements (Hatch, 2002). Video data can assist with collected field notes, member checking, and capture participants in the classroom setting. Video-based research can also provide researchers with the knowledge to juxtapose the participants' interview responses with the observable behaviors seen in the classroom. When direct observations are completed, the possibility exists for researchers to overlook certain actions during the observation. However, video recordings provide all the data available which allow researchers to have credible evidence to support their analysis.

The participants is this study were all knowledgeable on the use of technology and the benefit it provides in the teaching profession. Online videos were required by administrators for

teacher participants to view to assist with professional development growth. For future studies, having video recordings, researchers would have the ability to playback recordings for participants and discuss their thoughts in conjunction with interview responses providing additional data. Therefore, videotaping elementary teachers teaching the PBIS approach to their students could be used in research to share how teachers respond to the challenges they experience with student misbehavior in the classroom setting.

Additional Recommendations

To further expand this study, it may be beneficial for future researchers to take into consideration the suggestions and recommendations about leadership the elementary teacher participants shared. Three of the 10 participants did not teach the PBIS approach to their students. Instead, the teachers used their own educational resources to address student conduct. Future researchers could add teachers' perspectives and experiences to the field of research by adding the classroom behavior management resources that teachers find effective when teaching positive student behavior. The educational resources used by teachers could be aligned with the PBIS approach so that researchers can gain a better understanding of certain behavior classroom management resources that can support, reinforce, and strengthen the current PBIS program.

In this study, it was not disclosed as to whether or not the seven remaining participants who taught the PBIS approach in their classrooms were content in utilizing the program to monitor student behavior. Future researchers could have an in-depth study on how teachers perceive the PBIS program working in certain schools yet not very effective in others. Teachers should have a certain level of comfort and assurance when managing classroom behaviors. Therefore, it is wise to further research their pedagogical content knowledge of behavior classroom management in connection with the PBIS program.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to explore teachers' perspectives and experiences teaching the PBIS approach to fourth and fifth grade students in classrooms at two schools in the HES district. The PBIS approach is a research-based framework with over 20 years of research promoting positive behavior in youth and adults (Bradshaw et al., 2015; Simonsen, & Myers, 2015; PBIS, 2017). The key findings revealed that teacher participants experienced limited, inconsistent, or no teacher training in the PBIS approach. The participants described how they did not receive adequate support from administration to address challenging student misbehaviors in the classroom. The teachers discussed how teamwork executed through grade team meetings and observing how other veteran teachers handled classroom misconduct worked in helping new teachers to cope and manage student conduct.

In this chapter, I discussed the results of the case study with greater detail and in context of the findings with answers to the central research question of teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. I identified a number of emergent themes from the data that included teachers' perspectives and experiences of teaching the PBIS approach. The teachers discussed inconsistencies with the execution of the current PBIS program at their schools, the lack of administrative classroom support, an overwhelming documentation process that is ineffective, and a PBIS reward system that is not effective with many of their students.

In this study, the teachers also discussed their appreciation to their colleagues who are willing to assist them in handling student behavior in the classroom setting. The teachers were able to cope with student challenges when having time for discourse during team meetings. The teachers discussed the benefit of have colleagues in a work environment who provided assistance

on a professional level relating to student behavior. Working together as a team provided the coping mechanism that certain teachers needed and appreciated.

This dissertation addressed the limited research on exploring elementary teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms framed by constructivism. The findings and discussions in the study has contributed to current available research which can help guide future research studies. The methodology of this qualitative case study was designed to learn more about this group of elementary teachers who provided a rich, in-depth, detailed story of their perspectives and experiences.

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Appendix A: Consent Form

Research Study Title: Exploring Teachers' Perspectives of the Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports Program in Fourth and Fifth Grade Classrooms

Principal Investigator: Norma Ferguson
Research Institution: Concordia University
Faculty Advisor: Dr. Edward Kim

Purpose and what you will be doing:
The purpose of the study will be to explore teachers' perspectives of the PBIS approach as well as the challenges and successes using the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. A qualitative instrumental case study design will be used to gain insight into this phenomenon.

