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Elementary School Teachers' Levels of Concern with Disruptive Student Behaviors in the Classroom

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COLLEGE OF EDUCATION

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Abstract

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MA, University of Phoenix, 2006

BA, Valdosta State University, 2002

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

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Abstract

Educators are concerned over disruptive student behavior that diverts teacher attention from instruction to student's negative behavior. The disruptive student is frequently removed from the classroom, decreasing negative behavior but resulting in shorter instructional time for the disruptive student. The purpose of this correlational survey study was to identify teachers' (a) levels of concern for specific disruptive behaviors, (b) methods most frequently used for disruptive behavior, and (c) professional needs related to general classroom and behavior management. The study examined the relationship between teachers' levels of concern regarding specific behaviors and the degree of support needed to manage those behaviors. Bandura's self-efficacy theory served as the framework for this study. Stephenson's Child Behavior Survey was modified and used to collect data from 49 Title I elementary school teachers in a southern state. Data were analyzed descriptively and results indicated that teachers (a) were concerned with student distractibility and disobedience, (b) used a variety of disruptive behavior methods, and (c) desired additional knowledge and support to address disruptive behavior. Also, a correlation analysis was conducted and determined that a significant relationship existed between teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support needed to address disruptive behavior. It is recommended the school district implement a system of teacher support for disruptive behavior, and identify existing underused supports and promote their use. This study may contribute to positive social change by providing teachers with the support and methods needed to decrease disruptive behavior, resulting in increased teachers' sense of efficacy and improved students' learning and achievement.

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Dedication

In recognition of their continuous prayers and support, I dedicate this doctoral study to my family. This study would not have been possible without the limitless patience of my husband Victor, and children Sariah and Eli. I can never repay you for all of the sacrifices you have made. To my mother and father, Jackie and Evelyn Hill, for teaching me to trust in the Lord with all my heart and He would direct my path. For believing in me to accomplish this achievement for our family, I dedicate this doctoral study to sisters, Evelina, Felicia, Lakendra, and my brother, Terrance. I dedicate it to my grandparents, Rachel Mathis and John Hill, Sr. who always encouraged me to never quit. I also dedicate it to my mother-in-law, Arlean McCaskey for assisting me with my children during the writing of this doctoral study. Finally, I dedicate this study to my grandmother, the late Sarah Hill, and aunt, the late Annette Anderson, who are in my heart, but not here to see me achieve this level of study and chapter in my life.

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Section 1: Introduction to the Study

Since the No Child Left Behind (NCLB, 2001) act was introduced, school districts receiving federal Title I funds have been in danger of receiving reduced funding, or facing other sanctions, if 100% of its students did not perform at proficiency or better by 2014 (NCLB, 2002). Essentially, classroom teachers are responsible for ensuring that students meet the accountability requirements of NCLB, which are based on a series of yearly incremental increases in the percentage of students who must demonstrate subject matter proficiency. However, U.S. schools have been faced with problems that have impacted effective teaching and student learning (Bloom, 2009; Marshall, 2009) and, therefore, have made it difficult for school districts to meet their proficiency targets. One of these issues is student misbehavior (Gable, Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009).

When students misbehave, teachers focus on classroom behavior rather than teaching subject matter content (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010), which disrupts the flow of classroom activities and interferes with student learning (Gable et al., 2009). One method for dealing with disruptive students in the classroom is to remove them from the classroom. The prevalent use of this method is evident in the increase in suspension and expulsion rates of young students (Appelbaum, 2009). When students are removed from the classroom or from the school entirely, they miss out on instruction, which can be detrimental to their long-term academic success (Appelbaum, 2009). Disruptive behavior (a) is a growing problem in schools (Bloom, 2009), (b) is one of the most serious concerns of teachers and parents (Bloom, 2009; Chong & Low, 2009), (c) is common in the classroom, and (d) influences classroom learning (Allen, 2010). However, school

administrators and boards of education typically do not acknowledge or address this problem (Allen, 2010). According to Appelbaum (2009), there is a need to decrease the incidence of disruptive student behaviors in the classroom so instructional time can be maximized and the exclusion of students from the classroom and the school can be minimized.

In response to this need, I designed this study to explore disruptive student behaviors in the focus school from the perspective of the teachers who worked directly with students in the classroom. I discuss the details of this study in subsequent sections. Specifically, in Section 1, I define the problem, identify the purpose of the study, and explain both the nature of the study and the theoretical framework applied in the study. In addition, I provide operational definitions of terms used in the study and present assumptions and limitations for the study, as well as the scope and delimitations of the study. Finally, I discuss the significance of the study and provide a summary for the section.

Problem Statement

The focus school in this study had an ongoing discipline problem with regard to disruptive student behavior in the classroom. This condition was evident in the number of student referrals written by teachers in the 3 years prior to this study. During the 2011-2012 school year, among 1,252 students, there were 750 referrals; during the 2012-2013 school year, among 1,394 students, there were 883 referrals; and during the 2013-2014 school year, among 1,307 students, there were 821 referrals (All referrals represent teacher referrals only for disruptive student behavior in the classroom). In addition,

results from the Teacher Needs Assessment Survey conducted annually during these same 3 school years indicated teachers perceived classroom behavior management and discipline to be problems in the school: 30%, 50%, and 42%, respectively. Similarly, results from the Parent Survey conducted during these same years indicated that parents perceived the school to be unsafe because of discipline problems: 80%, 82%, and 80%, respectively. However, despite evidence reflecting teachers' concern about disruptive student behavior in the classroom, no research has been conducted at the site with regard to those concerns or specific areas in which teachers may need additional support to manage disruptive student behavior in the classroom. More specifically, no research has been conducted at the site with regard to the relationship between those concerns and specific areas in which teachers may need additional support to manage disruptive student behavior in the classroom. It was possible a correlation would be found between these two variables.

That disruptive student behavior in the classroom may impact student achievement is suggested by low student scores on the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI) when students are compared to overall student performance in the state. The CCRPI is an accountability system used to (a) measure content mastery for students in Grades 3-5 and (b) predict postelementary school readiness for students in Grades 3 and 5 and high school graduation for students in Grade 5. As shown in Table 1, in the last 2 years, 50% of the time student scores at the focus school were below overall student performance in the state.

Table 1
Comparison of CCRPI Scores for Students in the Focus School and the State

Measure	CCRPI scores (% passing)			
	2012-2013		2013-2014	
	School	State	School	State
Content mastery				
Math	87	85	88	84
Reading	95	94	94	93
English language arts	**93**	95	92	92
Science	**75**	81	**78**	80
Social studies	85	83	85	80
Post elementary school readiness				
Grade 3	**60**	61	**50**	65
Grade 5	**43**	64	**61**	65
High school graduation predictor				
Grade 5	58	55	**63**	68

Note. The eight percentages in bold indicate years in which the focus school percentages for students passing were lower than the state percentages.

Disruptive student behavior diverts the teacher's focus from teaching and redirects it to managing the classroom, thus having a negative impact on student learning (Basch, 2011). Low student assessment scores at the elementary level are indicative of poor long-term outcomes for students (Marugán de Miguelsanz, Carbonero Martín, & Martínez, 2012). When students continue to be unsuccessful at the middle and high school levels, the potential for student dropout increases (Bowers, Sprott, & Taff, 2013). This outcome is undesirable because students who drop out of high school earn less than high school and college graduates (Neely & Griffin-Williams, 2013), have an increased potential for being incarcerated (Neely & Griffin-Williams, 2013), and experience an overall lower quality of life than their more educated peers (Neely & Griffin-Williams, 2013).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was (a) to identify teachers' levels of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors, need for additional support to manage those specific disruptive behaviors, methods used to manage disruptive behavior, and informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management and (b) to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those specific disruptive student behaviors. An understanding of (a) teachers' levels of concern regarding specific disruptive behavior in the classroom and (b) the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding disruptive behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those disruptive behaviors could help school administrators implement relevant

professional development for teachers, which ultimately may lead to decreased incidence of disruptive student behavior in the focus school. The relevance of such an outcome is discussed in more detail in the Significance of the Study section.

Nature of the Study and Research Questions

To identify teachers' levels of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors in the classroom and to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those specific disruptive student behaviors, I conducted a quantitative study. The study was guided by four research questions:

Research Question 1: What are elementary teachers' levels of concern about various disruptive student behaviors in the classroom as measured by the Child Behavior Survey?

Research Question 2: What methods do elementary teachers use most frequently when dealing with disruptive student behavior in the classroom?

Research Question 3: What are elementary teachers' specific informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management?

Research Question 4: Is there a relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior?

$H_0$2: There is no relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior.

$H_1$2: There is a relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior.

To collect data from a convenience sample of teachers in a Title I elementary school in Georgia, I used Martin, Linfoot, and Stephenson's (1999a) Child Behavior Survey. With regard to data analysis, I calculated (a) descriptive statistics for the background data as well as for all of the research questions and (b) inferential statistics for Research Question 4.

Theoretical Framework

Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy served as the theoretical framework for this study. Self-efficacy, according to Bandura, refers to a person's beliefs in his or her capacity to accomplish a task. Tasks which are unfamiliar to a person may invoke fear, which will deter a person from attempting to complete the task (Bandura, 1977). In this way, "efficacy beliefs influence how people feel, think, motivate themselves, and behave" (Bandura, 1993, p. 118). As a result, a person's level of self-efficacy also can influence his or her performance outcomes (Bandura, 1977).

Self-efficacy beliefs can be influenced in four ways: "performance accomplishments, vicarious experience, verbal persuasion, and physiological states" (Bandura, 1977, p. 191). Performance accomplishments, also referred to as mastery experiences, are instances of successful task completion which serve as examples that a person can accomplish a specific task; these accomplishments contribute to a person's belief that he or she can accomplish a task again and motivates the person to take action toward completing that task again (Bandura, 1977). Because mastery experiences result

in what can be considered proof of capacity (Bandura, 1982), this source of self-efficacy is the most influential of the four sources (Bandura, 1977). Vicarious experiences refer to the observation of successful task completion by others with whom a person can compare him or herself; by observing others successfully complete a task, a person's beliefs in his or her own capacity to accomplish that task may be improved (Bandura, 1977). Verbal persuasion refers to the encouragement to complete a task a person receives from others; through this encouragement, a person's beliefs he or she possesses the skills needed to complete a task may be developed or strengthened (Bandura, 1977). Verbal persuasion alone, however, is less likely to affect behavioral change than when verbal persuasion is accompanied by the provision of the tools necessary to complete the task (Bandura, 1977). Physiological states refer to a person's level of emotional arousal, which can interfere with his or her ability to accomplish a task and, therefore, the person's perceptions about his or her ability to accomplish a task (Bandura, 1977).

In addition to identifying the sources of self-efficacy, Bandura (1977) also distinguished between two types of expectations associated with behavior: self-efficacy expectations and outcomes expectations. While self-efficacy expectations are the expectations a person has about his or her capacity to accomplish a task, outcome expectations are the belief, in general, that the engagement in certain behaviors will lead to certain outcomes. According to Bandura, even though a person may believe engagement in a certain behavior will lead to certain outcomes, the person will not engage in the behavior him or herself unless he or she has the self-efficacy expectation that he or she personally can accomplish the task. This relationship between self-efficacy

expectation and outcome expectation underscores the influence of self-efficacy on human behavior.

When Bandura (1989) expanded on the theory of self-efficacy and established theories of social learning behavior; the outcome was the social cognitive theory. In this theory, Bandura hypothesized that environmental factors alone, as suggested by proponents of the social learning theory, are not responsible for human behavior and, ultimately, performance outcomes. Rather, Bandura suggested that behavior functions as the result of reciprocal interactions between not only the environment but personal factors as well. In the social cognitive theory, Bandura also identified four processes that translate self-efficacy into behavior: cognitive, motivational, affective, and selection. Cognitive processes refer to the way people's patterns of thought shape their beliefs in their capacity to accomplish tasks; motivational processes refer to the way a person's beliefs in his or her capacity to accomplish a task serve as a motivator to take action; affective processes refer to the way a person perceives his or her ability to overcome obstacles associated with the completion of particular tasks; and selection processes refer to a person's choice to engage in particular tasks in which he or she is likely to be successful, thus generating performance accomplishments, which work to further improve self-efficacy (Bandura, 1989).

Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy was appropriate to use as the theoretical framework in this study because it provided a lens through which to consider the reactions of teachers who participated in this study with regard to disruptive student behaviors they encounter in their classrooms. According to Brouwers and Tomic (2000),

self-efficacy in classroom management is "defined as a teacher's beliefs in their capabilities to organize and execute the courses of action required to maintain classroom order" (p. 242). Furthermore, Dicke et al. (2014) suggested that teacher self-efficacy affects behavior outcomes such as teacher practice and teacher behavior in the classroom as well as student behavior and classroom management success. Thus, teachers with a high level self-efficacy are likely to discern the classroom as less chaotic, implement positive strategies, and have a positive learning environment with fewer disruptions (Dicke et al., 2014). Therefore, it is likely that teacher self-efficacy may play a role in teachers' perceived level of concern with particular disruptive student behaviors in their classrooms as well as the behavior management methods they choose to employ and the informational needs they express. Therefore, I determined that Bandura's theory of self-efficacy may be useful for understanding the results I generated in this study.

Operational Definitions

Discipline referral: In public schools, a discipline referral is a written record of an incident issued by an educator, in which the educator documents the disciplinary reasons the student is being sent to the office (Terrell-Edmiston, 2007).

Disruptive behavior: With regard to students in the classroom, disruptive behavior has been defined as behavior that is inappropriate (Bloom, 2009) and interferes with the learning of other students in the class (Sida-Nicholls, 2012). Although various examples of disruptive behavior have been presented in the literature, for the purposes of data collection and analysis in this study, disruptive behavior referred to any of the 20 specific behaviors identified by Martin et al. (1999a) on the Child Behavior Survey:

> Demands must be met immediately/cannot wait for attention, Disrupts the activities of others, Doesn't remain on-task for a reasonable time, Excessive demands for teacher's attention/doesn't work independently, Distractibility or attention span a problem/does not listen, Argues when reprimanded or corrected, Runs away from school or classroom, Does not get along well with other children, Does not follow established class rules, Expresses anger inappropriately, Is physically aggressive with others/bullies, Damages others' property, Uses obscene language or gestures, Engages in inappropriate sexual behavior, Uses obscene language or gestures, Steals, Refuses to obey teacher-imposed rules, Is verbally aggressive with others, Lies, [and] Breaks things/damages others' property. (p. 2-3)

Assumptions, Limitations, Scope, and Delimitations

While developing this study, I made three assumptions. First, I assumed that teachers at the focus school would answer the survey questions honestly and do so based on their personal knowledge and experiences in the classroom. Second, although teachers were asked to answer survey questions based on memory, I assumed that teachers would accurately remember the incidents of their students' disruptive behavior even when the incidents may not have occurred recently. Third, I assumed that teachers noticed all disruptive student behaviors in their classrooms so their responses accurately reflect the extent of disruptive behavior occurring in their classrooms.

