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High School Teachers' Perceptions and Experiences With Interventions to Address Disruptive Student Behavior

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Denise Bailey

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Walden University
2022

Abstract

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Disruptive Student Behavior

by

Denise Bailey

MA, Phoenix University, 2013

BS, Phoenix University, 2006

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

September 2022

Abstract

U.S. high school teachers are challenged with disruptive student behavior and struggle to implement available interventions to reduce these behaviors in the classroom. This basic qualitative design was conducted to examine high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive student behaviors in the classroom. The conceptual framework was based on Canter's assertive discipline theory, which addresses teachers' management of student behavior and provides concepts and strategies for improving disruptive behavior. Data were collected through semistructured interviews with nine teachers of Grades 9 to 11 from two different high schools within the same school district in the state of California. The data were analyzed using open coding, and axial coding was used with the initial coding. Four themes emerged from the open coding: (a) disruptive behavior has an adverse effect on the classroom climate when interventions are not used sufficiently; (b) teachers use a variety of intervention strategies, but many are ineffective; (c) teachers perceive that professional development for interventions has been minimal and more training is needed; and (d) teachers believe that good engagement strategies will improve the efficiency of interventions. The findings of this study have potential implications for positive social change by providing information that can enhance the knowledge of teachers, administrators, and stakeholders concerning the use of interventions for disruptive student behavior. Addressing student behavior leads to more engaging and effective classroom environments, which will enhance student outcomes and retention.

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Dedication

I dedicated this dissertation to my mom, Dotsie Love Samuel. Her love, dedication, and teachings guided me throughout life. Thank you, Mom, for setting a powerful example of a woman of strength that comes from belief in the word of God. Your influence has paved the way, and I hope I have made you proud. As you would say, "I thank the Lord for things being as well as they are."

Also, I dedicate this dissertation to my sister, Yvonne Samuel Hicks. You have always lifted my spirit, were never judgmental, and are always patience with your perspective and views. You are a blessing to my life.

I want to express a special thanks to my great-grandmother, Ada Moore, my angel. I also thank the rest of my family, who inspires me to be the best I can be and to set an example to guide the way. This journey was not easy. However, I know my strength comes from my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Many urban high school districts experience problems related to creating a productive classroom environment. Among students who exhibit disruptive behavior in urban secondary schools, 10%–20% need intensive behavioral support to be successful in school (Collins et al., 2016). One third of secondary teachers nationally have reported that disruptive behavior continues to occur in their classrooms regardless of discipline measures or interventions implemented (Steinberg & Lacoe, 2017). Due to disruptive environments, students in regular mainstream classrooms are at an increased risk of academic failure and dropping out (Rodriguez et al., 2016).

Reducing the occurrences of disruptive behavior is important and there is a growing need to enhance learning environments. When any student (disruptive or not) is confident in their capacity to learn, the student appears to meet with greater academic success (Usher et al., 2019), which in turn, may produce a higher possibility of improving classroom climate. Classroom experiences should provide a concrete structure for encouraging student growth. Meeting these challenges is monumental but doing so is significant. Collected data can provide insight into the problem and help gain a deeper understanding of numerous occurrences of disruptive behavior.

This study may contribute to social change by providing a deeper understanding of the challenges of disruptive behavior that occur in high school classrooms. Stakeholders, educators, and administrators may gain an understanding of disruptive behavior and what may be used to support students and enhance the classroom climate.

Finally, this study contributes to social change by providing a deeper understanding of the issues that may contribute to disruptive behavior.

In this chapter, I discuss the background of disruptive behavior and how the literature is related. Also, the problem statement, purpose, and the research questions are provided. The conceptual framework connects theory to the study. This chapter also includes several sections—the nature of the study, the definition of terms, the assumptions, the scope, and the delimitations—that outline aspects of the problem, limitations, and significance.

Background

One of the main challenges in schools for teachers is managing students with disruptive behaviors (Ahmed, 2020; Allday, 2018). Disruptive behavior can be referred to as off-task and challenging behaviors that interfere with student learning by reducing teachers' instructional time (Young & Martinez, 2016). Managing students' behaviors efficiently has been a universal challenge for teachers (Nash et al., 2016). When students' behavior interferes with teachers' instructional time, teachers must be able to intervene in a quick and efficient manner (Young & Martinez, 2016). However, when teachers are unable to manage behavior problems, teachers may turn to student removal as a solution for reducing disruptive behavior and improving the classroom climate.

Teachers are ill-prepared to manage and assess students with challenging behaviors (Young et al., 2018). According to Griffiths et al. (2019), teachers do not receive the training necessary to manage disruptive student behavior. For this reason, these challenges may result in reactionary discipline (student removal) by the teacher,

thus causing a decline of learning opportunities for all students and progressively worse outcomes for offenders.

Evidence-based interventions are available to help teachers manage challenging classroom behaviors. These interventions are described as specific actions used to change behaviors. Numerous interventions are being used at the study site high school and many of them are a multitiered systems of support (MTSS), i.e., a three-tiered intervention framework for academic and behavior success. Also, schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports (SW-PBIS), i.e., behavior intervention support, are used in conjunction to support the needs of students. Schools that implement the components of MTSS and SW-PBIS interventions consistently are more likely to receive desired outcomes in student behaviors (Noltemeyer et al., 2019). Unfortunately, a gap in practice exists when the interventions used are not implemented sufficiently to reduce the problem of disruptive behavior. Strickland-Cohen et al. (2019) found that behavior support interventions are frequently adopted, but the interventions are implemented inconsistently and not likely to be successful.

In the United States, more than 2.6 million students are suspended each year, and another 2.7 million children experience in-school suspension (Jacobsen et al., 2019). These figures illustrate the challenges of disruptive behavior in the United States. Examining teachers' perspectives of students who display challenging and disruptive behavior problems may bring about a change that will benefit the entire learning environment.