Teachers' experience with data for this research will follow a qualitative research case study design utilizing one-on-one teacher interviews, a focus group interview, and analysis of documents (artifacts).

Interviews –This study will use digital recordings from structured one-on-one teacher interviews, follow-up interviews (member checking interviews), and analysis documents (artifacts-participants' journals) as the primary means of data collection. To fully understand teachers' perspectives about behavioral classroom management practices, open-ended interview questions will be used during recorded sessions, and the responses will be transcribed. According to Ravitch and Riggan (2017), using interviews with open-ended questions, I will be able to go beyond typical experiences and understand better the teachers' perspectives in their own words. During data collection, letters of the alphabet will be assigned to each teacher for identification (Teacher A, B, C, etc.) to create a clear description of how each teacher will be identified before the interview without confidentiality compromised. Ensuring accuracy with data collection and striving for credibility and validity is of the essence (Yin, 2018). Interview questions will be piloted by me with non-participants to see what type of responses may be received during the interview sessions and whether or not they will answer the research questions.

The interviewer will guide the conversation about the topic through a series of questions. Teachers will be able to express themselves candidly in a private setting about issues or concerns knowing their viewpoints will be confidential (Yin, 2013). Focusing on key categories of the case study will help with refining the validity of the data collected during the thematic analysis. This form of data collection is a process recoding patterns or themes within data. The patterns are coded to establish the meaning of the patterns.

Artifacts are items the teacher participants develop and use in their environment to assist with behavioral classroom management (Creswell, 2013). Artifacts will be used as analysis documents to assist with credibility, validity, and reliability (Creswell, 2013; Yin, 2009). I will use and maintain artifacts as supporting evidence to justify the study. Collected artifacts from teachers for this study could be teacher tickets, teaching charts, videos, a teacher notebook, etc. Artifacts will be collected and stored to establish ongoing PBIS implementation in fourth and fifth grade classrooms for stable credibility to the case study.

We expect approximately 10 volunteers. No one will be paid to be in the study. We will begin enrollment on March 5, 2019 and end enrollment on March 29, 2019. Doing the following things should take less than three hours of your personal time.

To be in the study, you must be:
1. A general education teacher (Grades 4–5)
2. A teacher with a general education classroom for instruction

Each participant will:
1. Participate in a recorded interview
2. Provide artifacts or analysis documents
3. Provide information through interviews based on your perspectives in the general classroom setting of challenges and success of the PBIS approach.

Risks:
There are no risks to participating in this study other than providing your information. However, we will protect your information. Any personal information you provide will be coded so it cannot be linked to you. Any name or identifying information you give will be kept securely via electronic encryption or locked inside a safe. When we or any of our investigators look at the data, none of the data will have your name or identifying information. We will only use a secret code to analyze the data. We will not identify you in any publication or report. Your information will be kept private at all times and then all study documents will be destroyed 3 years after we conclude this study.

Benefits:
Information provided will help the literature as well as the school district have a better understanding of the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. Teachers could benefit from this study by having fewer class disruptions, experience a greater understanding of the effectiveness of their behavior management strategies, and understand the impact the strategies have in establishing a positive classroom setting.

Confidentiality:
The data collected in this study will not be distributed to any other agency and will be kept private and confidential. The only exception to this is if you tell us about abuse or neglect that makes us seriously concerned for your immediate health and safety.

Right to Withdraw:
Your participation is greatly appreciated, but we acknowledge that the questions we are asking are personal in nature. You are free at any point to choose not to engage with or stop 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. If at any time you experience a negative emotion from answering the questions, we will stop asking you questions. However, please make contact if you wish to retract your data.

Contact Information:
You will receive a copy of this consent form. If you have questions you can talk to or write the principal investigator, Norma Ferguson at email [redacted]. If you want to talk with a participant

advocate other than the investigator, you can write or call the director of our 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.