I also recognized limitations in this study. For example, participation was voluntary, and the sample size was small. Thus, the results I obtained may be different

than what I would have obtained if a larger participant pool were available. Moreover, because I used a convenience sample, my ability to generalize the findings to other school settings was limited. In addition, self-report surveys are subject to participant perceptions (Morse, Gullekson, Morris, & Popovich, 2011) and, therefore, may not be a completely accurate reporting of what is happening in the classroom. Also, because the data on student disruptive behavior were obtained after the fact, the data may not accurately reflect current conditions.

The scope of this study was limited to teachers' level of concern about various disruptive student behaviors in the classroom, the methods of behavior management the teachers use, the general information needs teachers have, and the level of additional support teachers need with regard to managing disruptive student behavior. Although Martin et al. (1999a) included sources of teacher support as a topic of interest in the original Child Behavior Survey, I did not explore this concept. As an employee in the focus school, I already was aware no school-wide support systems for teachers were in place at the time I conducted this study. Had one or more school-initiated support programs been in place, it would have been beneficial to know what programs were being used and which were not being used so school administrators could take action to either amend, promote, or discontinue programs that were not being used and further promote the programs being used. Because this scenario was not applicable to my study, I did not explore sources of teacher support.

This study was delimited to the perspectives of general education teachers who taught students in prekindergarten through fifth grade and who had at least 3 months of

experience in the current school. I did not include special education teachers in this study. Because special education teachers regularly interact with children who have diagnosed disabilities that often include a negative behavior component (e.g., autism, oppositional defiance disorder, emotionally disturbed) and these teachers receive specialized training in behavior management, it is likely these teachers might express lower levels of concern for certain disruptive student behaviors that they encounter in the classroom, thus skewing the study results. Also, students in special education classrooms who have diagnosed disabilities that include a negative behavior component are not referred to the office in the same fashion as students who demonstrate inappropriate behavior in the general education classroom.

Grades prekindergarten through fifth grade were included in this study because the referral data suggesting the focus school was experiencing a problem with student discipline applied to students in all grades at the school. By including teachers who had 3 or more months of experience in the focus school, I was able to ensure participants had a solid understanding of their students' behavior.

Significance

This study is significant because it generated information about (a) teachers' levels of concern associated with disruptive behavior in the classroom and (b) the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding disruptive behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those disruptive behaviors. This information could be helpful to school administrators in the focus school who could use it to make informed decisions about how to best support teachers in their efforts to manage

disruptive student behavior in the classroom. By providing teachers (a) with the opportunity to increase their knowledge about classroom management techniques and (b) the support they need to best manage disruptive student behaviors in the classroom, the incidence of those behaviors can be decreased. Decreasing the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the classrooms is important because such behavior impedes learning not only for the disruptive student but for other students in the classroom as well. Any time a student is prohibited from learning is cause for concern. In addition, scholars have shown that poor behavior in lower grades is a predictor of poor behavior in higher grades, which, like in the lower grades, is associated with decreased academic performance. Thus, the results of this study ultimately may contribute to improved student performance not only at the focus school level but at higher levels of education as well.

Summary

The focus school in this study had an ongoing discipline problem with regard to disruptive student behavior in the classroom. Because disruptive student behavior diverts teacher attention away from teaching to managing the disruptive behavior, all students in classrooms in which any student is disruptive are affected. This condition is problematic because it can impact the long-term academic success of students in the focus school. By learning more about the factors associated with this condition, administrators at the focus school can take action to initiate change. For this reason, the purpose of this study was to (a) to identify teachers' levels of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors in the classroom, need for additional support to manage those specific disruptive behaviors, methods used to manage disruptive behavior, and informational needs related to general

classroom and behavior management and (b) to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific.

This quantitative study was correlational in nature, and data were collected using a survey. The data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Bandura's (1977) theory of self-efficacy was used as the theoretical framework for this study as a means of understanding the teacher perspectives reported in response to the survey items. When I developed my study, I made several assumptions and acknowledged limitations. Specifically, I assumed teachers were aware of all of the disruptive behaviors occurring in their classrooms, would accurately remember incidents of disruptive student behaviors, and report their perspective honestly. This study was limited by the small sample size and the resulting inability to generalize results to a larger population, such as the school district or state. This study also was limited because it was based on self-reported data about retrospective incidents of disruptive student behaviors. Nonetheless, the study was valuable because through it I was able to generate data administrators at the focus school can use to inform their decisions with regard to the information and support they provide to teachers to improve their classroom management skills, ultimately contributing to decreased incidents of disruptive student behavior in the classroom and potentially improved student outcomes.

The remainder of this research study is made up of four sections. In Section 2, I present a detailed review of literature associated with the study topic. In Section 3, I discuss the study's methodology. In Section 4, I present the results of the data analysis,

and in Section 5, I discuss the results as well as implications for social change and both recommendations for action and further study.

Section 2: Literature Review

The purpose of this study was (a) to identify teachers' levels of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors in the classroom, need for additional support to manage those specific disruptive behaviors, methods used to manage disruptive behavior, and informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management and (b) to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those specific disruptive student behaviors. As such, the content of this literature review is based on and organized around these concepts. Specifically, in this literature review, I discuss how disruptive behavior is characterized in the literature, the factors that contribute to disruptive behavior, methods for managing disruptive behavior, consequences of disruptive behavior, and teacher needs with regard to support for and information about managing disruptive student behavior.

To locate scholarly articles for this literature review, I used electronic databases (e.g., EBSCOhost, ProQuest, Sage, and Education Resources Information Center). Although I focused on accessing current, peer-reviewed journal articles, I did access and include in my review older resources that were particularly relevant to my topic. Search terms included the following: *behavioral referral*, *continuous disruptive behavior*, *defiance*, *disruptive behavior*, *classroom management*, *social learning*, *social learning theory*, *student behavior*, *student discipline*, *student misbehavior*, and *teacher challenges.*

Characterizing Disruptive Behavior

Disruptive behavior, also referred to as misbehavior, generally has been characterized as behavior that veers from the expected norm and affects others. More specifically, Bloom (2009) defined disruptive behavior as behavior inappropriate for the setting or situation in which it occurs, and Sida-Nicholls (2012) defined disruptive behavior as behavior that (a) interferes with the act of teaching or with other students' learning or (b) is psychologically or physically unsafe. According to Dalgıç and Bayhan (2014), students misbehave intentionally, not inadvertently; they know they should not act in certain ways but do so anyway. However, there are behavioral disorders in which misbehavior is an evident component, including: oppositional defiant disorder (ODD), conduct disorder (CD), attention deficient disorder (ADD), attention deficient hyperactive disorder (ADHD), and Asperger's syndrome. ODD is characterized by persistently negative, defiant, and hostile behavior towards authority figures; CD is characterized by repetitive behavior that is inappropriate and damaging to peers; ADD is characterized by the lack of ability to focus or pay attention; ADHD is characterized by inattention and impulsive and hyperactive behavior; and Asperger's syndrome is characterized both by an inability to interact appropriately in social situations and to communicate nonverbally (Loeber, Burke, & Pardini, 2009).

Examples of disruptive behavior in the literature are numerous. It is likely there are so many examples of disruptive behavior because, as Harrell and Hollins (2009) pointed out, the process of identifying disruptive behavior in the classroom is subject to interpretation by the teacher; what one teacher might consider acceptable behavior

another might consider disruptive. In Table 2, I present a summary of disruptive behavior examples from select sources. Charles (1996) organized misbehavior into five broad categories:

> aggression (physical and verbal assaults on the teacher or other students); immorality (cheating, lying, and stealing); defiance of authority (refusal to do as the teacher asks); class disruptions (talking loudly, walking around the room, and calling out); and clowning around (fooling around, daydreaming, not doing assigned work, and wasting time). (p. 2)

The literature differs with regard to the types of disruptive behaviors teachers most commonly encounter in the classroom. While Reynolds, Stephenson, and Beaman (2011) found that teachers reported most often experiencing behaviors that fit into the clowning around category, Jolivette and Steed (2010) found that teachers, students, and police officers all agreed that the most common disruptive and aggressive behaviors evident in schools are shoving, grabbing, pushing, stealing from, and verbally insulting others. The literature also differs with regard to the level of severity teachers assign to particular disruptive behaviors. While Bracey (2009) found that teachers considered behaviors such as stealing, cruelty/bullying, and lying to be a few of the most significant disruptive behaviors, Clement (2010); Conroy, Sutherland, Snyder, Al-Hendawi, and Vo (2009); Erdoğan et al. (2010); and Rubinstein (2012) found that teachers rate as most disturbing any disruptive classroom behavior in which one student has a negative, observable effect on other students.

Table 2

Examples of Disruptive Behavior in the Literature

Source	Examples of disruptive behavior
Allen (2010)	Putting down of peers and adults, pushing, fighting, tardiness to class, inappropriate sexual displays, truancy, refusal to participate in class, and use of profanity
Appelbaum (2009)	Talking out of turn, teasing, disrespecting others, and getting out of one's seat
Conroy et al. (2009)	Acts of violence and vandalism
Green (2010)	Yelling out in class, destroying property, or bothering other students
Hall (as cited in Santrock, 2009)	Aggression, immorality, defiance of authority, class disruption, and clowning around
Harrell and Hollins (2009)	Monopolizing class discussions, belittling other students, refusing to participate in class, entering the class late or loudly, and asking irrelevant questions
Jolivette and Steed (2010)	Threats to students and teachers, verbal insults, kicking, biting, hitting, pushing, shoving, slapping, and stealing
McCready and Soloway (2010)	Defiance of teacher and ignoring school rules
Sida-Nicholls (2012)	Destruction of property

Factors Contributing to Disruptive Student Behavior

The reasons why students are disruptive in the classroom may be familial in nature (Allen, 2010; Bracey, 2009; Conroy et al., 2009; Erdoğan et al., 2010; Freiberg, Huzinec, & Templeton, 2009; Green, 2010; Güner, 2012; Jensen & Reichl, 2011; McCready & Soloway, 2010; Roehrig, Turner, Grove, Schneider, & Liu, 2009). Home environment factors that may impact a child's behavior include family dysfunction (Sida-Nicholls, 2012), attention deprivation (Bloom, 2009; Jensen & Reichl, 2011; Newberry & Davis, 2009; Ünal & Ünal, 2012), a lack of nurturance, and excessive parental control (Jolivette & Steed, 2010). In dysfunctional families, parents typically fail to function as positive role models for their children (Scott & Dadds, 2009) or provide their children with the emotional support they need to develop a healthy self-concept (Jensen & Reichl, 2011), which can affect students' behavior both at home and at school (Bandura, 1977, 1999; Sida-Nicholls, 2012). Specifically, children in dysfunctional families often do not receive the attention they crave (McCready & Soloway, 2010; Roehrig et al., 2009) and as a result feel unloved (Jolivette & Steed, 2010). As a means of garnering attention, they may misbehave in the classroom. Similarly, some children only receive attention at home for misbehavior (Bloom, 2009; Jensen & Reichl, 2011; Newberry & Davis, 2009; Ünal & Ünal, 2012) and thus come to understand this behavior as the norm for seeking attention (Allen, 2010; Bracey, 2009; Conroy et al., 2009; Erdoğan et al., 2010).

Reasons that students are disruptive in the classroom also may be related to societal factors, such as habitation in poor neighborhoods (Appelbaum, 2009), a lack of

positive role models, and exposure to violence (Chong & Low, 2009). Elements of the school environment also may contribute to students' misbehavior in school. Specifically, these factors include poor classroom management (Dicke et al., 2014), inappropriate classroom placement, irrelevant instruction, rigid behavioral demands, insensitivity to student diversity (Guardino & Fullerton, 2010), a lack of adult supervision during recess and in overcrowded classrooms (Guardino & Fullerton, 2010), and differing teacher expectations for high- and low-achieving students (McCready & Solowya, 2010). Students also may be disruptive in the classroom because the school culture is one that lacks civility and in which school behavior policies are weak and are not enforced consistently (Bru, 2009). Finally, students may be disruptive in the classroom because they (a) model inappropriate behavior from misbehaving peers (Roehrig et al., 2009; Spilt & Koomen, 2009; Tomé, Gaspar de Matos, Simões, Camacho, & AlvesDiniz, 2012; Ünal & Ünal, 2009), believe their peers will accept their inappropriate behavior (Glaser, Shelton, & Bree, 2010; Petraitis, Flay, & Miller, 1995), (c) are high achievers bored with the classroom material (Freiberg et al., 2009), or (d) are low achievers struggling with the classroom material (Bloom, 2009; Casillas et al., 2012).

Consequences of Disruptive Behavior

Researchers have identified numerous negative outcomes associated with disruptive student behavior, including peer rejection (Appelbaum, 2009), lack of friendships, and referral for placement in a special education classroom (Bru, 2009). However, the majority of literature has been focused on teacher stress and attrition, loss of instructional time, and decreased academic achievement.

Teacher stress. Disruptive student behavior constitutes one of the major sources of teacher stress (Sida-Nicholls, 2012) and is significantly related to teacher burnout (Marshall, 2009; Pas, Bradshaw, Hershfeldt, & Leaf, 2010), which is characterized by the psychological syndromes of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, decreased personal accomplishment, and (Marshall, 2009). Emotional exhaustion refers to feelings of becoming emotionally over-extended and drained of emotional resources; depersonalization refers to the service provider's excessively negative or detached reaction towards other people, generally the recipients of the services being provided; and decreased personal accomplishment refers to an individual's negative self-evaluation with respect to performance at his or her job (Gable et al., 2009). Teacher burnout may even lead to physical and mental problems which can cause an increase in absenteeism and a decrease in teacher self-efficacy, teacher performance, and quality of instruction (Pas et al., 2010).