Problem Statement

The research problem is that teachers are struggling to address the challenges of disruptive behaviors and to effectively implement interventions to reduce disruptive behavior. Disruptive behavior is one of the most persistent and challenging problems in education (Atmojo, 2020). Teachers are presented with constant challenges, such as defiance, talking out, off task, and disrespect (Adamson & Lewis, 2017; Young & Martinez, 2016). Despite teachers' efforts to manage disruptive behavior in the classroom using MTSS practices, students who continuously exhibit disruptive behavior are being removed from the classroom setting (Ervin et al., 2018). Ervin et al. found that 62% of educators report that students' disruptive behaviors interfere with the learning environment. In addition, studies indicate that teachers' instructional time is reduced by 50% in a disruptive environment (Hartman & Gresham, 2016). The problem of disruptive behavior is significant because students' removal from the classroom negatively affects the classroom climate, reduces learning opportunities, and intensifies disruptive behavior problems.

Students who exhibit disruptive behavior have been a major concern in the local high schools. The research site is part of a diverse district that consists of 18 comprehensive high schools and five alternative schools. I studied two high schools in the district. The student demographic of the first local site was composed of 89.4% Hispanic students and 10.6% various other ethnic groups. The site is located in an urban district composed of 2,457 students, which was the fourth largest enrollment in the

district in 2017, and 94.2% of the site's students are socioeconomically disadvantaged and receive free or reduced meals.

The problem of disruptive behavior is a recalcitrant challenge for teachers at a local high school within the school district. According to the California Department of Education (2020), in the 2016 school year, the local site reported an 8.5% suspension rate. By 2017, student suspensions rose by 7.9%, resulting in a 16.5% overall suspension rate (California Department of Education, 2020). More students were suspended from the local site than any other high school in the district. For example, in 2016, the largest school in the district had an 11.4% suspension rate, and in 2017, the rate decreased to 10.2%—which is significantly lower than the rate at the study site school. Also, in 2017–2018, the local site students' proficiency testing scores were in the bottom 50% of the state's average.

In contrast to the situation at the first local school, a second high school in the district has been far more successful in addressing disruptive behavior. For instance, the second largest high school in the district maintained a suspension rate of only 2.5% in 2017 and reduced the suspension rate by 0.9% in 2018, which is an indication of successful practices. The exemplar site was also located in an urban district and had a population of 3,251 students in 2017. The student demographics there consist of 95.4% Hispanic, 3.4% White, and 0.6% African American. Therefore, I have decided to study both sites to gain a better perspective of the interventions being used.

Disruptive behavior contributes to student removal from school or class and may result in missed learning opportunities. Administrators have adopted and implemented

SW-PBIS to contend with the problem of disruptive behaviors. However, a gap exists when the interventions are not implemented sufficiently to reduce the problem of disruptive behavior.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this basic qualitative designed study was to examine high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom. The collected data provide insight into the problem and help gain a deeper understanding of disruptive behavior occurrences. Teachers may benefit and understand how to manage disruptive behaviors and implement interventions, so the classroom climate is not impeded. This process may lead to the development of a classroom action plan and personalized plans that will demonstrably improve the classroom climate and may reduce students' removal from the learning environment. The research questions were developed to examine the challenges teachers encounter and suggestions for improving interventions.

Research Questions

The following research questions drove the study:

RQ1: How do teachers describe the challenges they have using interventions to reduce students' disruptive behavior?

RQ2: What are teachers' perceptions as to what can be done to improve the sufficiency of interventions currently in use?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework was based on Canter's (1976) theory of assertive discipline. The assertive discipline theory is a step-by step process composed of concepts and strategies. These concepts and strategies were created to guide teachers' daily management of students who exhibit disruptive behavior. Canter (1976) pointed out that to be effective, teachers must maintain an effective learning environment. For this purpose, many concepts and strategies are provided by Canter's assertive discipline theory concerning disruptive behavior: skills and confidence, classroom discipline plan, classroom management, and reducing disruptive behavior. Therefore, assertive discipline theory is relevant and includes clearly delineated strategies and techniques that teachers can use to create an effective classroom environment.

The purpose of this basic qualitative design was to examine high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom. Two of the most relevant characteristics for fostering an effective classroom environment are the teacher's skill and confidence (Canter, 1976). For example, a lack of respect for teachers and their authority is a significant aspect of students' disruptive behavior (Canter, 1976). Teachers cannot allow students who demonstrate these behaviors to interrupt the classroom climate. Second, assertive discipline theory establishes that teachers should introduce students to a classroom discipline plan (Canter, 1976). A discipline plan establishes rules for students and ensures fair treatment from teachers (Canter, 1976). Also, the goal of a discipline

plan is to have a consistent structure that allows a teacher to teach in an orderly, safe, and effective classroom.

The main contention of the assertive discipline plan is to provide teachers with a framework to reduce disruptive behavior. Several concepts relate to the problem of disruptive behavior have been discussed, such as skills and confidence of the teacher, effective classroom management, and reduction of disruptive behavior. These concepts work in conjunction to create an effective classroom environment where students can learn. The improvement of disruptive behavior may be contingent on teacher training because teachers believe they have not received sufficient training to deal with students who display disruptive behavior (Canter, 1976).

The assertive discipline plan provided by Canter is well developed because each concept connects to the prior concept. Also, for each concept, there are strategies for implementation and to provide a comprehensive understanding. Canter's (1976) assertive discipline theory is relevant for this study and provides insight that was instrumental for understanding and analyzing the data collected pertaining to teachers' perspectives and experiences with interventions to reduce disruptive student behavior in the classroom.

Nature of the Study

For this study, I used a qualitative approach at two local high school sites. This study involved direct interaction with the participants and can provide the most in-depth information. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated that a researcher is interested in the intricacy of a phenomenon and the meaning participants ascribe to their world. Most importantly, researchers can engage with participants, view environments, and clarify any

misinterpretations to obtain a detailed description. Qualitative research stems from inductive reasoning; data are gathered so that concepts can be built instead of deductive reasoning, which seeks to test a hypothesis (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained that a basic qualitative design is the construction of meaning derived from a phenomenon being studied. A basic qualitative design was chosen because the issues in this study that address disruptive behavior stem from a specific environment. A basic qualitative study was relevant because a variety of insights can emerge and provide readers with an understanding of the phenomenon of disruptive student behavior.