_____   _____
Participant Name   Date

_____   _____
Participant Signature   Date

_____   _____
Investigator Name   Date

_____   _____
Investigator Signature   Date

Investigator: Norma Ferguson   email: [redacted]
c/o: Professor Dr. Edward Kim
Concordia University–Portland
2811 NE Holman Street
Portland, Oregon 97221

Appendix B: Consent Form Letter

Permission for Research Study

Date: 7/30/18 Eastern Standard Time

I am a graduate student at Concordia University pursuing a doctorate in Educational Leadership. I am working on a case study regarding teachers' perspectives on the challenges and successes using the PBIS program in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. I am asking for your permission to use two of the elementary schools as sites for this study. My sample is very small. It consists of 10 teachers. It is important for me to receive your permission to use this school for my case study. The information gained will provide benefits to the school district. Thank you in advance for your consent.

Doctoral Candidate-Concordia University

cc: Principals of 2 Elementary Schools

Appendix C: Interview Procedures

- An observation protocol will be used. (60 to 90 minutes)

- Thank each participant for attending the interview session.

- State the purpose for the interview session and why each participant was selected.

- Emphasize the rules and confidentiality.

- Introduce the questions one at a time and provide adequate time for feedback.

- Ensure that the perspectives of each participant are expressed in an informal setting.

- All individuals will have an opportunity to answer questions fully before rebuttals.

- Record the session for accuracy as well as take notes.

(Dilshad & Latif, 2013; Yin, 2018)

*Note – Refreshments will be served. (Small talk only. Refrain from topic discussion during this time.)

Time-60 minutes

Time of Interview:

Date:

Place:

Interviewer:

Interviewee:

Position of Interviewee:

(Briefly describe the project)

School Name:

Note-I will introduce self to each interviewee and ensure that the consent form is signed.

The purpose of this interview is to provide you with the opportunity to share your perspectives about the PBIS program in your school. The understanding is that the PBIS program was implemented in your school at the beginning of the 2008–2009 school year, and the program continues to the present school year. Please keep in mind that your identity will be kept confidential as the results are analyzed. The interview will be recorded in order to have an accurate record of your responses. Remember, there are no right or wrong answers to these questions. I have three areas for discussion. I may need to seek clarification from you before proceeding to the next question. I may also need to go back and receive clarity about a response stated earlier. Feel free to share your thoughts as candidly as you wish. Thanks again for being a volunteer. It is greatly appreciated. Let us begin.

Appendix E: Initial Semistructured Interview Questions

Participant Code:

Interview #

Section A─Use of PBIS Program in the Classroom Setting─The understanding is that the

PBIS program has been implemented in your school district. I am interested in learning about how

the program is executed in your classroom.

Questions:

- How does the PBIS program help you to manage student behavior in the classroom?

  a. Probe for how the program works in other areas within the school

  b. Probe for negative or positive student reactions to the program

- What are your reflective thoughts about the PBIS program in your classroom?

  a. Probe for the challenges and successes of the PBIS program.

  b. Probe grade team discussions about the program.

- Can you describe a time during the school year when PBIS practices worked well for

  you, in the classroom? What did you do?

- Can you describe a time during the school year when PBIS practices did not work

  well for you, in the classroom? What did you do?

- Can you talk about ways you monitor student behavior based on the PBIS approach?

  a. Probe for student rewards

  b. Probe to understand when referrals are written

  c. Probe to discuss student reactions to discipline referrals

- How well do you relate to your students with disruptive conduct in class using PBIS

  reward practices?

    a. Probe for change in student behavior or improving student outcome

b.   Probe for teacher's compliance with student rewards

- What are your thoughts about how the PBIS program responds to the use of punishment or consequences (e.g., detention, timeout, verbal reprimands), especially for students with serious behavior problems?

- Are there other programs that you draw from or use in your classroom other than the PBIS program? If so, talk about the program(s) most often used.

- What PBIS behavioral management approaches are effective?