Teacher attrition. According to Bracey (2009), teachers dread having to deal with defiance, aggression, and immorality. Such disruptive student behavior in the classroom can contribute to teacher attrition (Schaefer, Long, & Clandinin, 2012). Schafer et al. (2012) indicated that this condition was especially evident among beginning teachers who reported disruptive student behavior influenced their decision to leave or return to the teaching profession. According to Smart and Igo (2010), 30-50% of teachers leave the profession within 5 years; of those teachers, 30% cite disruptive behavior as the reason for leaving. Mee and Haverback (2014) reported 100% of the participants in their study experienced disruptive student behaviors in their classrooms,

which affected their decision to return back to their jobs for another year, change schools, or change professions. One participant stated, "If anything makes me quit it will be the stress caused by classroom management problems" (Mee & Haverback, 2014, p. 47). The loss of talented teachers weakens the profession (Lloyd & Sullivan, 2012).

Loss of instructional time. Another negative outcome of disruptive student behavior is the loss of instructional time. When students are noncompliant and disruptive, teachers must contend with issues of classroom management and discipline, which takes away from instructional time (Sida-Nicholls, 2012). Although certain disruptive behaviors may be interpreted as clowning around and not appear to be threatening, they detract teacher attention from teaching nonetheless (Poulou, 2009) and contribute to decreased quality of teaching (Harjunen, 2009). In addition, and one disruptive student may distract a teacher's attention to the same degree as several disruptive students (Bear, 2010).

Decreased academic achievement. Disruptive student behavior in the classroom also can result in decreased levels of academic achievement (Casillas et al., 2012; Marugan de Miguelsanz et al., 2012). Casillas et al. (2012) found students who displayed disruptive behaviors such as misconduct, lack of self-control, and not thinking before acting were at risk for academic difficulties. Because disruptive students consistently break rules, they spend much of their time in nonacademic pursuits and, therefore, usually have deficits in essential academic skills (Appelbaum, 2009; Jolivette & Steed, 2010). Some researchers have noted disruptive classroom behavior specifically resulted in reading difficulty at higher grade levels (Appelbaum, 2009; Yu-Chu et al., 2013).

Zimmerman, Schütte, Takinen, and Köller (2013) found that disruptive classroom behavior was particularly detrimental with regard to student performance in math because the subject heavily depends on skill building. When students are disruptive in math classes, they miss out on essential skills, which, over time, impede their ability to keep up with the new material being presented.

Although deficits in any academic area can contribute to academic failure (Pas et al., 2010), Marugan de Miguelsanz et al. (2012) suggested the more problematic the disruptive behavior, the more subjects the disruptive student is likely to fail (Marugan de Miguelsanz et al., 2012). Ultimately, these deficits and failures can lead to school dropout (Saraiva, Pereira, & Zamith-Cruz, 2011).

Of disruptive students in the classroom setting, van Lier et al. (2012) found that students engaging in aggressive behaviors were more likely to suffer academically as the result of their behavior than students engaging in nonaggressive behaviors. However, Clement (2010) suggested disruptive behavior in the classroom was more detrimental to student learning than violence in the classroom because disruption typically is consistently ongoing and, therefore, has a greater long-term impact on learning.

Disruptive students not only affect their own potential for learning, but may affect the potential for other students to learn as well. For example, Bru (2009) reported disruptive students caused the learning environment to be noisy, which made it difficult for other students to focus on instruction. In Saraiva et al.'s (2011) study, seven out of 10 student participants reported experiencing disruptive classroom behaviors that kept them

off task, resulting in poor academic achievement. In Bru's (2009) study, students reported they would learn more if disruptive students were removed from the classroom.

Methods Teachers Use to Deter Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom

Teachers have used a variety of methods to deter disruptive behavior in the classroom. In this section, I review the methods most prevalent in the literature. I have grouped the methods into three major categories: interacting with students and parents, organizing and planning, and implementing established behavior plans.

Interacting With Students and Parents

Very little research exists on the effectiveness of ignoring disruptive behavior as a method of deterring it. However, Smart and Igo (2010) reported that when teachers tried ignoring severe disruptive behaviors as a method of deterring it, they did so because they felt that being confrontational would only worsen the situation. Gaskill and Gaskill (2010) reported that teachers ignored disruptive behavior when they noticed students were seeking negative attention. Rather, the bulk of the literature on deterring disruptive student behavior has been focused on teacher interactions with students and parents. In this section, I discuss ways in which teachers interact with students and parents to deter disruptive behavior.

Praise. Teachers interact with students to deter disruptive behavior by praising appropriate behavior. When a teacher uses praise to deter disruptive behavior, the teacher identifies a specific student who is behaving correctly and then verbally praises the student (Smart & Igo, 2010). When a teacher uses praise and identifies a specific

behavior in which a student is engaged, the process is referred to as “specific praise” (Reinke, Herman, & Stormont, 2012 p. 41).

By using specific praise, the teacher not only reinforces the positive behavior with the student at the time the student is immediately engaged in the behavior but also encourages that student to repeat the positive behavior in the future (Smart & Igo, 2010). Future engagement in the positive behavior becomes more likely when teachers communicate specific expectations because the student has a clear understanding of how he or she should behave and thus is better able to repeat the exact positive behaviors (Reinke et al., 2010). In addition, the positive behavior of one student may serve as a model of appropriate behavior for other students, thus decreasing the incidence of disruptive behavior among all students in the classroom (Del Guercio, 2011; Smart & Igo, 2010). Praise often is an effective method for deterring disruptive student behavior because, typically, students enjoy being praised for their actions (Reinke et al., 2010). Praise as a method for deterring disruptive student behavior is most effective when it is genuine, that is, used in a positive and respectful manner (Shook, 2012).

According to Leflot, van Lier, Onghena, & Colpin (2010), increased use of praise and decreased use of negative remarks deters disruptive classroom behaviors. Although this may be the case, Shook (2012) found that students who exhibit disruptive behaviors rarely receive praise. This condition may be the result of teacher focus on reprimanding students’ for their disruptive behaviors as well as the lack of opportunity to praise students for engaging in positive behavior (Shook, 2012).

Talking with students. Teachers interact with students to deter disruptive behavior by talking with the students about their disruptive behavior. In a study of methods teachers use to deter disruptive behavior, Shook (2012) found that teacher participants reported talking to students as the most common method they used to deter disruptive behavior. Of the 19 participants in the study, 54% used individual talks as a strategy for deterring disruptive behaviors in their classrooms (Shook, 2012).

Talking to students privately about their disruptive behavior may effectively help deter them from engaging in further disruptive behavior because students do not react positively to open rebuke such as yelling and screaming (Lewis, Roache, & Romi, 2011). In addition, when a teacher talks to a student privately, the teacher may discover (a) the student has hidden attributes the teacher may help promote to improve the student's overall behavior or (b) the student acted out to get attention and approval from his peers, in which case the teacher may actively engage in discussion focused on that inappropriate impetus for the behavior (Kritsonis, 2014).

Talking with a student privately is most appropriate in situations that do not require emergency action (Kritsonis, 2014) and most effective when it occurs within 10 seconds of the disruptive behavior so the student can be made aware of the exact behavior that was found to be disruptive (MacSuga & Simonsen, 2011). Furthermore, Beaty-O'Ferrall, Green, and Hanna (2010) suggested when teachers talk to students about disruptive behavior, the teacher first should acknowledge something the student as done well and then address the disruptive behavior to help reduce the potential for a power battle. In addition, conversations between teachers and students are more productive

when they are (a) positive and sincere and (b) void of sarcasm, which typically will contribute to continued disruptive behaviors (Beaty-O'Ferrall et al., 2010).

Talking to a student privately about inappropriate behavior also provides the teacher an opportunity to discuss with the student a plan of action to eliminate future disruptive behaviors (MacSuga & Simonsen, 2011). Smart and Igo (2010) found that teachers in their study were most successful using the talking-with-students method to deter disruptive behavior in the classroom when they conducted one-on-one talks with students on a weekly basis to discuss the students' disruptive behavior from the past week and then develop a plan of corrective action for the upcoming week.

Teaching and modeling appropriate behaviors. Teachers interact with students to deter disruptive behavior by teaching and modeling appropriate behaviors. Teaching students how to respect themselves, others, the environment, safety, and responsibility can help deter disruptive behavior because the teaching of positive behaviors provides ongoing reminders for students of what is expected of them, (MacSuga-Gage, Simonsen, & Briere. 2012). For the same reason, following daily rituals and routines and teaching school-wide rules and consequences are effective practices for deterring disruptive behavior (Graham & Prigmore, 2009; MacSug-Gage et al., 2012; Michael, Meese, Keith, & Mathews 2009). In a study by Shook (2012), 37% of teachers reported teaching students how they should behave in the classroom and why it was important to behave that way as a method for deterring disruptive behaviors.

Positive reinforcement and punishment. Teachers interact with students to deter disruptive behavior by using positive reinforcement and punishment. Bernier, Simpson,

and Rose (2012) defined positive reinforcement as the praise of positive behavior as a means of increasing the chance of continued positive behavior and suggested that positive reinforcement is a very effective way of promoting compliance, which leads to decreased disruptive behavior. In addition to being implemented through praise, positive reinforcement can be implemented through the use of a reward system (Sheffield & Waller, 2010). For example, teachers may use points or tokens to reward students for appropriate classroom behavior and then allow students to redeem the points and tokens for prizes or other classroom privileges and free time (Sheffield & Waller, 2010). In some cases, teachers most successfully have used this system of positive reinforcement to recognize students for obeying rules that were challenging for students class wide (Smart & Igo, 2010).

Teachers also have used positive and negative punishment to deter disruptive behavior. Smart and Igo (2010) defined positive punishment as a negative consequence to an inappropriate behavior, especially in cases when classroom rules were already established to deter inappropriate behaviors. In Smart and Igo's study, teachers reported using verbal reprimand as a positive punishment because they hoped that the embarrassment would deter undesirable behaviors. Teachers also reported using time out and the loss of free time, recess, and student privileges to prevent future disruptive behaviors (Smart & Igo, 2010). Whereas positive punishment consists of applying a negative consequence for the student, negative punishment consists of the removal of something valued by the student as a consequence for unwanted behavior (Smart & Igo, 2010). Although the use of negative punishment can be effective when the valued

privilege is generally accessible to all students, such as rewards or class jobs, the consequence typically becomes more effective for deterring disruptive behavior the more child specific it is (Smart & Igo, 2010). According to Appelbaum (2009), the delivery of consequences is likely to be ineffective when teachers negatively reinforce noncompliance, provide little or no reinforcement for compliance, and repeat commands.

Contacting parents. Teachers interact with parents to deter disruptive behavior in the classroom by contacting parents and building trusting relationships with them. Contacting parents can help reduce the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the classroom because by initiating contact with parents, teachers build relationships with parents (Spilt, 2010) that help create a support network extending beyond the classroom (Carlson, 2012; Kritsonis, 2014; Myers, 2013). In a study by Myers (2013), parents who reported teaching their children how to behave in school and to respect teachers and others also reported wanting to be contacted immediately when their children are disrupting the classroom. These parents welcomed contact concerning their child's academic life as well as their social life (Myers, 2013).

MacSuga-Gage et al. (2012) suggested that parental contact is most effective for developing relationships that contribute to decreased incidents of disruptive student behavior when teachers (a) begin the conversation with something positive about the student before addressing the behavioral issue, (b) use positive language during the interaction, and (c) offer suggestions with regard to how the teacher, parent, and student can work together to decrease disruptive behavior (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012). Smart and Igo (2010) suggested that developing a plan to support the student's efforts to

improve his or her behavior was a critical element for deterring disruptive behavior and that the child's parent(s) and/or guardians, the teacher, the school counselor, and either the principal or assistant principal should be part of the team that helps develop the support plan.

Although initiating contact with parents can help deter the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the classroom once the behavior has become evident, Dillion and Nixon (2014) suggested that initiating parental contact prior to observed misbehavior can help prevent the behavior from manifesting in the first place. The researchers posited that when teachers develop a relationship with parents under positive circumstances (in the absence of misbehavior), parents are more likely to develop a vested interest in promoting the continued occurrence of that positive behavior. One way that teachers can initiate contact with parents under such positive circumstances is to invite parents into the school to volunteer or eat lunch with the students (Dillion & Nixon, 2014).

Organizing and Planning

In some instances, studies have shown that teachers can reduce the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the classroom through strategic organizing and planning. For instance, research has shown that the use of seating plans can help deter disruptive student behavior (Kritsonis, 2014). The use of seating plans can be especially helpful in elementary school classrooms where students work together in small groups and engage in activities that include regular movement about the classroom (Kritsonis, 2014). According to Kritsonis (2014), the use of seating plans is a successful strategy because

teachers can use them to separate students who are more likely to misbehave when seated next to or near each other.

Teachers also can deter disruptive student behavior in the classroom by keeping students engaged in academic activities. Disruptive behavior rarely occurs in classrooms where students are fully engaged academically (Gaskill & Gaskill, 2014; Reinke et al., 2012). However, when students become tired or bored, they are more apt to lose focus on the activity in which they are engaged, and as a result, engage in disruptive behavior (MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012). According to Kritsonis (2014), disruptive behavior in the classroom is unavoidable when students have too much down time in the classroom and nothing is expected of them. Similarly, students can become distracted and engage in disruptive behavior during transitions between activities (Kritsonis, 2014).

Teachers can encourage student engagement by effectively planning instruction and activities (breaking up longer lessons and activities into shorter increments) as well as transitional procedures that keep all students actively engaged (Kritsonis, 2014; MacSuga-Gage et al., 2012). When instruction, activities, and transitional procedures are well planned, the atmosphere of the classroom typically remains positive and further contributes to decreased incidence of disruptive behavior (Kritsonis, 2014).

Implementing Established Behavior Plans and Classroom Management Models

Results from Leflot et al. (2010) study of 570 Grade 2 and 3 students revealed that implementing research-based behavior plans may prevent disruptive behavior in the classroom. In particular, Leflot et al. found that the Good Behavior Game (behavior plan) was an effective method for reducing disruptive behavior among elementary students.

The Good Behavior Game, focused on off-task behavior, included teacher praise for correct behavior and negative marks for disruptive behavior (Leflot et al., 2010). After implementing the plan, teachers in the study (a) used less negative marks and more praise in the classroom and (b) experienced a decrease in students talking out and engaging in off-task behaviors (Leflot et al., 2010).