I used Zoom conferencing to conduct interviews virtually rather than in-person interviews because of the COVID-19 pandemic. To collect data, I conducted nine semistructured interviews which was sufficient for saturation and provided a variety of perspectives. The participants included teachers of grades nine to 11 who had at least 1 year of full-time teaching experience.

Definitions

Alternative education: Schools that specialize in programs that address needs of students who are at risk for academic failure. These settings provide alternative programs designed for academic support through innovative approaches. Also, the programs are designed to help address students' social or behavioral issues (Wilkerson et al., 2016).

Attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD): A neurodevelopmental disorder that accounts for inappropriate levels of inattention, hyperactivity, and impulsivity that can impair student function (Rushton et al., 2020).

Disruptive behavioral disorders: The most common psychiatric disorders commonly diagnosed in children and a construct of behavioral and emotional dysregulations that can lead to impulsive behavior (Ayano et al., 2021).

Educational Code 32261: All pupils in public schools have the right to attend safe, peaceful, and secure classes (California Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations, 2017).

Emotional and behavioral disorders (EBDs): Students identified as having EBDs struggle with behavior and can have poor academic outcomes (State et al., 2019).

Exclusionary discipline: The typical response used for minor behavior and attendance problems including in-school and out-of-school suspensions (Jacobsen et al., 2019).

Gun-Free School Zones Act: In 1990, U.S. Congress implemented the Gun-Free School Zones Act, making it a criminal offense for individuals to knowingly possess a firearm in a school zone (Vessels, 2019).

Multitiered system of support (MTSS): An umbrella term of academic and behavior frameworks, such as response to intervention and schoolwide positive behavior support intervention and support for the improvement of student outcomes (Weingarten et al., 2020).

Preservice and inservice training: Training for job acquisition that focuses on skills, knowledge, and required duties of the job (Yirci et al., 2021).

Schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports (SW-PBIS): A framework that supports schools and is composed of a three-tier approach that emphasizes clear expectations for preventing behavioral issues (Whitcomb et al., 2016).

Zero-tolerance policy: A policy that consists of severe and uncompromising discipline (Curran, 2019).

Assumptions

One of the primary assumptions for this study was that participants have used various resources and interventions to reduce disruptive behavior. This is essential for accumulating information from their perspectives on the various challenges that may occur. Also, the second assumption was that teachers would give accurate and truthful information during interviews. A study's truthfulness is important to shed light on the problem and bring about positive change.

Scope and Delimitations

This study's scope was limited to two urban high school settings in California that have demonstrated a problem with disruptive behavior (i.e., nonviolent offenses). The study was chosen because there has been an enormous problem of disruptive behavior throughout the United States. Ervin et al. (2018) asserted that 62% of educators report that students' disruptive behavior interferes with the learning environment and students are often removed from the class setting. Also, the study was delimited by the fact that I did not use observational data due to COVID-19. Therefore, considering the degree of disruptive incidence, I collected data regarding ninth- and 11th-grade teachers' perspectives and experiences with interventions used to reduce disruptive behavior.

The information provided in this study may allow for transferability. Lodico et al. (2010) stated that transferability is possible when the information provided is richly detailed, which allows a reader to make a judgment as to alignment with the reader's site. Readers may then compare the similarities of the two sites and determine whether transferability is possible.

Limitations

Qualitative research is conducted with rigor so that others can be confident as to the credibility and reliability of the study (Merriam, 2009). Even though this study was conducted with rigor to specify dependability, there are weaknesses. The fact that the study was limited to eight to 12 participants from two high schools reduces the potential for transferability. Even though teachers are struggling to address the problem of disruptive behavior, a larger participant pool of teachers and the inclusion of administrators' and students' voices would provide a more accurate examination of the problem. Further studies may be needed to sufficiently determine transferability. In addition, there is the potential for researcher bias. I am an African American, and I understand how my perception of disruptive behavior could influence this study because disruptive behavior discipline has been shown to affect racial minorities disproportionately. I addressed any biases by using self-reflection to enhance the trustworthiness of the study.

Significance

The study is significant because disruptive behavior has had a profound effect on the educational system. Teachers are dealing with students who may be unmotivated and

uninterested in learning (see Wiesman, 2016). Disruptive behavior is a local problem and

a national issue; government officials have called for school discipline reforms designed

to improve school climate by initiating exclusion reform discipline practices (Steinberg &

Lacoe, 2017). This study is significant because it addresses a problem that directly affects

student success. Although, there have been many attempts at solving the problem,

disruptive students seem to continually demand attention. Educators are having a

challenging time finding solutions to enhance classroom climate. Therefore, addressing

the potential problems that may be associated with interventions may provide educators

with key information for improving the disruptive behavior problem.

The study contributes to positive social change by examining teachers'

perspectives and experiences with interventions used to reduce disruptive behavior in the

classroom. Educators may gain a deeper understanding of how to manage students who

display disruptive behavior. Also, this study contributes to social change by providing

teachers with information concerning interventions and strategies. Teachers may gain

knowledge and better understand their challenges to better support students. The optimal

outcome sought is to increase teachers' understanding of disruptive behavior so that the

environment is conducive for learning.

Summary

Chapter 1 provided an overview of the study's background, justification, and

design. The background section provided more details concerning disruptive behavior,

intervention methods for student support, and the gap in practice. A problem statement

was provided that emphasizes that teachers are struggling with addressing the challenges

of disruptive behaviors and effectively implementing interventions to reduce these behaviors.

The purpose of this basic qualitative design was to examine high school teachers' challenges with using interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom. Therefore, research questions were created to guide the study in comprehensive understanding of the participants' perspectives and experiences. Chapter 1 provided a conceptual framework based on Canter's (1976) assertive discipline theory, which includes strategies for the management of disruptive behavior. Many other sections provided a complete overview of the study, such as nature of the study, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and the significance of the study.