- Have you accessed PBIS materials and information online for classroom use?

   a.   Probe for online sites

   b.   Probe for site usage

   c.   Probe for continued learning online or with other sources

Section B─Knowledge of PBIS Program for Effectiveness─Your district has been engaged with the implementation of the PBIS program for a few years now.

Questions:

- What are your thoughts about the PBIS program in your school and district?

   a.   Probe does the teacher believe the program is working

   b.   Probe for positive of negative changes using the PBIS program in the district

- How does your school get training in PBIS? How beneficial is the ongoing PBIS professional development(s)?

- How effective is the team-based leadership at your school? Are data-based decisions about student behavior made together as a team, or individually?

- In what ways has the PBIS program contributed to your professional growth?

   a.   Probe for factors that might be in the way for improving the program's success

   b.   Probe about PD sessions

- What work must be done at the school or district level using the PBIS program for students to reach proficiency standards as it relates to student behavior?

Section C—Teacher Efficacy Using the PBIS Program—Working in an educational environment with diverse students is an experience that requires time and dedication.

- How long have you been teaching in the educational system?
  a. Probe for years at current district
  b. Probe for deciding on the teaching profession
- What are your thoughts about classroom management?
  a. Probe for organizational skills
  b. Probe for teacher-student relations
  c. Probe for social interaction among students
  d. Probe for consistency with classroom rules and fairness
- Do you perceive yourself to be in the teaching profession for the next five years or until retirement?
  a. Probe teacher morale
  b. Probe thinking on teacher retention and transferring

Reminders for the Interviewer:

- Differences and similarities of classroom management techniques using the PBIS approach between teachers will be noted to assist with a narrative write-up to make a distinction between the different teachers' management techniques stated during the interview.
- I will take field notes of how the teachers describe using the PBIS approach towards student behavior.

- Artifacts and teacher notes will be collected to establish ongoing PBIS practices in the classroom setting.

- **Note:** An interview protocol will assure confidentiality. Thank participants for their time (Creswell, 2013).

Appendix F: Secondary Semistructured Interview Questions

Participant Code:

Interview #

1. How long have you been teaching in the school district?

2. What supplement authorizations do you hold? (other credentials)

3. After analyzing all interviews, elementary teachers seem to face diverse and unique

    challenges with student behavior. Using the PBIS approach and/or your own classroom

    management strategies from resources, please talk about how you teach or would teach

    student behavior effectively based on student ethnicity or culture.

    a. Probe for students who are often most challenging. (Is there a difference?)

    b. Probe for whether or not the same students are most challenging. Why?

4. Based on the knowledge you have about the PBIS approach and/or behavior classroom

    management, how do you effectively teach, model, and implement classroom expectations

    for student success? (Provide specific details.)

    a. Probe for a step-by-step approach.

    b. Probe for teacher efficacy.

5. What additional support do you think would be most helpful for you to effectively address

    challenging student behaviors?

6. Teachers indicated needing to have administrators and district officials go through substantive PBIS training along with the teachers to help with a smoother transition of the approach in the classroom setting. How important is it for teachers, administrators, and possibly parents to explicitly understand (if any) the benefits for students to learn and adopt the PBIS approach into the school or classroom setting with fidelity? Talk more about why that would be important.

7. Is there anything else you would like to include that was not discussed in our two interviews?

Appendix G: Document Request

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this study exploring teachers' perspectives and experiences regarding the PBIS approach in fourth and fifth grade classrooms. As part of my study I need to collect documents from you that indicate to what extent you have been equipped to instruct all students using the PBIS approach. Any documents you are willing to share would be of great assistance to me. These documents need to reflect examples of how instructing the PBIS approach to students has been taught in your current setting. Below are examples of the document types I would like to collect, but are not limited to:

- PBIS Expectations

- Behavior Forms

- Behavior Referral Forms

- E-mail correspondence

- Teacher Journal, notes, comments, or recommendations for a student

- Rewards/Incentives

- PBIS documents/materials

- Written student reports

- Registration acknowledgements for attending a PBIS training or seminar

- Behavior Charts/Posters/Class Rules

- Personal self-improvement plans.