The Positive Behaviors Support plan is another behavior plan that has been found to be effective for deterring disruptive behavior in the classroom. In a study of 32 disruptive third grade students, Ünlü et al. (2014) found the Positive Behavior Support plan dramatically decreased the incidence of disruptive student classroom behavior. To provide evidence for this claim, Ünlü et al. shared results about two particularly disruptive students, neither of whom had diagnosed behavior disorders. Prior to the implementation of the Positive Behavior Support plan, student A was disruptive 83% of the day; after 3 weeks of teacher implementation of the plan, Student A was disruptive 31% of the day, and after 6 weeks, 27% of the day (Ünlü et al., 2014). Disruptive behavior for Student B decreased from 82% prior to the implementation of the plan to 34% after 3 weeks (Ünlü et al., 2014). For a period of 3 days during this study, the plan was not implemented; the researchers do not provide an explanation for this lapse in the program implementation. However, after the 3-day lapse, Student B's rate of disruptive behavior increased to 87.5%. During the following 2 weeks in which the program was implemented again, Student B's rate of disruptive behavior declined, on average, to 35.5%. These results, although inconsistent, do demonstrate the effectiveness of a

structured behavior plan for reducing the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the classroom.

Reglin, Akpo-Sanni, and Losike-Sedimo (2012) conducted a study on the effect of the Professional Development Classroom Management Model (PDCMM), a model developed to promote a loving, classroom atmosphere that encourages positive communication and establishes a relationship between the teacher and students. The study site was an elementary school with a high incidence of disruptive behaviors and resulting high rates of discipline referrals and academic failure (Reglin et al., 2012). Results from this study showed the implementation of the PDCMM significantly reduced disruptive behaviors and decreased the number of discipline referrals in relation to classroom disruptive behaviors (Reglin et al., 2012).

Teacher Needs

Teachers continuously have to contend with disruptive students in their classrooms. Often, however, teachers do not feel as if they have the information or support they need to address this problem. This condition may be especially true for pre-services teachers who have the least amount of in-class experience.

Because the effectiveness of strategies for deterring disruptive student behavior will vary based on multiple factors, it is necessary that teachers reflect on the structure of any implemented plan, the implementation process, and the outcomes of implementing the plan to determine their level of effectiveness and potentially needed adjustments (Woodcock & Reupert, 2013). However, teachers often do not have the information they

need to adequately determine the effectiveness of a behavior management plan/program (Smart & Igo, 2010).

With regard to support, Leflot et al. (2010) suggested that teachers specifically need support learning how to properly implement behavior-specific praise, which research has shown to be effective. The researchers based this suggestion on findings that indicated teachers who implemented the Good Behavior Game (behavior plan) only praised students once or twice per 30 minutes. Although teachers typically understand the concept of acknowledging positive behavior and the importance of doing so, they nonetheless often fail to praise these behaviors using behavior-specific praise (Leflot et al., 2010).

In Smart and Igo's (2010) study, teachers reported needing additional support from administration, counselors, and other teachers when dealing with severe disruptive behaviors. Teachers felt as though they had exhausted all management strategies and did not know what else to do (Smart & Igo, 2010). Other teachers in the same study indicated they constantly called the principal and guidance counselor for assistance and stated "The administration has been highly absent in my classroom when I needed them and that has surprised me" (Smart & Igo, 2010, p. 580). Teachers indicated they were open to support in a variety of forms as long as they received some sort of support (Smart & Igo, 2010).

Literature Related to the Method

The purpose of this study was (a) to investigate elementary school teachers' perspectives regarding level of concern with specific disruptive behaviors, the need for additional support to manage those specific disruptive behaviors, methods used to

manage disruptive behavior, and informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management, and (b) to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those specific disruptive student behaviors. To investigate these topics, I conducted a quantitative study using a correlational design and a survey approach to data collection.

Unlike qualitative research, which is humanist in nature and conducted in a natural setting using a variety of data collection methods and interpretive data analysis techniques to explore a social phenomenon (Creswell, 2009), quantitative research is conducted using a research instrument that allows for the collection of quantifiable data that are then analyzed using various statistical processes (Creswell, 2009). The purpose of correlational research in particular is to determine if a relationship exists between two or more variables using a correlational analysis (Creswell, 2009). Correlational research is nonexperimental in nature (Creswell, 2013). According to Creswell (2009), surveys are useful when researchers want to evaluate programs, identify perspectives or beliefs of respondents, determine opinions concerning policies, and describe conditions (trends). These study design concepts are repeated in Section 3 along with the rationale for choosing them.

Literature Related to Differing Methods

In this section, I discuss research methods that may have been appropriate to use to explore my topic but that I did not choose to use. I did not choose to use qualitative research because, according to Creswell (2009), the focus of qualitative research is on

interpretive data analysis. Because the purpose of my first three research questions was to identify conditions rather than describe them interpretively and the purpose of my fourth research question was to compare relationships between variables, qualitative research was less appropriate than quantitative research for my study. Although I could have conducted a case study to gather information about teacher experiences with regard to disruptive student behavior, I chose not to do so because the survey I used included an extensive list of potentially concerning disruptive behaviors and provided teachers with a wide range of response options I determined to be thorough and effective for the purposes of my study. In addition, I did not choose to conduct a case study because I wanted to express the data (teacher level of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors, need for additional support to manage those specific disruptive behaviors, methods used to manage disruptive behavior, and informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management) in objectively analyzed quantifiable units that I could share with the school administrators, who then could make informed decisions based on the strength of statistical evidence.

Summary

Although disruptive behavior has been defined in numerous ways, in general, it can be characterized as behavior that (a) deviates from what is typically expected in given situations and that affects others. Disruptive behavior can manifest in many forms, but the behaviors can be grouped into five broad categories: “aggression . . . immorality . . . defiance of authority . . . class disruptions . . . and clowning around” (Charles, 1996, p. 2). Reasons that students are disruptive in the classroom may be (a) familial in nature; (b)

related to societal factors such as habitation in poor neighborhoods, lack of positive role models, and exposure to violence; and (c) related to elements in the school environment. The literature differs with regard to the types of disruptive behaviors teachers most commonly encounter in the classroom. However, the consequences of disruptive behavior are always negative and include peer rejection, lack of friendships, referral for placement in a special education classroom, teacher stress and attrition, loss of instructional time, and decreased academic achievement.

The literature has demonstrated that teachers consistently use specific methods to deter disruptive behavior in the classroom. These methods fall into three major categories: interacting with students and parents, organizing and planning, and implementing established behavior plans. Teachers may interact with students by giving praise, talking with students, teaching and modeling appropriate behavior, and using positive reinforcement and punishment. Teachers may interact with parents by initiating contact with them and developing relationships. Teachers may organize and plan by using seating charts, keeping students engaged in academic activities and effectively planning transitional procedures. Finally, to deter disruptive behavior, teachers also may implement established behavior plans and classroom management models. Despite evidence that teachers do use specific methods to deter disruptive behavior, they also have identified the need for additional information on behavior management and support from administration.

Section 3: Research Method

At the focus school in this study, there was a lack of research associated with the incidence of disruptive student behavior. For this reason, I designed this study to explore four aspects associated with this condition. Specifically, I explored elementary school (a) teachers' level of concern about various disruptive student behaviors in the classroom, (b) the methods those teachers used most frequently when dealing with disruptive student behavior, (c) teachers' specific informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management, and (d) the relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior. To explore these aspects, I conducted a quantitative study. The details of the study design and approach are presented in this section along with a discussion of the study setting and sample, instrument used to collect data, the data collection and analyses processes, and steps taken to protect the study participants.

Research Design and Approach

This quantitative study was correlational in nature. Unlike qualitative research, which is humanist in nature and conducted in a natural setting using a variety of data collection methods and interpretive data analysis techniques to explore a social phenomenon (Creswell, 2009), quantitative research is conducted using a research instrument that allows for the collection of quantifiable data that are then analyzed using various statistical processes (Creswell, 2009). Because I used a research instrument to collect quantifiable data that I analyzed statistically to identify teachers' perspectives regarding various aspects associated with disruptive student behavior in the classroom, a

quantitative design was appropriate for my study. The purpose of survey research is to determine if a relationship exists between two or more variables using a correlational analysis (Creswell, 2009). Because I sought to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those specific disruptive student behaviors, a correlational design was appropriate for my study.

A survey approach to data collection was used in this study. According to Creswell (2009), surveys are useful when researchers want to evaluate programs, identify perspectives or beliefs of respondents, determine opinions concerning policies, and describe conditions (trends). Because the purpose of this study was to identify teachers' perspectives regarding various aspects associated with disruptive student behavior in the classroom and (b) to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those specific disruptive student behaviors (a condition), a survey approach to data collection was appropriate in this study.

Setting and Sample

The focus school in this study was a Title I elementary school in Georgia that employed 60 general education teachers who serviced students in prekindergarten through Grade 5. Of the general education teachers, 77% were White, 23% were Black, 99% were female, and 1% was male. All teachers at the focus school were highly qualified teachers as required by the state of Georgia: 32.7% held only a bachelor's degrees, 65.3% held master's degrees, and 2% held doctoral degrees.

The average enrollment for the 2013-2014 school year was 1,307 students, 90% of whom had family incomes below the federal poverty line and were participating in the free- and reduced-price lunch program. Of all the students in the school, 83% were Black, 8% were White, 6% were Hispanic, and 3% were multiracial. Also, less than 3% of the students were second language learners, 10% received special education services, and 8% were in the gifted program.

The sampling method used in this study was nonprobability sampling, specifically convenience sampling. According to Creswell (2009), in nonprobability sampling, the researcher selects individuals because they are available, convenient, and represent some characteristic the investigator seeks to study. In convenience sampling in particular, the researcher selects participants because they are willing and available to be studied (Creswell, 2009). Because the purpose of this study was to identify perspectives of elementary school teachers, it was necessary to choose participants who taught at this level. In addition, because I had access to teachers through my school, I chose this site from which to collect data (i.e., the data collection site was convenient). For these reasons, convenience sampling was most appropriate for my study. To be an eligible teacher participant for this study, the teacher must have been the teacher of record for a regular education prekindergarten to fifth grade classroom in the focus school for at least 3 months prior to data collection for this study.

When considering a study sample, it is important to consider sample size. Wilson, Van Voorhis, and Morgan (2007) suggested that correlational analysis should include approximately 50 participants to have adequate power to detect significance with a power

of .80, $\alpha = .05$, and a moderate effect size of .30. Because there only were 60 teachers at the focus school, this was the population from which I had to draw participants. Baruch and Holtom (2008) found (based on a review of 490 studies) that typical survey response rates at the individual level was 52.7%. Using this rate to estimate the number of participants for my study, I could have expected 31 responses, far fewer than the 50 needed to determine significance. However, I anticipated that I would exceed the typical response rate because I had planned to send two reminder notices and because I was a teacher at the school. Although I was not in a position of power over the teachers at the school and I did not anticipate that they would feel coerced to participate, I did expect that they would choose to participate as a professional courtesy to me. For these reasons, I did not expand the scope of my study to other schools.

Instrument

To collect data for this study, I used the Child Behavior Survey developed by Martin, Linfoot, and Stephenson (1999b) as a means of collecting data that would help me to assess (a) whether teacher beliefs are linked to the support they receive and the strategies they use to manage behavior and (b) "the extent to which teachers' confidence mediates the relationship between their concerns about students' misbehavior and their use of support, strategies, and information needs" (p. 348; see Appendix A). Specifically, Martin et al. developed the survey to collect background data on the teachers who complete the survey as well as data on student behaviors that concern teachers, additional support needed by teachers to manage the behaviors that concern them, the ways in

which teachers deal with misbehaving students, and teachers' needs for additional general information about classroom and behavior management.

Instrument Description

The 33-item survey is divided into four sections (Martin et al., 1999a). Section 1 is made up of 16 items, including items about the teachers themselves, the teachers' classes, and the school (Martin et al., 1999b). Section 2 is made up of three items, the first of which is a list of 20 potentially problematic behaviors; for each behavior, teachers rate their level of concern and the level of support they feel they need to manage that specific behavior (Stephenson, Linfoot, & Martin, 2000). Both levels of concern and support are rated on 4-point scales: 1 (*not at all*), 2 (*somewhat*), 3 (*quite*), 4 (*extremely*) and 1 (*not at all*), 2 (*a little*), 3 (*some*), 4 (*a lot*), respectively (Stephenson et al., 2000). Teachers also can indicate that a particular behavior is not applicable if they have not experienced this behavior in their classrooms (Martin et al., 1999b). For the second item in Section 2, teachers are provided an opportunity to identify additional behaviors not on the list of behaviors included in the survey, and for the third item, teachers are asked to describe their general impression of their students' classroom behavior using a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (*Cheerful, happy, & well-behaved at all times*) to 5 (*Frequently difficult to manage with many worrying behaviors*; Martin et al., 1999a).

Section 3 of the survey is made up of two items, the first of which is a list of 16 support sources that teaches may have used to manage challenging behavior in their classrooms (Martin et al., 1999a). For the second item in Section 3, teachers are provided an opportunity to identify any additional help they may have used previously to manage

difficult behavior in the classroom. Section 4 is made up of five items, the first two of which are related to methods the teachers may have used in the past to manage difficult student behavior. For the first item, teachers are asked to identify from a provided list methods they may have used to manage difficult classroom behavior, and for the second item, teachers are provided the opportunity to identify any additional methods they may have used for the same purpose (Martin et al., 1999a). For two other similar items, teachers are asked to identify specific strategies or programs they may have used to manage difficult classroom behavior and are provided an opportunity to identify any additional specific strategies or programs they may have implemented to manage difficult classroom behavior, respectively (Martin et al., 1999a). One question in this section is related to teachers' overall level of confidence in dealing with difficult behaviors in their classrooms (Martin et al., 1999a).

Section 5 of the survey is made up of nine items, the first of which is a list of general behavior management topics about which teachers may want additional information (Martin et al., 1999a). For other items, teachers are provided the opportunity to identify additional general behavior management topics about which they would like more information, the methods they would prefer for receiving the identified information, the locations in which they would prefer receiving the identified information, and their perspectives about out-of-school workshops on classroom management (Martin et al., 1999a).