In Chapter 2, I present the literature search strategy used for the literature review, which involved a multitude of databases and search engines. Next, I discuss the conceptual framework in greater detail. In Chapter 2, I also present an exhaustive literature review of peer-reviewed articles and books related to the topic under study.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The research problem is that teachers are struggling with addressing the challenges of disruptive behaviors and effectively implementing available interventions to reduce disruptive behavior. The purpose of this basic qualitative design was to examine high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom. The challenge of managing disruptive behavior in the classroom continues to be a persistent and universal problem. Disruptive behavior is considered one of the most pervasive issues affecting teaching (Atmojo, 2020; Narhi et al., 2017; Sezer, 2017).

Educators and administrators have attempted to address classroom disruption using various interventions and strategies, but disruptive behavior persists. Several factors influence teachers' struggles with addressing the challenges of disruptive behavior: mental and emotional health, intervention strategies, and professional development. Dever (2016) and Grothaus (2013) found that mental and emotional health issues are of concern because teachers often mistake these health issues as disruptive behavior problems. Canter (1976) and Young and Martinez (2016) found that teachers need to have supportive intervention strategies in place when problematic behavior arises to prevent reactionary discipline. Most importantly, State et al. (2019) found that teachers lack sufficient training to support the needs of student that have EBDs, defined as students who struggle with behavior and have poor academic performance.

Several other important topics have a bearing on teachers' struggles with addressing disruptive behavior, such as teachers' perceptions of challenging behaviors. Aldosari (2017) and Atmojo (2020) found that disruptive behavior is the most challenging problem in education. Because of this problem, teachers face classroom management challenges, mental health problems, issues with school belonging, and more. Marzano and Marzano (2003) pointed out that students cannot learn in an environment that is chaotic and poorly managed. For this reason, teachers' intervention strategies are vital to supporting students. Leach and Helf (2016) and Palmer and Noltemeyer (2019) explained that effective intervention strategies mainly focus on a preventive and positive framework because these strategies appear to be the most sufficient way to support student needs and control the classroom atmosphere.

Additional challenges are derived from school policies and rules. Peguero and Bracy (2015) found that teachers may apply sanctions when students do not comply with school policies. These sanctions could be in the form of suspension and expulsion. Chu and Ready (2018) found that these practices are punitive and counteractive as a discipline option because this form of discipline may intensify the negative behavior. These problems present significant challenges for teachers, and professional development and professional learning communities can be used to address these problems. Yenen and Yontem (2020) found that professional development can be instrumental in maintaining an effective learning environment, and Prenger et al. (2021) indicated that collaboration among teachers in professional learning communities can improve the overall quality of education.

In this chapter, I explore the challenges of disruptive behaviors and explore teachers' experiences with the implementation of interventions. I provide the conceptual framework based on Canter's (1976) assertive discipline theory. I provide an extensive literature review that addresses a variety of topics concerning teachers' perceptions of challenging behavior, challenges teachers face, teachers' intervention strategies, challenges posed by school policies and discipline, professional development, and professional learning communities.

Literature Search Strategy

Using the research databases, the topic of *disruptive behavior* yielded a wealth of information. While searching the Walden University's library, I searched the following databases: Academic Search Complete, Dissertations & Theses, EBSCO, Education Source, ERIC, NCES Publications, Sage Journals, Thoreau Multi-Database Search, and Walden Library Books. I also searched various websites to gain a comprehensive understanding: ProQuest, PsycINFO, and NCES. The websites for the California Department of Education and the U.S. Department of Education were additional sources used to identify research and were useful in providing statistical data. I also used Google Scholar to obtain relevant information from credible, scholarly literature.

The keywords and phrases I used included *classroom management, teacher and student behavior, disruptive behaviors, student belonging, school discipline, disruptive climate, behavior disorders in children, mental health, teacher–student relationships, teaching strategies, challenges teachers face, engagement, behavior, school belonging,* and *interventions*. I also used *classroom challenges, SW-PBIS, school discipline policies,*

exclusionary discipline, punitive discipline, and *in-and-out of school suspensions*. The research focus was peer-reviewed articles published between 2016 and 2021, so data presented would be current.

Conceptual Framework

In this section, I present the conceptual framework of the study based on Canter's (1976) assertive discipline theory, which consists of concepts and strategies to support teachers' management of the classroom. Teachers can use the concepts and strategies to reduce disruptive student behavior. In the assertive discipline theory, Canter (1976) provided a list of various concepts to support beginning and struggling teachers. The topics that underscore this qualitative study are effective classroom management, classroom discipline plan, and reducing disruptive behavior. The theory is significant for providing a comprehensive understanding of each concept and strategy.

In the assertive discipline theory, Canter (1976) indicated that teachers need to have skills and confidence when dealing with disruptive students. The term *skills and confidence* are emphasized as an essential aspect for managing student behavior. For example, teachers can be effective classroom managers when they have the skills and confidence to express using a strong voice. The term *strong voice* is deemed necessary when students demonstrate a lack of respect or challenge authority. In a similar study, Marzano and Marzano (2003) found that when teachers demonstrate a level of authority, positive behavior outcomes may be accomplished. Canter (1976) and Marzano and Marzano (2003) used different language to express their thoughts, but the main objective is the same. Teachers are responsible for the classroom environment; therefore, teachers

must develop an authoritative stance when dealing with noncompliant students in order to gain their respect.

For this reason, teachers need to introduce students to a classroom discipline plan (set of rules and procedures) at the beginning of a school year that outlines classroom behavior expectations (Canter, 1976). When rules and regulations are outlined in advance, students have a better understanding of how to manage their behavior. In addition, Collier-Meek et al. (2019) found that a list of expectation that are measurable and observable and that can be applied is necessary to provide structure. Canter (1976) and Collier-Meek et al. (2019) are in congruence concerning constant verbal and visual reminders being necessary to keep students focused in the classroom environment.