Appendix H: Criteria for Selecting Teacher Participants

Criteria for Selecting Teacher Participants:

- All participants must be general education fourth and fifth grade teachers.

- The teachers can be male or female.

- The teacher participants must be a part of the same school district.

- Ten teachers are needed for the study with a total population of 24 teachers to choose from in fourth and fifth grade classes from two schools (about 25%).

- Teachers must have at least a year's professional development training of the PBIS program.

- The selection process for teacher participants will be the entire general education population in fourth and fifth grades at both elementary schools. The first 10 teachers will be selected from this target population of teachers who are using or have used the PBIS approach in their classrooms for at least on school year.

- All interested participants must sign up individually online based on prior notice.

- If more volunteers are needed, I can ask participants to suggest other teachers who can participate. I can also contact other teachers who may be interested through online inquiry.

- If I have more volunteers than needed, a list with contact information should be kept in a secure place. They should be informed that their services would be used if a current participant drops out of the study.

EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH

Research Participants Needed

Participate in a research study about the PBIS program in your school

district. Share your perspectives. All queries are confidential.

Eligibility Requirements:

- All participants must be general education fourth and/or fifth grade classroom

    teachers.

- The teachers can be male or female.

- The teacher participants must be a part of the same school district.

- Teachers must have at least a year's professional development training of the

    Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS) program.

For more information, please contact:

Phone: Email:

Appendix J: Inductive Analysis Steps

1. Read the data from the transcriptions and identify the frames of analysis.

2. Create domains from the relationships within the frames of analysis.

3. Assign codes for the domains.

4. Reread the data to refine the domains.

5. Keep a record of relationships and patterns from the data to determine if the examples fit with the relationships in the domains.

6. Complete analysis within domains and identify the themes.

7. Create an outline to organize the relationships and patterns.

8. Select data to support your themes.

Appendix K: Interpretive Analysis Steps

1. Read data to have an understanding of the documents as a complete unit.

2. Review impressions recorded in research journals.

3. Read the data.

4. Identify and record impressions in research journals.

5. Study charts, posters, forms, PowerPoint, memos, and notes for prominent interpretations.

6. Reread data, color coding interpretations that are consistent.

7. Write a full summary.

8. Review interpretations with teacher participants for correctness.

9. Write a final summary of interpretations.

Appendix L: Statement of Original Work

The Concordia University Doctorate of Education Program is a collaborative community of scholar-practitioners, who seek to transform society by pursuing ethically-informed, rigorously-researched, inquiry-based projects that benefit professional, institutional, and local educational contexts. Each member of the community affirms throughout their program of study, adherence to the principles and standards outlined in the Concordia University Academic Integrity Policy. This policy states the following:

Statement of academic integrity.

As a member of the Concordia University community, I will neither engage in fraudulent or unauthorized behaviors in the presentation and completion of my work, nor will I provide unauthorized assistance to others.

Explanations:

What does "fraudulent" mean?

"Fraudulent" work is any material submitted for evaluation that is falsely or improperly presented as one's own. This includes, but is not limited to texts, graphics and other multi-media files appropriated from any source, including another individual, that are intentionally presented as all or part of a candidate's final work without full and complete documentation.

What is "unauthorized" assistance?

"Unauthorized assistance" refers to any support candidates solicit in the completion of their work, that has not been either explicitly specified as appropriate by the instructor, or any assistance that is understood in the class context as inappropriate. This can include, but is not limited to:

- Use of unauthorized notes or another's work during an online test
- Use of unauthorized notes or personal assistance in an online exam setting
- Inappropriate collaboration in preparation and/or completion of a project
- Unauthorized solicitation of professional resources for the completion of the work.

Statement of Original Work (Continued)

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.*

Norma Ferguson
_____
Digital Signature

Norma Ferguson
_____
Name (Typed)

5/4/20
_____
Date