Reliability Testing

While the one confidence item on the survey was treated as a single variable, the other 32 behavior items formed 13 subscales (aggression, delinquency, disobedience, distractibility, professional support, school-based support, professional liaison, positive strategy, non-physical punishment, referral, positive info, misbehavior info, and teacher information; Martin et al., 1999b) when Martin et al. (1999b) used the instrument with a sample of teachers from 21 preschools (three each from the seven Local Government Areas) in western Sydney, Australia. Based on scale reliability testing conducted using Cronbach's alpha, Martin et al. (1999b) stated that the instrument scales demonstrated acceptable internal consistency. However, five of the 13 subscales had Cronbach's alphas below .70 (Martin et al., 1999b), and although the researchers do not provide any rationale for their description of the reliability as acceptable based on the Cronbach's alphas they achieved, according to Multon and Coleman (2010), "typically, a 'high' reliability coefficient is considered to be .90 or above, 'very good' is .80 to .89, and 'good' or 'adequate' is .70 to .79" (Interpreting Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient section, para. 1). Based on this initial analysis, the reliability of the instrument may be questionable; however, additional scale reliability analysis did demonstrate overall instrument reliability.

In 2000, Stephenson et al. presented additional analysis with regard to their original 1999 study results. In this additional analysis, the researchers aggregated items and formed four subscales, distractibility, disobedience, delinquency, and aggression, to which they applied to both the concern and the support needed items, for a total of eight

subscales. Results of scale reliability analysis for these eight subscales indicated the scales were acceptable; Cronbach's alphas for the level of concern subscales ranged from .79 to .92, and Cronbach's alphas for the support needed subscales ranged from .79 to .91 (Stephenson et al., 2000).

The Child Behavior Survey also has been used in subsequent research. For example, in 2007, Giallo and Hayes slightly modified the Child Behavior Survey and used it with a sample of 86 staff members of government schools and one university in Australia to explore teachers' perceptions with regard to behavior management in the classroom. Also, more than a decade after developing the Child Behavior Survey, Stephenson, with a new team of researchers, used the instrument with a sample of 42 primary school teachers in New South Wales, Australia to explore teachers' views on latency as well as "what aspects of non-compliant behavior Australian rural primary teachers deal with in the classroom and the levels of non-compliance they see as requiring additional support in the classroom" (Reynolds et al., 2011, p. 107). In both cases, the researchers did not conduct scale reliability analysis with their respective populations; however, the use of the instrument over time does provide evidence of its lasting value.

Instrument Adaption for Use in Current Study

For the purposes of this study, I slightly adapted the Child Behavior Survey. Specifically, I eliminated 11 of the 16 items in Section 1 and entirely eliminated Section 4 (five items). I eliminated Section 4 on teachers' current use of available support systems for managing student behaviors because this topic was beyond the scope of this

study. In Section 1, I eliminated Item 3 in particular because I already had the data on the number of students in the school. I eliminated the additional 10 items in an effort to reduce the length of the survey, and thereby the amount of time it takes to complete the survey, as a means of promoting teacher participation. I based this decision on a recent study by Cape (2012) which indicated that 21% percent of people stated begin too busy as the reason they do not participate in survey research. Because the items I eliminated in Section 1 were strictly for descriptive purposes, their elimination did not affect the value of this study in any way. Prior to making adaptations to the Child Behavior Survey and using the survey to collect data in this study, I sought and received permission to do so from Martin et al. (1999a; see Appendix A).The adapted version of the instrument is presented in Appendix B.

Data Collection and Analysis

Prior to collecting any data for this study, I obtained permission to conduct the study from Walden University's Institutional Review Board (#02-05-14-0173235). In addition, I obtained permission from the focus school principal to collect data from teachers at the school (see Appendix C). To recruit participants for this study, I spoke to teachers at the close of a staff meeting at which time I explained the purpose of the study, the processes through which I would disseminate the survey and collect data, and the procedure for demonstrating consent.

During the staff meeting at which I recruited participants, I distributed a letter of invitation to participate in the study (see Appendix D) along with a letter of consent (see Appendix E). In the invitation to participate in the study were instructions for accessing

the digital version of the adapted Child Behavior Survey that I generated using the online survey-generating software SurveyMonkey. Because of concern that some teachers would not participate in the study via an online medium, I also distributed the survey in hard-copy form along with a return envelope. I instructed teachers who planned to complete the hard-copy survey to seal the completed survey in the provided envelope and return the envelope to my staff mailbox. To promote participation, I sent two email reminders to teachers after Weeks 1 and 2 of the data collection period, which lasted a total of 3 weeks.

After the data were collected, I entered it into an SPSS file for analysis. Then I calculated (a) descriptive statistics for the background data as well as for all of the research questions and (b) inferential statistics for Research Question 4. With regard to the descriptive statistics in particular, I reported frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. For the background data, I also identified minimum and maximum responses. With regard to the inferential statistics, I conducted correlations.

Protection of Human Subjects

To ensure the protection of participants in this study, I followed appropriate procedures for conducting research. For example, prior to collecting data for this study, I obtained all the necessary permissions from Walden University and focus school principal. In addition, I provided potential participants with a letter of consent (see Appendix D) in which I explained the purpose of the study, the time required to complete the survey, how the data will be used, potential benefits of participating in the study, and how confidentiality will be maintained. Return of the completed survey indicated that

participants had read and agreed to the terms of participation expressed in the letter of consent. Also, participation in this study was voluntary. Although I was a teacher in the focus school at the time of this study, I did not hold any supervisory role over any of the teachers at the school; therefore, they should not have felt pressured to participate in any way.

Summary

To explore elementary school (a) teachers' level of concern about various disruptive student behaviors in the classroom, (b) the methods those teachers used most frequently when dealing with disruptive student behavior, (c) teachers' specific informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management, and (d) the relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior at the focus school, I conducted a quantitative study. Because I explored the relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior, this study was correlational in nature. The focus school in this study was a Title I elementary school that employed 60 highly qualified general education teachers in the 2013-2014 academic school year to provide services to 1,307 students. Data were collected using an adapted version of the Child Behavior Survey, which was disseminated in both electronic and hard copy forms. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were calculated. In the next section, the results of the data analyses are presented.

Section 4: Results

The purpose of this study was (a) to identify teachers' level of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors in the classroom, need for additional support to manage those specific disruptive behaviors, methods used to manage disruptive behavior, and informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management) and (b) to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those specific disruptive student behaviors. To this end, I used SurveyMonkey to collect data from teachers using Martin et al.'s Child Behavior Survey (1999a). I collected select background data (gender, highest education level, years teaching, number of children in the teacher's classroom, number of male and female disruptive students in the teacher's classroom) as well as data pertinent to the research questions in particular. In the remainder of this section, I present the results of the descriptive and inferential analyses of these data followed by a summary of the main points of the findings.

Data Analysis Procedure

Inferential statistics were used to draw conclusions from the sample tested. The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 was used to code and tabulate scores collected from the survey and provide summarized values where applicable including mean and standard deviation. Descriptive and frequency statistics were used to evaluate Research Questions 1-3 and correlation analysis was conducted to evaluate Research Question 4. The research questions were

Research Question 1 - 3

Research Question 1 (RQ1): What are elementary teachers' levels of concern about various disruptive student behaviors in the classroom as measured by the Child Behavior Survey?

Research Question 2 (RQ2): What methods do elementary teachers use most frequently when dealing with disruptive student behavior in the classroom?

Research Question 3 (RQ3): What are elementary teachers' specific informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management?

Research Question 4

Research Question 4 (RQ4): Is there a relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior?

Table 3
Summary of Analyses used to Evaluate Research Questions 1-4

Research Question	Dependent Variable	Independent Variable	Type of Analysis
1	Level of Concern		Descriptive Statistics
2	Methods of Behavior		Descriptive Statistics
3	Specific Informational Needs		Descriptive Statistics
4	Level of Concern	Support Needed	Correlation

Demographics

Data were collected from a sample of 49 elementary school teachers in Georgia. Specifically, 48 of the teachers were female (98.0%, $n = 48$) and one was male (2.0%, $n = 1$). Additionally, the majority of teachers had a master's degree (65.3%, $n = 32$), 16

teachers had a bachelor's degree (32.7%, *n* = 16), and one teacher had a doctorate degree (2.0%, *n* = 1). Displayed in Table 4 are frequency and percent statistics of participants' gender and level of education.

Table 4
Descriptive and Frequency and Percent Statistics of Participants' Gender and Highest Level of Education

Variable	Frequency (*n*)	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	1	2.0
Female	48	98.0
Highest education level		
Bachelor's	16	32.7
Master's	32	65.3
Doctorate	1	2.0

Participating teachers had a range of teaching experience between 18 and 25 years with an average of 20.6 years (*SD* = 1.51). Additionally, teachers had a minimum of 18 students in their classroom and a maximum of 43 students (*M* = 21.02, *SD* = 3.54). Finally, teachers reported an average of over two times as many male students (*M* = 2.78, *SD* = 1.79) as female students (*M* = 0.61, *SD* = 0.95) who exhibited disruptive classroom behaviors that required additional behavior management. Descriptive statistics of participants' years of teaching experience, number of students, and number of disruptive students are displayed in Table 5.

Table 5
Descriptive Statistics of Participants' Years of Teaching Experience, Number of Students, and Number of Disruptive Students

Demographic	Min.	Max.	*M*	*SD*
Years of teaching experience	18	25	20.57	1.51
Number of students in classroom	18	43	21.02	3.54
Number of disruptive students				
Male	0	7	2.78	1.79
Female	0	3	0.61	0.95

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 was evaluated using frequency and descriptive statistics to determine the levels of concerns that elementary teachers had regarding various disruptive student behaviors in the classroom. Specifically, teachers' levels of concerns were measured by 20-items on Section 1: Level of Concern and Associated Support Needed of the Child Behavior survey. Response parameters were measured on a 4-point scale where 1 = *not at all*, 2 = *somewhat*, 3 = *quite often*, and 4 = *extremely*. That is, higher scores indicated a higher level of concern for that particular disruptive behavior.

Results from the descriptive and frequency statistics on each of the 20 survey items revealed that no teachers ($n = 0$) were concerned that students "engage[d] in inappropriate sexual behavior on the school campus." Additionally, 40 of the 49 teachers (81.6%) reported that stealing was no concern at all, six (12.2%) reported that stealing was somewhat of a concern, and the remaining three teachers (6.1%) stated they were "quite" concerned about students stealing. Teachers were most concerned about students who "argue when reprimanded or corrected" ($M = 2.06$, $SD = 0.92$) and students who

"disrupt the activities of others" ($M = 2.37$, $SD = 0.83$). Descriptive statistics and frequency and percent statistics of participants' responses to each of the 20 survey items are displayed in Table 6 in ascending order of level of concern.

Table 6

Frequency and Percent Statistics of Participants' Responses on the Teachers' Level of Concern for Disruptive Behavior Questionnaire

Disruptive Behavior	Not at all		Somewhat		Quite		Extremely		Mean (*M*)	Standard Deviation (*SD*)
	N	%	*N*	%	*N*	%	*N*	%		
Engages in inappropriate sexual behavior	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	--	--
Steals	40	81.6	6	12.2	3	6.1	0	0.0	0.24	0.56
Ignores the feelings of others	14	28.6	27	55.1	5	10.2	3	6.1	0.94	0.80
Runs away from school or classroom	25	51.0	7	14.3	9	18.4	8	16.3	1.00	1.17
Breaks things/damages others' property	17	34.7	20	40.8	7	14.3	5	10.2	1.00	0.96
Damages others' property	18	36.7	14	28.6	11	22.4	6	12.2	1.10	1.05
Lies	2	4.1	40	81.6	6	12.2	1	2.0	1.12	0.48
Uses obscene language or gestures	14	28.6	18	36.7	12	24.5	5	10.2	1.16	0.97
Refuses to obey teacher-imposed rules	5	10.2	24	49.0	17	34.7	3	6.1	1.37	0.76
Is verbally aggressive with others	6	12.2	22	44.9	13	26.5	8	16.3	1.47	0.92
Is physically aggressive with others/bullies	12	25.0	13	27.1	11	22.9	12	24.5	1.48	1.13
Demands must be met immediately/ cannot wait for attention	7	14.3	17	34.7	18	36.7	7	14.3	1.51	0.92
Excessive demands for teacher's attention/doesn't work independently	2	4.1	18	36.7	20	40.8	9	18.4	1.73	0.81
Does not get along well with other children	6	12.2	11	22.4	22	44.9	10	20.4	1.73	0.93
Doesn't remain on-task for a reasonable time	0	0.0	13	26.5	24	49.0	12	24.5	1.98	0.72
Distractibility of attention span a problem/does not listen	2	4.1	10	20.4	22	44.9	15	30.6	2.02	0.83
Does not follow established class rules	2	4.1	10	20.4	21	42.9	16	32.7	2.04	0.84
Expresses anger inappropriately	5	10.2	9	18.4	14	28.6	21	42.9	2.04	1.02
Argues when reprimanded or corrected	4	8.2	7	14.3	20	40.8	18	36.7	2.06	0.92
Disrupts the activities of others	1	2.0	8	16.3	12	24.5	28	57.1	2.37	0.83

Note. Total $n = 49$

Research Question 2

For Research Question 2, SPSS 22.0 was used to run frequency distributions. Specifically, teachers were asked to state how often they used 25 separate methods as described in the Methods of Behavior Management section of the survey (see Appendix B). Response parameters were measured on a 3-point scale where 1 = *never used*, 2 = *sometimes used*, and 3 = *frequently used*. That is, the higher the score the more often the particular method was employed.

The two least used methods of behavior management were "referred the child to medical personnel" (M = 1.22, SD = 0.42) and "referred the child to other profession (e.g., psychologist, social worker, etc.)" (M = 1.29, SD = 0.46). The four most frequently reported methods of behavior management were "used seating arrangement" (M = 2.53, SD = 0.58), "used praise to encourage better behavior" (M = 2.57, SD = 0.50), "talked it over with the child" (M = 2.63, SD = 0.57), and "contacted the child's parents" (M = 2.63, SD = 0.53). Displayed in Table 7 are descriptive and frequency statistics of participants' responses to the 25 methods of behavior management sorted in ascending order by item mean.