The most important concept of Canter's (1976) assertive discipline theory is the reduction of disruptive behavior. One of the most relevant strategies for reducing disruptive behavior seems to be engagement. Canter (1976) explained that when students are engaged, teachers are less likely to have behavioral problems. Nguyen et al. (2018) explained that behavioral engagement is a central component conceptualized by student participation, classroom conduct, and interest in academic. For example, when student behavior is positively aligned with the components described by Nguyen et al., students are most likely engaged on task and learning is taking place. Canter (1976) and Nguyen et al. (2018) each identified that engagement is a key strategy for a successful classroom environment. However, even if students are engaged, other factors may prevent engagement, such as peer influence. Peer influence is a determinant of disruptive behavior (Muller et al., 2018); therefore, careful attention should be implemented.

In the assertive discipline theory, several strategies are suggested for reducing disruptive behavior: (a) teaching with enthusiasm, (b) providing constant opportunities for students to respond, and (c) pacing the lesson. These strategies are important to the overall process of creating an effective learning environment. Assertive discipline theory goes from one concept to the next describing how each concept influence teachers' classroom management. These concepts and strategies can benefit the classroom environment by providing teachers with the resources and tools to maintain the classroom environment.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variable

Teachers' Perceptions of Challenging Behaviors

Teachers contend that one of their most challenging problems in school is disruptive behaviors (Aldosari, 2017; Atmojo, 2020; Hunter & Haydon, 2019; Strickland-Cohen et al., 2019). Off task, out of seats, yelling, disturbing learning, defiance, noncompliance, and crying are considered disruptive behaviors in the classroom (Aldosari, 2017). A considerable number of researchers have found that teachers' perceptions of disruptive behavior may be derived from the fact that challenging student behaviors interfere with instructional time and interfere with the learning environment (Hirsch et al., 2019).

However, in another study, Sezer (2017) explained that disruptive behaviors could also stem from teacher behaviors and various other conditions concerning teacher qualifications, learning environment, boring teachers, teacher burnout, and discipline

methods. The views of Hirsch et al. (2019) and Sezer (2017) are relevant and highlight the tremendous problem of disruptive behavior.

Student Behavior

Teachers find that student behavior is extremely difficult to manage (Atmojo, 2020). When students display behaviors, such as defiance, reluctance, off-task, disrespect, and talking back, teachers may not know how to respond. Even worse, the problem is usually intensified by the fact that most teachers are unaware of the source of the misbehavior. Student behaviors problems have been attributed to a variety of reasons, such as poor home environment, limited learning abilities, lack of parental support, socioeconomic status, health, emotional problems, and more (Atmojo, 2020). However, Atmojo (2020) emphasized that teachers should understand the behavior and know why the behavior is occurring before trying to cope with the behavior. Understanding the behavior is important because when teachers attribute insufficient reasons to student behavior, teachers may not engage in behavior assessments to correctly identify and align interventions (Young & Martinez, 2016).

With the multitude of issues preventing students from acting in accordance with a teacher's classroom expectations for behavior, administrators, teachers, and staff members should be prepared with a plan to sufficiently intervene (Borgmeier et al., 2017). When teachers are not prepared to intervene, reactionary discipline may arise. Disruptive student behavior may lead to removal from the classroom environment, which results in missed learning opportunities.

Teacher Behavior

Teacher behavior could be a factor that adds to the problem of disruptive student behavior in the classroom. Even though a variety of assumptions are made as to why disruptive student behavior continues to impede the classroom, teacher behavior is not often addressed. However, Dulay and Karadag (2020) found that students are often depicted as the source of disruptive behavior in the classroom, but teacher behavior may be the foundation of the problem. Also, Baloglu (2009) found that teachers are reluctant to admit that students' failure to behave may be due to the teacher's style of teaching. Even though these two studies seem to suggest that teacher behavior may play a role in undesirable student behaviors, teachers may be unaware of the behavior that is negatively affecting the students. Nonetheless, student behavior has been linked to lack of parental involvement, lack of engagement, sleep deprivation, social–economic issues, and emotional heath (Atmojo, 2020). When these issues are prevalent in the lives of students, unfavorable outcomes are likely.

The behavior of teachers is considered undesirable when their behavior has a negative effect on students' motivation and learning (Dulay & Karadag, 2020). Also, Dulay and Karadag (2020) found that these undesirable behaviors have been described as incompetence (confusing lesson, boring, and unfair grading); offensiveness (verbal abuse, discrimination, negative personality); and indolence (being unprepared and late arrival). Dulay and Karadag (2020) also contended that undesirable teacher behavior may affect student behavior or exacerbate problem behavior. However, teacher behaviors should not be considered the driving influence for student disruptive behavior. Administrators,

stakeholders, educators, and all involved with education should take a broader look at teacher behavior as a holistic approach when exploring ways to address disruptive student behavior.

Challenges Teachers Face

Disruptive student behavior problems have been considered as one of the main challenges teachers face in the classroom (Sezer, 2017). In many studies students' disruptive behavior seems to be the only challenge that teachers face, and there has been a tremendous amount of research written concerning the topic. However, there are many challenges contributing to teachers' problem of reducing disruptive behavior such as challenges with classroom management, students' emotional health challenges, and school belonging issues. These challenges and many more can affect teachers' ability to provide all students with a safe and productive learning environment.

Teachers' Challenges With Classroom Management

Classroom management is considered as an essential aspect of an effective learning environment. Blake (2017) and Mkhasibe and Mncube (2020) stated that classroom management consists of the deliberate actions that teachers take to maintain an effective learning, environment. Moreover, Farmer et al. (2019) asserted teachers have the responsibility to manage the classroom environment and are expected to maintain the effective functioning of the classroom. However, teachers have many challenges in the form of disruptive behaviors, which may effective classroom management difficult. Therefore, Canter, (1976) found that teachers need to be prepared to teach by having a systematic plan in place which emphasizes appropriate student behaviors from the

beginning. A systematic plan is vital for teachers to have so they can intervene in a fair and just manner when behavior problems arise. When teachers do not have a management plan in place, teachers may react in a manner that is not conducive for the classroom environment which could exacerbate a situation even further. With proper planning, negative classroom situations may be avoided. Letina and Dikovic (2021) asserted that teachers should have clear rules and procedures in place to express their classroom expectation. Also, Letina and Dikovic (2021) agreed with Canter's (1976) point regarding a systematic plan and point out that behavior management is composed of a structure environment inclusive of a preplanned method for avoiding misbehavior of students which encompasses setting established rules.

Some of the challenges that interfere with learning may stem from a lack of respect, inclusion of special needs students, non-compliant students, and lack of teacher training. Students cannot learn in an environment that is chaotic and poorly managed (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). For this reason, Canter (1976) developed a theory of discipline that consist of rules, procedures, and discipline for creating and to ensure a safe and orderly classroom environment. In addition, Hirsch et al. (2019); Marzano and Marzano (2003), and Mitchell and Shoho (2017) also found that established rules and procedures for teachers' classroom expectations are essential and are required elements for successful classroom behavior.

Challenges Posed by Students With Mental Health Concerns

One of the biggest challenges that teachers face may be students with mental health issues. Teachers may feel uncomfortable and unequipped because they do not have

the knowledge nor skills to address emotional health challenges (Kaye et al., 2020). For

this reason, teachers may have failed to recognize those students with possible emotional

health issues (i.e., disruptive behavior disorders) and have often responded to those

students with disciplinary action (Grothaus, 2013).

Oftentimes, when challenges arise in the classroom, teachers may infer that when

students consistently deviate from classroom rules and school policies, the students are

consciously deciding to deviate from what is considered proper classroom behavior.

Teachers do their best to keep the environment organized and running smoothly.

However, when students do not comply or follow the designed rules and procedures, the

teacher may naturally assume that the behavior is demonstrative of disruptive behavior

and may tag or categorize the student with labels, such as defiant, malfeasant, or dissident

(Grothaus, 2013).

Dever (2016) found that many forms of emotional health issues fall under the

classification of disruptive behavior disorders (DBDs) which may account for students'

disruptive behavior problems. Grothaus (2013) explained that DBDs include conduct

disorder, which consists of aggressive behavior such as bullying, and oppositional defiant

disorder, which is characterized by argumentative and defiant behavior. Unfortunately,

these behavior disorders are in alignment with the issues that are so commonly exhibited

within the classroom. Therefore, when teachers have not been trained to recognize

behaviors that are consistent with emotional health issues alignment of interventions may

be delayed. Both Grothaus (2013) and Dever (2016) made a significant point regarding

emotional-health issues because when a proper diagnosis of student behavior is not made these behavioral issues can be a challenge for the classroom and the teacher.

On the other hand, the most notable behavior disorder that teachers face in school is ADHD; however, ADHD does not fall under the category of DBD (Grothaus, 2013). ADHD is a neurodevelopmental disorder that can interfere with a persons' ability to function or develop (Rushton et al., 2020). Students with ADHD present an enormous challenge for teachers because their disorder interferes with ability to follow directions, stay in their seat, and stay on task (Frohlich et al., 2020). Teachers may find that the repetitiveness of the problem is disturbing and distractive not only for the teacher, but also for the classroom climate. In a recent study, Guerra et al. (2017) found that teachers lack understanding and perception of students with ADHD, and this gap could offset the performance of teachers and students.

Challenges of School Belonging

Teachers face challenges with students who have low level of school belonging. Many students may not feel the sense of belonging, and this lack may lead to problems with behavior in the classroom. School belonging is defined as the quality of engagement students have with teachers, peers, and the support personnel (Booker, 2021; Keyes, 2019). Even though school belonging seems to have more to do with academics, school belonging is highly associated with students' behavior, depression, harmful habits, and dropping out of school (Allen et al., 2018; Atabey, 2020).

Students who have a low level of school belonging may adversely affect the learning environment because they do not feel personally accepted nor included (Roffey

et al., 2019). Unfortunately, these students may demonstrate behaviors that could range between being quiet and withdrawn to fighting and bullying. When disruptive behavior manifest in the classroom, teachers have the responsibility of controlling the classroom and creating a community where students feel connected and comfortable with the teachers as well as the peers.

Teachers play a major role in building students' sense of belonging because they generally set the tone by their instructional techniques, the values they employ, and by building relationships (Booker, 2021). Teachers' main objective should consist of developing a classroom setting where student can feel connected so that behavioral problems are kept to a minimal. However, in many instances, Bouchard and Berg (2017) found that teachers had difficulty identifying the difference between those students that have a sense of belonging and those that did not have a sense of belonging. When this is the case, teachers may have a difficult time facilitating an effective setting because they are dealing with groups of students that could have emotional health issues and or problems with their home environment (Booker, 2021). Unfortunately, these issues are likely to affect teachers' instructional time and the students' classroom peers. Identifying students who have low sense of belonging is important because teachers may then be able to provide the correct interventions. However, every student will not benefit from the interventions that are provided by teachers. Allen, et al. (2018) found one in four students are categorized as not having a sense of belonging to the school. Apparently, when students do not have these positive emotions, teachers' challenges may become more profound.

Challenges Posed by School Policies and Discipline

The zero-tolerance policy and the Gun-Free Schools Act were meant to eliminate the fear in the schools related to violence, drugs, and gang activity (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016; Simson, 2014; Vidal-Castro, 2016). The implementation of these policies called for a 1-year mandatory expulsion penalty for students who did not adhere to this law. With the violent crimes that have played out in the schools across the nation, the call for implementation of extreme safety measures may have been considered as the only protection against school violence. When the legislators wrote the Gun-Free Act of 1994, the federal government gave latitude to the states in crafting what is known as the zero-tolerance policy (Camacho & Krezmien, 2020; Simson, 2014). Some of these laws are still in effect because the federal government allowed the states to use these policies (Simson, 2014). However, these same rules may be considered as placing hardships on teachers and students' education.