Table 7
Descriptive and Frequency Statistics of Responses to Items in Teachers' Methods of Behavior Management

	Never used		Sometimes used		Frequently used			
Method of Behavior Management	*n*	%	*N*	%	*n*	%	M	SD
Referred the child to medical personnel	38	77.6	11	22.4	0	0.0	1.22	0.42
Referred the child to other professional (e.g., psychologist, social worker)	35	71.4	14	28.6	0	0.0	1.29	0.46
Detained the child	35	71.4	13	26.5	1	2.0	1.31	0.51
Imposed punishment (e.g., pick up papers)	31	63.3	15	30.6	3	6.1	1.43	0.61
Implemented peer support program	30	61.2	16	32.7	3	6.1	1.45	0.61
Called class meeting or discussion	27	55.1	17	34.7	5	10.2	1.55	0.68
Used conflict resolution system	17	34.7	29	59.2	3	6.1	1.71	0.58
Adapted curriculum to suit student needs	20	40.8	22	44.9	7	14.3	1.73	0.70
Arranged for short-term placement in another teacher's classroom	11	22.4	32	65.3	6	12.2	1.90	0.59
Implemented behavior agreement/ contract	12	24.5	29	59.2	8	16.3	1.92	0.64
Sent the child to the corner/back of room	10	20.4	30	61.2	9	18.4	1.98	0.63
Referred the child to the counselor	4	8.2	38	77.6	7	14.3	2.06	0.48
Used behavior modification	6	12.2	32	65.3	11	22.4	2.10	0.59
Sent the child out of class (time out)	3	6.1	37	75.5	9	18.4	2.12	0.48
Sent child to principal or assistant/vice principal	5	10.2	32	65.3	12	24.5	2.14	0.58
Ignored the bad behavior	4	8.2	33	67.3	12	24.5	2.16	0.55
Remove privileges (e.g., no story)	2	4.1	33	67.3	14	28.4	2.24	0.52
Used token/reward system	5	10.2	25	51.0	19	38.8	2.29	0.65
Verbally reprimanded the child	0	0.0	31	63.3	18	36.7	2.37	0.49
Used school merit/levels system	4	8.2	23	46.9	22	44.9	2.37	0.64
Tried to teach better behavior	4	8.2	22	44.9	23	46.9	2.39	0.64
Used seating arrangement	2	4.1	19	38.8	28	57.1	2.53	0.58
Used praise to encourage better behavior	0	0.0	21	42.9	28	57.1	2.57	0.50
Talked it over with the child	2	4.1	14	28.6	33	67.3	2.63	0.57
Contacted child's parents	1	2.0	16	32.7	32	65.3	2.63	0.53

Research Question 3

For Research Question 3, SPSS 22.0 was used to evaluate frequency distributions on data collected. Specifically, teachers were asked to state how much they agreed with 29 specific informational needs that relate to general classroom and behavior management. The 29 items were measured by one item each on the Specific Informational Needs section of the survey (see Appendix B). Response parameters were measured on a 5-point Likert-type scale where 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *neither disagree nor agree*, 4 = *agree*, and 5 = *strongly agree*. Frequency and percent statistics of participants' responses to each of the 29 informational needs are displayed in Appendix F, Table 12.

The two leased desired informational needs of teachers included "encouraging children to share" ($M = 3.31$, $SD = 0.80$) and "helping children when shy or fearful" ($M = 3.45$, $SD = 0.65$). Furthermore, results indicated that the four most desired informational needs included "encouraging children to be more responsible for their own behavior" ($M = 4.12$, $SD = 0.81$), "dealing with stress" ($M = 4.16$, $SD = 0.66$), "effective ways of decreasing disruptive behavior" ($M = 4.27$, $SD = 0.64$), and "dealing with defiance" ($M = 4.33$, $SD = 0.77$). Descriptive statistics of teachers' specific information needs are displayed in Table 8 and were sorted in ascending order by item mean.

Table 8
Distribution of Responses to Items in Teachers' Specific Information Needs

Informational Needs	M	SD
Encouraging children to share	3.31	0.80
Helping children when shy or fearful	3.45	0.65
Developing classroom rules and routines	3.49	0.68
Dealing with children who run away	3.49	0.82
Ideas for me when I get angry	3.51	0.71
Communicating with parents	3.53	0.65
Dealing with dishonesty	3.59	0.71
Encouraging children to be aware of the feelings of others	3.63	0.67
How to use rewards to elicit the desired behavior	3.63	0.67
Showing children how to apologize to others	3.65	0.72
Setting appropriate consequences for misbehavior	3.69	0.62
Stopping children from fighting	3.69	0.71
Teaching children how to interrupt appropriately	3.69	0.71
Encouraging children to cooperate with others	3.76	0.72
Dealing with temper tantrums	3.76	0.75
Helping students listen to teachers and peers	3.80	0.74
Dealing with special disorders/disabilities	3.82	0.60
Encouraging children to cooperate with reasonable requests	3.83	0.69
Encouraging children to be more positive about school	3.84	0.66
Helping students stay on task	3.94	0.63
Dealing with argument	3.98	0.80
Dealing with children who have emotional problems	4.04	0.50
Dealing with violent children	4.06	0.59
Dealing with disobedience	4.06	0.72
Helping children to be better learners	4.10	0.65
Encouraging children to be more responsible for their own behavior	4.12	0.81
Dealing with stress	4.16	0.66
Effective ways of decreasing disruptive behavior	4.27	0.64
Dealing with defiance	4.33	0.77

Research Question 4

Research Question 4 was analyzed using correlation analysis to determine if any significant relationships existed between elementary teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior. The dependent variables (a.k.a. criterion variables) were teachers' level of concern and the independent variables (a.k.a. predictor variables) were teachers' levels of additional

support. Both the criterion and predictor variables consisted of four subscales each: level of concern - distractibility, disobedience, delinquency, and aggression; and level of additional support - distractibility, disobedience, delinquency, and aggression. The subscales were measured by five items each on Section 1: Teachers' Level of Concern and Associated Support Needed questionnaire. Response parameters were measured on the same 4-point as defined in Research Question 1. Composite scores were calculated for each of the subscales by averaging case scores across the subscales' five items. Composite scores were used to evaluate Research Question 4. However, for the delinquency subscale, all participants responded as "*not applicable*" to one item (engages in inappropriate sexual behavior on the school campus). Therefore, the survey item was removed from the delinquency subscale and a total of four items were used to calculate the composite scores.

Data Cleaning

Before the research question was evaluated, the data were screened for missing data, univariate outliers, and reliability. Missing data were investigated using frequency counts and no cases were found within the variable distributions. The data were screened for univariate outliers by transforming raw scores to z-scores and comparing z-scores to a critical range between - 3.29 and +3.29, $p < .001$ (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Z-scores that exceed this critical range are more than three standard deviations away from the mean and thus represent outliers. The distributions were evaluated and no cases with univariate outliers were found. Thus, 49 valid responses from participants were received

and 49 were evaluated by the correlation model for research question 4 (n = 49). Displayed in Table 9 are descriptive statistics of the teachers' scores on the level of concern and support needed subscales.

Table 9
Descriptive Statistics of Level of Concern and Support Needed Subscales

Subscale	Mean	Standard Deviation
Level of Concern		
Distractibility	1.92	0.66
Disobedience	1.63	0.68
Delinquency	0.88	0.62
Aggression	1.42	0.89
Support Needed		
Distractibility	1.47	0.79
Disobedience	1.15	0.76
Delinquency	0.64	0.66
Aggression	1.21	0.86

Note. Total n = 49

Reliability Analysis

Reliability analysis was run to determine if the dependent variables (levels of concern) and independent variables (support needed) were sufficiently reliable. Reliability analysis allows one to study the properties of measurement scales and the items that compose the scales (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis procedure calculates a reliability coefficient that ranges between 0 and 1. The reliability coefficient is based on the average inter-item correlation. Scale reliability is assumed if the coefficient is ≥ .60. Results from the tests found that all variable constructs were sufficiently reliable (p > .70). See Table 10 for summary details of the reliability analyses. Thus, the variable constructs did not violate the assumption of reliability and were used to evaluate Research Question 4.

Table 10
Results of Scale Reliability Analysis for Levels of Concern and Support Needed

Subscale	Number of items	Cronbach's α
Level of concern		
Distractibility	5	0.87
Disobedience	5	0.85
Delinquency	4	0.72
Aggression	5	0.92
Support needed		
Distractibility	5	0.91
Disobedience	5	0.88
Delinquency	4	0.76
Aggression	5	0.90

Note. Total $n = 49$

Results of Research Question 4

Null Hypothesis 4 ($H_0 4$): There are no significant relationships between elementary teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior.

Alternative Hypothesis 4 ($H_A 4$): There are significant relationships between elementary teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior.

Research Question 4 was evaluated using correlation analyses to determine if any significant relationships existed between elementary teachers' levels of concern (distractibility, disobedience, delinquency, and aggression) and levels of additional support (distractibility, disobedience, delinquency, and aggression) needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior. Results indicated that significant relationships existed between all subscales of teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support ($p < .05$). Therefore, the null hypothesis for Research Question 4 was rejected in favor of the

alternate hypothesis; that is, there are significant relationships between elementary teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior. Displayed in Table 11 is a model summary of the correlation analyses conducted for Research Question 4.

Table 11
Correlation Matrix between Level of Concern and Support Needed Subscales

	Support needed			
Level of concern	Distractibility	Disobedience	Delinquency	Aggressive
Distractibility	.693**	.580**	.479**	.564**
Disobedience	.570**	.762**	.700**	.758**
Delinquency	.364*	.687**	.787**	.674**
Aggressive	.403**	.717**	.677**	.870**

Note. *$p < .05$, **$p < .01$.

Summary

The results presented in this section were based on responses from 49 teachers to the Child Behavior Survey. Student distractibility was the behavior of most concern to the teachers, and teachers indicated the highest need for support. For each of the four categories of behaviors (distractibility, disobedience, delinquency, and aggressive), there was a strong, positive, relationship between the teachers' level of concern and their need of support. This result indicates teachers realized they needed help in managing the disruptive student behaviors in their classrooms. Finally, the teachers who completed the survey indicated that they frequently used seating arrangement, used praise to encourage better behavior, talked over the misbehavior with the child, and contacted the child's parents to address disruptive behavior.

Section 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

Teachers often experience challenging student behavior in the classroom, and the school under study was no exception. Disruptive behavior is problematic for students and teachers alike. Given this, the purpose of this study was to identify teachers' concerns with disruptive student behavior in the classroom. Specifically, Research Questions 1-3 focused on the level of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors, need for additional support to manage those specific disruptive behaviors, methods used to manage disruptive behavior, and informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management. Research Question 4 determined the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those specific disruptive student behaviors. Gaining these insights can provide opportunities to enhance teacher support in ways that both prevent and respond to potentially disruptive behavior in the classroom.

This study was guided by the following research questions:

RQ1: What are elementary teachers' levels of concern about various disruptive student behaviors in the classroom as measured by the Child Behavior Survey?

RQ2: What methods do elementary teachers use most frequently when dealing with disruptive student behavior in the classroom?

RQ3: What are elementary teachers' specific informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management?

RQ4: Is there a relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior?

Summary of Findings

Data were collected from 49 teachers at one school site using the Child Behavior Survey. Respondents indicated that their greatest student behavior concern was students' distractibility and student disobedience. Descriptive statistics were used to examine the variables of level of concern, methods of behavior, and specific informational needs of teachers. Correlation analysis was run to examine the supports needed by teachers to address the cited behavioral challenges.

Delinquency was the least concerning behavior, and teachers indicated that they needed the least amount of informational support for this behavior. Moreover, on average, respondents revealed that they needed the most support in handling students' distractibility than any of the other disruptive behaviors (i.e., aggression, disobedience, and delinquency). Strategies currently in place to address these classroom issues included seating arrangements, using praise to encourage better behavior, talking to the child about misbehavior, and contacting the child's parents.

Interpretation of the Findings

The findings of this study have implications for teaching practice and research into classroom management and student behavior. In the following section, I explore the implications of the study findings by research question.

Results of Research Question 1

Research Question 1 focused on the level of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors. Results from Research Question 1 indicated that teachers did not report inappropriate sexual behavior as a concern on the school campus. Additionally, 81.6% of the participants reported that stealing was of no concern at all. Although these behaviors are a concern, they are not evidenced as disruptive behaviors in the classroom at the school under study. Teachers were most concerned about students who "argue when reprimanded or corrected," and students who "disrupt the activities of others." These findings align with the work of Bru (2009), who reported that disruptive students caused the learning environment to be noisy, which made it difficult for other students to focus on instruction. In Saraiva et al.'s (2011) study, seven out of 10 student participants reported experiencing disruptive classroom behaviors that kept them off task, resulting in poor academic achievement. In Bru's study, students reported that they would learn more if disruptive students were removed from the classroom. The distractions presented through generally disruptive behavior or argument is well documented in the results of this study and within the literature; thus, the results of this study reiterate the importance of minimizing these distractions whenever possible.

One possible explanation why teachers reported being *somewhat* to *quite concerned* about 18 of the 19 potentially applicable behaviors on the survey may be that teachers are bothered when they are not able to do their jobs to the best of their ability because of disruptive student behavior. Many teachers join the teaching profession to perform a service or to give back to their community (Oğuz & Kalkan, 2011). As an

educator, I, too, was drawn to the field of education so that I might have the opportunity to be a positive influence in the lives of children in my community. From this perspective, disruptive student behavior is concerning because it prohibits teachers from most effectively achieving that goal. It must also be noted that disruptive behavior can have lasting effects. Disruptive behavior in children in the early years is a predictor of ongoing disruptive behaviors in adolescence and even adulthood (Loeber et al., 2009).

It is likely that teachers in the focus school were concerned with disruptive behavior because they care about the children they teach and want them to be successful, but know that disruptive behavior may be indicative of future problems for their students. Dicke et al. (2014) suggested that teacher self-efficacy affects behavior outcomes such as teacher practice and teacher behavior in the classroom, as well as student behavior and classroom management success. Thus, teachers with a high level self-efficacy are likely to discern the classroom as less chaotic, implement positive strategies, and have a positive learning environment with fewer disruptions (Dicke et al., 2014). Therefore, it is likely that teacher self-efficacy may play a role in teachers' perceived level of concern with particular disruptive student behaviors in their classrooms as well as the behavior management methods they choose to employ and the informational needs they express.

The issues cited by the teachers at the school under study align with the common issues cited by teachers throughout the existing body of research related to patterns of student behavior. The teachers at the school under study appear to be largely preoccupied by disruptive behavior, but not by high risk behaviors associated with sexual actions,

theft, or violence. Given this factor, the methods used to manage problematic behaviors focus on minimizing disruption, as discussed in the interpretation of Research Question 2.

Results of Research Question 2

Research Question 2 identified the methods elementary teachers used most frequently when dealing with disruptive student behavior in the classroom. The two least frequently used methods of behavior management were "referred the child to medical personnel" and "referred the child to other profession (e.g., psychologist, social worker, and so forth)." The four most frequently reported methods of behavior management were "used seating arrangement," "used praise to encourage better behavior," "talked it over with the child," and "contacted the child's parents."

Seating arrangements can be helpful for managing disruptive student behavior because these arrangements allow the teacher to control a student's physical location. A disruptive student can be placed closer to the teacher's desk and away from other potential negative influences or in an established time out area where the student may have time reflect in the inappropriate behavior (NacSuga-Gage et al., 2012). Similarly, Kritsonis (2014) reported the use of seating plans is a successful strategy because teachers can use them to separate students who are more likely to misbehave when seated next to or near each other.

Teachers in this study cited the value of praise in managing student behavior, and the researchers have confirmed that the use of praise can be helpful for managing disruptive student behavior, especially when teachers identify a particular student demonstrating a particular negative behavior. Students who may not be behaving

properly are provided with a clear example of the appropriate behavior to model, and students who are receiving the praise for the appropriate behavior are more likely to engage in that behavior again to garner additional praise (Smart & Igo, 2010). Reinke et al. (2010) reported that praise is often an effective method for deterring disruptive student behavior because, typically, students enjoy being praised for their actions. Shook (2012) stated praise as a method for deterring disruptive student behavior is most effective when it is genuine, that is, used in a positive and respectful manner.

The respondents' focus on addressing student behavior by talking to the student is also well documented in the literature. Talking to the student about a problem behavior can be helpful for managing disruptive student behavior (Lewis et al., 2011). Students react more positively to private and one-on-one discussions, especially when they are included in the discussion as part of the solution-seeking process. In contrast, students are less likely to respond positively to public reprimand, especially when the reprimand is associated with yelling or screaming (Lewis et al., 2011). Shook (2012) found that teacher participants reported talking to students as the most common method they used to deter disruptive behavior. Of the 19 participants in the Shook study, 54% used individual talks as a strategy for deterring disruptive behaviors in their classrooms. MacSuga and Simonsen (2011) reported talking to a student privately about inappropriate behavior also provides the teacher an opportunity to discuss with the student a plan of action to eliminate future disruptive behaviors. The results of this study align with the use of these strategies at the school under study.

Contacting parents can help reduce the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the classroom, because by initiating contact with parents, teachers build relationships with parents (Spilt, 2010) that help create a support network extending beyond the classroom (Carlson, 2012; Kritsonis, 2014; Myers, 2013). Dillion and Nixon (2014) suggested that initiating parental contact prior to observed misbehavior can help prevent the behavior from manifesting in the first place. MacSuga-Gage et al. (2012) suggested that parental contact is most effective for developing relationships that contribute to decreased incidents of disruptive student behavior when teachers (a) begin the conversation with something positive about the student before addressing the behavioral issue, (b) use positive language during the interaction, and (c) offer suggestions with regard to how the teacher, parent, and student can work together to decrease disruptive behavior.

The strategies employed by teachers in this study reflect practices that are frequently cited in the literature as common and effective. This decision and practice indicate that the teachers at the school under study are skilled in managing the behavior and using these strategies may have assisted teachers in dealing with these behaviors in the past. Though the teachers appear to have a strong complement of skills, they still indicated a desire for additional information and support, as evidenced in Research Question 3.

Results of Research Question 3

Research Question 3 identified the specific informational needs of teachers regarding disruptive behavior. Results indicated that the two leased desired informational

needs of teachers included “encouraging children to share” and “helping children when shy or fearful.” Furthermore, results indicated that the four most desired informational needs included “encouraging children to be more responsible for their own behavior,” “dealing with stress,” “effective ways of decreasing disruptive behavior,” and “dealing with defiance.”

Smart and Igo’s (2010) found teachers reported needing additional support from administration, counselors, and other teachers when dealing with severe disruptive behaviors. Teachers felt as though they had exhausted all management strategies and did not know what else to do (Smart & Igo, 2010). Other teachers in the same study indicated they constantly called the principal and guidance counselor for assistance and stated “The administration has been highly absent in my classroom when I needed them and that has surprised me” (Smart & Igo, 2010, p. 580). Teachers indicated they were open to support in a variety of forms as long as they received some sort of support (Smart & Igo, 2010).

Disruptive student behavior constitutes one of the major sources of teacher stress (Sida-Nicholls, 2012) and is also a major concern of teachers who participated in this study. According to Pas et al., (2010) teacher burnout may even lead to physical and mental problems that can cause an increase in absenteeism and a decrease in teacher self-efficacy, teacher performance, and quality of instruction. Teaching students how to respect themselves, others, and the environment, plus safety, and responsibility can help deter disruptive behavior because the teaching of positive behaviors provides ongoing reminders for students of what is expected of them, (MacSuga-Gage, Simonsen, & Briere. 2012). Shook (2012), found that 37% of teachers reported teaching students how

they should behave in the classroom and why it was important to behave that way as a method for deterring disruptive behaviors. Although research show modeling appropriate student behaviors decreases disruptive student behaviors, results from this study indicated teachers still need additional information on how to be more responsible for their own behavior.

Results of Research Question 4

Research Question 4 was evaluated using correlation analyses to determine if any significant relationships existed between elementary teachers' levels of concern (distractibility, disobedience, delinquency, and aggression) and levels of additional support (distractibility, disobedience, delinquency, and aggression) needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior. Results indicated that significant relationships existed between all subscales of teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support ($p <$ .05). Therefore, the null hypothesis for Research Question 4 was rejected in favor of the alternate hypothesis. That is, there are significant relationships between elementary teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior.

The relationship between elementary teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior were not only significant in my study but also in the study of Stephenson et al., (2000). Results from this study indicated that less confident teachers (low self-efficacy) were more concerned about distractibility and needed more support in the area of distractibility (Stephenson et al., 2000). Teachers also showed a high level of concern and support needed about

aggression in Stephenson's et al., (2000) study which also supports the findings in my study.

From personal experience, as a teacher in the focus school, concerns and support needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior has lead to a loss of instructional time and overall decrease in academic achievement. According to Sida-Nicholls (2012) when students are noncompliant and disruptive, teachers must contend with issues of classroom management and discipline, which takes away from instructional time. Disruptive student behavior in the classroom also can result in decreased levels of academic achievement (Casillas et al., 2012; Marugan de Miguelsanz et al., 2012). Although deficits in any academic area can contribute to academic failure (Pas et al., 2010), Marugan de Miguelsanz et al. (2012) suggested that the more problematic the disruptive behavior, the more subjects the disruptive student is likely to fail (Marugan de Miguelsanz et al., 2012). Ultimately, these deficits and failures can lead to school dropout (Saraiva, Pereira, & Zamith-Cruz, 2011). Of the disruptive students in the classroom setting, van Lier et al. (2012) found that students engaging in aggressive behaviors were more likely to suffer academically as the result of their behavior than students engaging in nonaggressive behaviors. Ultimately disruptive students not only affect their own potential for learning, but may affect the potential for other students to learn as well.

Implications for Social Change

The nation's schools have been faced with challenging problems that have impacted effective teaching and student learning (Bloom, 2009; Marshall, 2009), and one of these issues is student misbehavior (Gable, Hester, Rock, & Hughes, 2009). When

students misbehave, teachers are forced to focus on classroom behavior rather than teaching subject matter content (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). This disrupts the flow of classroom activities and interferes with student learning (Gable et al., 2009). According to Appelbaum (2009), there is a need to decrease the incidence of disruptive student behaviors in the classroom so that instructional time can be maximized and the exclusion of students from the classroom and the school can be minimized.

The results of this study have the potential to support social change by promoting an initiative to provide teachers with the support needed to decrease student disruptive behavior. As behavior issues become less intrusive in the learning environment, teachers and students are free to focus on the learning experience itself rather than on classroom management.

In addition, other stakeholders might support teachers in an effort to decrease disruptive student behaviors and increase academic achievement. Universities might consider providing a class or workshop for preservice teachers in which they will be trained on methods of decreasing student misbehavior and loss of classroom instruction to increase student achievement. Furthermore, community partners in education might support teachers through mentoring students with disruptive behaviors in an effort to increase academic achievement. Parents might benefit from the results of the study as well. Parents might consider becoming more involved in the Parent Teacher Organization to support teacher and parent relationships as well as attend other workshops that educate parents on disruptive student behavior.

Recommendations for Action

Disruptive student behavior in the classroom is an ongoing problem at many schools, including the school under study. Because disruptive student behavior diverts teacher attention from teaching to managing the disruptive behavior, all students in classrooms where disruptive behavior occur are affected. Based on the results of this study, I recommend the focus school administrator (a) increase support for teachers in the particular areas of concern identified by teachers and (b) use the information about teachers' methods used to manage behavior to determine which available supports may be underused and better promote their use.

Second, I recommend administrators implement a system of teacher support for disruptive behavior. Teachers have clearly indicated the types of support and general information that would be most helpful to them in terms of better managing disruptive student behavior. Therefore, administrators should consider these topics when planning teacher in-service education days. District personnel and administrators can use the results of this study as a basis for developing professional training sessions to aid teachers in managing disruptive behaviors in the classroom. These professional training sessions can equip teachers to spend less time reprimanding students and focus more on academic instruction. Although teachers often have negative attitudes toward mandatory teacher training and professional development, teachers are likely to be more receptive to training that they feel they could use and benefit from, and to training that is derived from their expressed concern.

Recommendations for Further Study

Although this study was valuable and the results can be used by the focus school administrator and administrators in the district to decrease the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the classroom, it must be noted that the study sample was small and the research design does not allow me to generalize the results outside of the selected setting. Consequently, the results of this study cannot be assumed to represent the disruptive student behaviors and the teachers' additional support and informational needs of schools in the state in which the study was conducted or throughout the United States. Therefore, the first recommendation is to conduct a similar study in more than one school district or in a larger school district to evaluate a larger sample size. A study might even include comparing the results of teachers from different schools within the same district.

The second recommendation for further study is to expand the participant recruitment to include grades seventh through 12, as opposed to kindergarten through fifth. Expanding the study would offer diversity in responses. Expanding the study kindergarten through 12 might identify the grades at which students are more or less disruptive in the classroom. Problematic behaviors may change with age, and understanding the needs across the entire district may aid in future support planning.

The final recommendation is to conduct a qualitative that would include teacher and/or student interviews. Interviewers could explore the teacher participants about their levels of concern and support needed in dealing with disruptive student behaviors. Teacher participants could explain their experiences in more detail, and deeper insights about the origins of problematic behavior could be explored.

Conclusion

This quantitative, correlational survey study explored the relationship between elementary teachers' level of concern and the degree of additional support needed to manage disruptive student behavior. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were calculated to answer the four research questions. Findings indicated teachers were most concerned about students who "argue when reprimanded or corrected" and students who "disrupt the activities of others." Students reported they would learn more if disruptive students were removed from the classroom (Bru, 2009). Knowing that disruptive student behavior in the classroom impedes learning, it is not surprising that there is direct correlation between management of student behavior and the learning that takes place in the classroom (Freiberg, Huzinec, & Templeton, 2009). Findings also showed there are relationships between elementary teachers' levels of concern and levels of additional support needed to deal with students' disruptive behavior. It is recommended that administrators at the school under study implement professional development training to best support teachers in their efforts to manage disruptive student behavior in the classroom.

This study was conducted to (a) identify teachers' levels of concern regarding specific disruptive behaviors in the classroom, need for additional support to manage those specific disruptive behaviors, methods used to manage disruptive behavior, and informational needs related to general classroom and behavior management and (b) to determine the relationship between levels of teachers' concern regarding specific disruptive student behaviors and the degree of additional support needed to manage those

specific disruptive student behaviors. Decreasing the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the classrooms is important, because such behavior impedes learning not only for the disruptive student but for other students in the classroom as well.

Decreasing the incidence of disruptive student behavior in the focus school could result in an overall academic success. Because all students deserve the chance to be successful in school and develop into well-adjusted and productive members of society, the ongoing problem of disruptive student behavior cannot be ignored.

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Appendix A: Permission to Use the Child Behavior Survey

From: Jennifer Stephenson <jennifer.stephenson@mq.edu.au>
Date: September 8, 2013, 9:46:19 PM EDT
To: Jacquline Hill <lashae21@hotmail.com>
Subject: Re: Child Behavior Survey

HI Jacqueline
That's fine - no doubt as part of the methodology of your thesis you would describe what you used and what you changed.
Regards
Jennifer

In a behaviorist view, if a student does not learn the way we teach, then we need to change the way we teach. The behaviorist view of education places the responsibility for student learning on the teacher. Perhaps this is why so many in public education settings ignore or reject behavior analysis (Fielding et al. 2013).

Jennifer Stephenson
Associate Professor
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F: +61 2 9850 8254

CRICOS Provider Number 00002J

On 09/09/2013, at 11:42 AM, Jacquline Hill <lashae21@hotmail.com> wrote:

Hello Dr. Stephenson,

This is Jacquline. I contacted you via email back in April requesting the use of your Child Behavior Survey. As I stated before I'm a grad student at Walden University located in the US. I would definitely like to use your survey to collect data for project study dissertation.

After carefully reading the survey there are some items or sections not directly related to my study. I'm requesting your permission to alter the Child Behavior Survey and publish it in my own dissertation with your acknowledgement as the creator of the survey.

Thanks in advance for your time and consideration.

Jacquline McCaskey

Date: Tue, 30 Apr 2013 13:14:38 +1000
Subject: Re: Child Behavior Survey
From: jennifer.stephenson@mq.edu.au
To: lashae21@hotmail.com

HI Jacqueline
The survey is attached – we are very happy for others to use it as long as we are acknowledged.
Regards
Jennifer

On 30/04/13 12:43 PM, "Jacquline Hill" <lashae21@hotmail.com> wrote:

Hello Dr. Stephenson,

My name is Jacquline McCaskey and I'm a doctoral student at Walden University in the United States. I am seeking to study teacher's perceptions of student disruptive behavior in upper elementary students in my school district. I've searched many articles discussing disruptive behavior and came across the Child Behavior Survey developed by you and your colleages, Martin and Linfoot.