In many schools, disruptive classroom climates seem to be beyond the realm of what is desirable for learning, which has spurred unfavorable responses of imposed discipline. Losen (2013) found that 95% of exclusionary discipline has been used for minor offenses, whereas only 5 % was for violent acts. Under California Law, EDC 32261, every student has a right to attend a safe and secure campus (CCSDLR, 2017). California Law EDC 48915 maintains that a superintendent must immediately suspend and recommend for expulsion any student who possesses a firearm on school grounds (CCSDLR, 2017). Certainly, this law may have been designed to keep schools safe; instead, egregious disparities for discipline seemed to have emerged. The controversy

that surrounds the codes of conduct is suggestive of the need to reform the law. The law needs to be examined to gain a better understanding of how these rules are supposed to be applied so that harmful discipline practices are eliminated.

Teachers' Interventions Strategies

Teachers use a variety of intervention strategies to control a disruptive classroom. Effective intervention strategies for classroom management mainly focus on preventative and positive framework rather than using reactionary punitive management for disruptive behavior (Korpershoek et al., 2016; Leach & Helf, 2016; Palmer & Noltemeyer, 2019; Scott et al., 2019). Many teachers would agree that preventative and positive strategies appear to be the most sufficient way to support student and to control a negative classroom atmosphere. Strategies such as engagement and teacher-student interaction are used to control the classroom environment, and they have been useful. Studies show that these intervention strategies are effective when used with fidelity; however, behavior issues are still considered a major problem in the schools today.

Teachers and Engagement

Engagement is an important construct that contributes to the prevention of disruptive student behavior. Engagement is a multifaceted construct and is the foundational component of many interventions (Fredricks et al., 2019; Moreira et al., 2018). The central components are conceptualized by students' participation, classroom conduct, and students' interest in academic (Nguyen et al., 2018). These components are essentially linked to the functionality of the classroom and have a bearing on students' daily behavior which could be positive or negative.

The structure of the classroom activities has an influence on student behavioral engagement (Nguyen et al., 2018). For example, when teachers devise lesson plans that are inclusive of fun and interesting activities that keep students engaged in the lesson, disruptive behavior may be kept to a minimal. When students are engaged there are obvious indicators, Nguyen et al. (2018) found that evidence of students' engagement may be recognized when they ask questions, when they focus on the lesson, and when they contribute to the discussion. When students are engaged, teachers are most likely enjoying the interactions with the students and feeling a sense of satisfaction.

However, the opposite happens when students deviate from participation and cause disruption. This type of behavior may be considered as reflecting low engagement. Liem & Chong (2017) found that low engagement can correspond to significant challenges in the learning environment and place a burden on teachers. Also, the authors explained that these challenges affect teachers' effectiveness, hampers teachers' competence and satisfaction, and have a deep effect on their psychological well-being. These are not the desired outcomes. When teachers feel devalued and unappreciated their desire to teach and engage with students may be affected.

However, Moreira et al. (2018) emphasized that there is a perspective throughout the literature that suggests teacher support is vital for supporting student engagement. Also, most teachers make a concerted effort to interact with students and by doing so teachers gain an interpersonal relationship that has a major influence on student development. Moreira et al. (2018) found that positive teacher-student relationships

increase student engagement and is protective against negative experience, such as student drop out.

Teacher–Student Relationships

Teacher–student relationships can be considered as one of the most important interventions. Studies have indicated that teacher–student relationships are closely tied to student belonging, whereas students feel a sense of connection to the classroom and the school. Also, positive academic and behavior outcomes are associated with high quality teacher–student relationships (Mosley et al., 2021; Zee & Roorda, 2018). In any grade level, building relationships should be an essential part of a teachers' characteristic. Equally important, several studies indicated that when students are in conflict with the teacher, problems may result in increased aggression, negative attitude, and problem behavior (Walker & Graham, 2021). Teachers who engage in conversations, find out about likes and dislikes, and find common topics of interest usually have better behavioral outcomes.

Moreira et al. (2018) found that healthy psychological development is based on relatedness, (warm interaction with others), which directly corresponds to having a positive teacher–student relationships. Furthermore, Moreira et al. (2018) pointed out that teacher–student interaction improves academic performance, student engagement, and self-efficacy. There are several benefits that are attributed to the association between teacher and student. In addition, Anyon et al. (2018) contended that research indicates that teachers' supportive relationships with students are essential for creating a positive school environment and reducing problem behaviors. These authors found that

relationship-building was most effective in reducing the suspension rate for all students. The suspension reduction is an indication of the importance of positive teacher–student relationships.

Teachers' Need for SW-PBIS

Affective interventions are needed to provide the teachers with the proper resources for assisting those students that have behavioral problems. SW-PBIS is a multitier framework that provides a comprehensive approach to support students. According to Macy and Wheeler (2021), having teachers and all stakeholders buy into the initiative of SW-PBIS is the first step for successful implementation. James et al. (2019) pointed out that Tier 1 is a prevention method for the support of all students and consists of feedback, modeling, and recognition for meeting behavior expectations. Tier 2 is for those students who need additional support with behavioral expectations that may involve social skills groups, a behavior education plan, and the check-in, check-out strategy. In addition, James et al. (2019) indicated that Tier 3 is used for students who did not benefit from Tier 1 and 2 and will need a more intense behavior structure such as, functional behavioral analysis, person-centered plans, or behavioral intervention. Instead of waiting for behavior problems to erupt in the classroom, the multi-tiered approach can be used to prevent disruptive behavior by addressing social and emotional issues. Teachers may then avoid further disruption.

SW-PBIS is an evidence-based behavior framework used to support all students academically as well as behaviorally (James et al., 2019). Depending on the need of the student, teachers can examine the behavior of the student and make an assessment as to

which form of intervention may work best for the student. An individualized behavior

plan may be needed to meet and support the need of the student. James et al. (2019)

concluded that the effectiveness of this framework may be due to the conceptualization of

the three-tiers that are used for the varying degree of behavior intensity.