Is it possible to obtain a copy of that survey and if it will suit the needs of my research study, do you allow other researchers to administer that survey? Once I have had the opportunity to review the survey and have decided that the data collected on the survey will meet the needs of my study, I will contact you by e-mail directly seeking permission to use it. Obtaining permission to use other researchers' instruments is a requirement of

my university's IRB.

I contacted Dr. Andrew Martin a few weeks ago and he referred me to you. Thank you so much for taking the time to consider this request and I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Regards,

Jacquline

Two quotes for the price of one

"The data-driven people are going to win in the long run," Simon Jackman, Professor of Political Science, Stanford University

"The trouble with having an open mind, of course, is that people will insist on coming along and trying to put things in it."
Terry Pratchett

Jennifer Stephenson PhD
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Post-graduate Course Co-ordinator
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CRICOS Provider No 0002J

Appendix B: Adapted Child Behavior Survey

Child Behavior Survey

Dear Teacher,

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey. Your responses will help me understand the problems which teachers may experience in managing the behavior of children in their class. The purpose of this research is to learn more about the kinds of behavior problems most teachers experience so support services might be identified to help teachers with them. Your help with this survey will assist that understanding. Remember your answers are completely confidential. There is no identifying information collected about individuals participating in this survey.

Background Information

1. How many children are in your class? _____

2. How many years have you been teaching? _____

3. Are you *(please check one)* ☐ male ☐ female

4. What is your highest teaching qualification? *(please check one)*

   ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Doctorate

5. How many children in your class demonstrate behavior that is severe enough that additional management strategies are required beyond those of normal classroom management practices?

   _____ males _____ females

Teachers' Level of Concern and Associated Support Needed

6. In this section, I would like to know about the types of behaviors in your classroom that may prove more difficult to manage. For each question I would like you to circle the number in Column A which describes how concerned you are about that particular behavior. In Column B, I would like you to circle the number which indicates the amount of additional support you might need in dealing with that particular behavior. If the behavior does not occur in your classroom, then just circle **NA** (Not Applicable)

		A. MY LEVEL OF CONCERN				***B. SUPPORT NEEDED***				
	CHILD'S BEHAVIOUR:	*Not at all*	*Some what*	*Quite*	*Ex-tremely*	*Not at all*	*A little*	*Some*	*A lot*	***NA***
A	Demands must be met immediately/ cannot wait for attention	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
B	Disrupts the activities of others	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
C	Doesn't remain on-task for a reasonable time	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
D	Excessive demands for teacher's attention/doesn't work independently	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
E	Distractibility or attention span a problem/does not listen	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
F	Argues when reprimanded or corrected	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
G	Runs away from school or classroom	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
H	Does not get along well with other	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA

	children									
I	Does not follow established class rules	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
J	Expresses anger inappropriately	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
K	Is physically aggressive with others/bullies	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
L	Damages others' property	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
M	Uses obscene language or gestures	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
N	Engages in inappropriate sexual behavior	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
O	Uses obscene language or gestures	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
P	Steals	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
Q	Refuses to obey teacher-imposed rules	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
R	Is verbally aggressive with others	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
S	Lies	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA
T	Breaks things/damages others' property	1	2	3	4	1	2	3	4	NA

Methods of Behavior Management

7. Many of us use different methods to deal with difficult behavior in our classes. Here is a list of ways some teachers might deal with behavior that is a concern to them. Please tell us how often, if at all, you might use each method in the list by *circling* the appropriate number.

	TO DEAL WITH BEHAVIOR THAT IS A CONCERN TO ME I HAVE	***Never used***	***Sometimes used***	***Frequently used***
A	Talked it over with the child	0	1	2
B	Ignored the bad behavior	0	1	2
C	Verbally reprimanded the child	0	1	2
d	Tried to teach better behavior	0	1	2
E	Used praise to encourage better behavior	0	1	2
F	Sent the child to the corner/back of the room etc.	0	1	2
G	Sent the child out of class (time out)	0	1	2
H	Removed privileges (e.g., no story, early mark)	0	1	2
I	Detained the child	0	1	2
J	Imposed punishment (e.g., pick up papers)	0	1	2
K	Contacted child's parents	0	1	2
L	Sent the child to the principal or assistant/vice principal	0	1	2
m	Referred the child to the counselor	0	1	2
N	Referred the child to medical personnel	0	1	2
O	Referred the child to other professionals (e.g., psychologist, social worker)	0	1	2
P	Arranged for short-term placement in another teacher's class	0	1	2
Q	Used seating arrangement	0	1	2
R	Adapted curriculum to suit student needs	0	1	2
S	Used token/ reward system	0	1	2
T	Used conflict resolution system	0	1	2
U	Used school merit/levels system	0	1	2
V	Called class meeting or discussion	0	1	2
w	Implemented peer support program	0	1	2
X	Used behavior modification	0	1	2
Y	Implemented behavior agreement/contract	0	1	2

Specific Informational Needs

8. Many teachers would like more information about disruptive classroom behavior in particular. Here is a list of some information which could be provided. Please tell me how much you would like each type of information by *circling* the appropriate number.

	I WOULD LIKE INFORMATION ON. . .	***Strongly disagree***	***Disagree***	***Neither disagree nor agree***	***Agree***	***Strongly agree***
a	Dealing with temper tantrums	1	2	3	4	5
b	Dealing with dishonesty	1	2	3	4	5
c	Encouraging children to share	1	2	3	4	5
d	Encouraging children to cooperate with others	1	2	3	4	5
e	Stopping children from fighting	1	2	3	4	5
f	Effective ways of decreasing disruptive behavior	1	2	3	4	5
g	Encouraging children to cooperate with reasonable requests	1	2	3	4	5
h	Helping children when shy or fearful	1	2	3	4	5
i	Encouraging children to be aware of the feelings of others	1	2	3	4	5
j	Showing children how to apologize to others	1	2	3	4	5
k	Encouraging children to be more responsible for own behavior	1	2	3	4	5
l	Ideas for me when I get angry	1	2	3	4	5
m	Helping students stay on task	1	2	3	4	5
n	Setting appropriate consequences for misbehavior	1	2	3	4	5

	I WOULD LIKE INFORMATION ON. . .	***Strongly disagree***	***Disagree***	***Neither disagree nor agree***	***Agree***	***Strongly agree***
o	Developing classroom rules and routines	1	2	3	4	5
p	Helping children to be better learners	1	2	3	4	5
q	Dealing with disobedience	1	2	3	4	5
r	Helping students listen to teachers & peers	1	2	3	4	5
s	Teaching children how to interrupt appropriately	1	2	3	4	5
t	Dealing with defiance	1	2	3	4	5
u	Dealing with argument	1	2	3	4	5
v	Dealing with children who run away	1	2	3	4	5
w	Communicating with parents	1	2	3	4	5
x	Dealing with stress	1	2	3	4	5
y	Dealing with special disorders/ disabilities	1	2	3	4	5
z	How to use rewards to elicit the desired behavior	1	2	3	4	5
aa	Encouraging children to be more positive about school	1	2	3	4	5
bb	Dealing with children who have emotional problems	1	2	3	4	5
cc	Dealing with violent children	1	2	3	4	5

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION!

Appendix C: Permission to Conduct Research at Focus School

December 18, 2013

Dear Jacquline McCaskey,

Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study entitled Elementary Teachers' Level of concern with Continuous Disruptive Classroom Behavior within the [redacted] As part of this study, I authorize you to introduce your research briefly at the end of a staff meeting, explain the survey instrument being used to collect data along with an explanation of implied consent. I understand that result dissemination will be available after the completion and university approval of the research study. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization does not have any responsibilities related to this research. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the research team without permission from the Walden University IRB.

Sincerely,

Appendix D: Invitation to Participate in the Study

Date: February 10, 2014

Dear Colleague:

I am a graduate student in the Ed.D. Teacher Leadership program at Walden University. I am conducting a study on Elementary Teachers' Levels of concern with Continuous Disruptive Classroom Behavior. The result of the study may provide information for educators, administration and school districts on how teachers can decrease the number of discipline referrals by implementing a behavior strategies for disruptive students.

Along with this invitation, you will find a consent form. The consent form explains in detail the nature of the study, risk and benefits of being a participant, procedures, and confidentiality. Please note that if you participate in the online survey, you are giving your consent. I know that you are busy but I hope you can assist me. The survey will take 15 minutes or less to complete. Thank you for your assistance and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Jacquline McCaskey

Appendix E: Letter of Consent

You are invited to take part in a research study of Elementary Teachers' Levels of concern with Continuous Disruptive Classroom Behavior. You were chosen for the study because you are an elementary teacher. The Consent Form is a part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study and make a decision regarding your participation.

A researcher named Jacquline McCaskey, a doctoral student at Walden University, is conducting this study.

Background Information:
The purpose of the study is to identify continuous disruptive classroom behaviors amongst elementary students and the levels of concern that elementary teachers' have with continuous disruptive classroom behavior.

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
Your participation in this study is voluntary; this means that everyone will respect your decision of whether or not you want to be in the study. If you feel uncomfortable during the study, you may stop at any time, and you may skip any questions that you feel are too personal. If you decide to join the study now, you can still change your mind during the study and withdraw at any time without penalty of any kind. No one will treat your differently if you decided not to be in the study.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
It is believed there is minimal risk for participation in this study other than the potential for a reader to make inferences about any published comments. Possible benefits for the participants of this project are to decrease the number of discipline referrals among teachers.

Compensation:
Participation in this study is voluntary. In order to ensure objectivity, no compensation is offered.

Procedures:
Participation involves completing an online survey. The survey is strictly confidential and may be completed at school or in the privacy of your own home. Click on the survey link at the end of the consent form to participate. The survey may take 15 minutes or less to complete.

Confidentiality:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The survey does not request any demographic information that will identify you to this research project. The researcher will not use your information for any purposes outside of this research project.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now; or, if you have questions later you may contact the researcher via email jacquline.mccaskey@waldenu.edu If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call ***Dr. Leilani Endicott,*** Walden University's representative, who can discuss this with you. The phone number is ***612-312-1210***. Walden University's approval number for this study is 02-05-14-0173235 and it expires on February 4, 2015.

Statement of Consent
I have read the above information and I feel I understand the study well enough to make a decision about my involvement. By completing the online survey, I am agreeing to the terms described above.

Please keep or print a copy of the consent form for your personal records.

To complete the online survey, please click below:

(www.surveymonkey.com/s/87FYL3Z)

Appendix F: Distribution of Responses to Items in Teachers' Specific Information Needs

Table 12

Distribution of Responses to Items in Teachers' Specific Information Needs

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither disagree or agree		Agree		Strongly Agree			
Item stem	*N*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Encouraging children to share	2	4.1	4	8.2	20	40.8	23	46.9	0	0.0	3.31	0.80
Helping children when shy or fearful	0	0.0	3	6.1	22	44.9	23	46.9	1	2.0	3.45	0.65
Developing classroom rules and routines	0	0.0	3	6.1	21	42.9	23	46.9	2	4.1	3.49	0.68
Dealing with children who run away	0	0.0	5	10.2	20	40.8	19	38.8	5	10.2	3.49	0.82
Ideas for me when I get angry	0	0.0	3	6.1	21	42.9	22	44.9	3	6.1	3.51	0.71
Communicating with parents	0	0.0	2	4.1	21	42.9	24	49.0	2	4.1	3.53	0.65
Dealing with dishonesty	1	2.0	2	4.1	14	28.6	31	63.3	1	2.0	3.59	0.71
Encouraging children to be aware of the feelings of others	0	0.0	4	8.2	11	22.4	33	67.3	1	2.0	3.63	0.67
How to use rewards to elicit the desired behavior	0	0.0	2	4.2	17	35.4	26	54.2	3	6.3	3.63	0.67
Showing children how to apologize to others	0	0.0	3	6.1	15	30.6	27	55.1	4	8.2	3.65	0.72
Setting appropriate consequences for misbehavior	0	0.0	2	4.1	13	26.5	32	65.3	2	4.1	3.69	0.62
Stopping children from fighting	0	0.0	4	8.2	10	20.4	32	65.3	3	6.1	3.69	0.71
Teaching children how to interrupt appropriately	0	0.0	2	4.1	16	32.7	26	53.1	5	10.2	3.69	0.71
Encouraging children to cooperate with others	1	2.0	1	2.0	11	22.4	32	65.3	4	8.2	3.76	0.72
Dealing with temper tantrums	1	2.0	1	2.0	12	24.5	30	61.2	5	10.2	3.76	0.75

(continued)

Table 12

Distribution of Responses to Items in Teachers' Specific Information Needs

	Strongly disagree		Disagree		Neither disagree or agree		Agree		Strongly Agree			
Item stem	*N*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*n*	%	*M*	*SD*
Helping students listen to teachers and peers	0	0.0	2	4.1	13	26.5	27	55.1	7	14.3	3.80	0.74
Dealing with special disorders/disabilities	0	0.0	2	4.1	8	16.3	36	73.5	3	6.1	3.82	0.60
Encouraging children to cooperate with reasonable requests	0	0.0	1	2.1	13	27.1	27	56.3	7	14.6	3.83	0.69
Encouraging children to be more positive about school	0	0.0	2	4.1	9	18.4	33	67.3	5	10.2	3.84	0.66
Helping students stay on task	0	0.0	1	2.0	8	16.3	33	67.3	7	14.3	3.94	0.63
Dealing with argument	0	0.0	2	4.1	10	20.4	24	49.0	13	26.5	3.98	0.80
Dealing with children who have emotional problems	0	0.0	0	0.0	5	10.2	37	75.5	7	14.3	4.04	0.50
Dealing with violent children	0	0.0	1	2.0	4	8.2	35	71.4	9	18.4	4.06	0.59
Dealing with disobedience	0	0.0	1	2.0	8	16.3	27	55.1	13	26.5	4.06	0.72
Helping children to be better learners	0	0.0	1	2.0	5	10.2	31	63.3	12	24.5	4.10	0.65
Encouraging children to be more responsible for their own behavior	1	2.0	1	2.0	4	8.2	28	57.1	15	30.6	4.12	0.81
Dealing with stress	0	0.0	0	0.0	7	14.3	27	55.1	15	30.6	4.16	0.66
Effective ways of decreasing disruptive behavior	0	0.0	1	2.0	2	4.1	29	59.2	17	34.7	4.27	0.64
Dealing with defiance	1	2.0	0	0.0	3	8.1	23	46.9	22	44.9	4.33	0.77