However, even though SW-PBIS is a multi-tiered framework used to support

students, Collins et al. (2018) found that there are still another 10–20% of students who

have not been reached at the Tier-1 level and will need target interventions to be

successful. Unfortunately, students who fall under the category of needing more targeted

intervention may be removed from the classroom setting in the interim. Schools cannot

continue to rely on punishment and removal for those students who need additional

targeted support when studies do show that prevention of behavioral problem would be

more beneficial (Horner & Macaya, 2018). Therefore, a closer look at the implementation

of SW-PBIS may be necessary.

The SW-PBIS process is most beneficial when interventions are implemented

with fidelity (Sugai & Horner, 2020). When students continue to display behavioral

problems after Tier-3 has been applied, facilitators (teachers and educators) may need to

assess whether they are implementing the interventions with fidelity. In a longitudinal

study, Kim et al. (2018) reported that fidelity of implementation is found when the

interventions are being used with consistency and an adequate degree of accuracy

according to how they were designed for the support of students' behavior. Freeman et al.

(2019) listed four critical elements for organization of implementation: staff support,

decision-making based on data, practices for student support, and behavior and academic

outcomes. When interventions are implemented with these strategies in place, successful outcomes may be realized. Both Kim et al. (2018) and Freeman et al. (2019) found that implementation of interventions is vital and has a bearing on academic and behavioral outcomes. In addition, McDaniel et al. (2017) added that facilitation of continuous training, coaching, and making modifications, when necessary, will improve student outcomes. The main point is that teachers and administrators should focus on the application of interventions with regards to sufficiency and accuracy. Student removal should not be an option and should be viewed as a portentous factor that has a negative effect on students' outcomes.

Moreover, one of the primary reasons for using PBIS with fidelity is to keep students in a learning environment. When students display behavior that impedes academic instructional time, teachers must decide on the most efficient way to remedy the situation, at hand. Often, teachers will decide to remove the student from the classroom sitting to reduce the potential for lost instructional time. In relation to retaining students in a learning environment, Scott et al. (2019) emphasized that the purpose for implementing PBIS prevention plan is to minimize the occurrences of behavioral incidents that result in classroom removal or suspension.

Therefore, Scott et al. (2019) conducted a study that examined the efficiency of the MTSS fidelity on SWPBIS implementation. The aim was to determine whether there were differences in the number of behavioral and in- or out-of-school suspensions between those schools that received SWPBIS training and comparative schools that had not. The authors found that schools that used the SWPBIS with fidelity showed 57%

fewer out-of-school suspensions. These data provide an indication of the sufficiency of SWPBIS intervention when properly implemented.

Policies and Rules

Teachers may have to implement harsh discipline when students do not adhere to policies and rules that have been set by the code of conduct. The No Child Left Behind Act and the Gun-Free Schools Act proposed exclusionary discipline when dealing with students' challenging behaviors (Kennedy-Lewis, 2015). These policies and rules placed teachers in a difficult situation because they are bound by sanctions in many states to follow guidelines for administering discipline.

These extreme discipline policies (i.e., codes of conduct) were mandated by the No Child Left Behind Act to outline behavior expectations and to keep a safe learning environment (Anderson & Ritter, 2020; Fan & Williams, 2018; Fenning et al., 2012). Even though teachers may not agree with these harsh penalties, teachers most likely understand that these sanctions were implemented to keep students safe. The fear of violence in the schools almost certainly gives administrators a viable argument for keeping these policies.

The code of conduct laws may be useful for violent acts, but these laws also place hardships on teachers' ability to keep students in a learning environment. Even more alarming is the fact that the formal written policies contribute to what some think of as ineffective exclusionary discipline (i.e., suspension, expulsion); (Fenning et al., 2012). These discipline policies and discipline methods were designed to create a safe and positive learning environment for teachers and students, (Brasof & Peterson, 2018) but

the law has also been criticized for the sanctions imposed on minor offenses. Yet, many schools continue to use these policies.

When Fenning et al. (2012) examined the frequency of behaviors (e.g., tardiness, truancy, bullying, fighting, vandalism, drug offenses, and weapons), they found that suspensions rated high as an option for discipline, even when the infraction (e.g., tardiness, truancy) was viewed as a minor offense. In a related article, Chu and Ready (2018) found that these practices are punitive. Chu and Ready (2018) also claimed suspensions may be counteractive as a discipline option because this form of discipline may intensify the negative behavior that is being addressed.

These policies and rules are in question because many times the infraction does not fit the prescribed discipline method. Most people believe that teachers are charging students with offenses that are considered as subjective such as defiance and disrespect. Studies show that teachers who overuse exclusionary discipline are more exhausted and less efficacious when trying to manage student behaviors which may account for their rash reaction for students that are disruptive (Nese et al., 2020). The code of conduct rules and policies, at one time, may have been considered as the most efficient way to deal with behavior problems; however, a reevaluation is needed to determine the appropriate form of discipline for the various types of infractions.

Suspensions and Expulsions

Teachers are burdened because disruptive classroom climates seem to be beyond the realm of what is desirable for teaching and learning. School districts are having difficulty finding appropriate resources to support the students' behavioral needs which

places the burden on teachers (Thompson, 2015). Teachers use an array of resources, strategies, and interventions to prevent using exclusionary practices. Despite the body of evidence that suggests that exclusionary discipline is detrimental and can result in low academic achievement and school violence, schools continue to use these practices as a response to problematic behavior (Nese et al., 2020). The issue is a dilemma because under California law, EDC 32261, every student has a right to attend a safe and secure campus (California Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations, 2017).

The issue of school exclusionary discipline practices does present a significant dilemma for teachers. The No Child Left Behind Act and Gun-Free Schools Act proposed exclusionary discipline when dealing with students' challenging behaviors (Kennedy-Lewis, 2015). For this reason, many districts refer to these laws when handing out discipline. Therefore, when teachers decide to remove a student from class, even for minor offense, there exist a possibility for suspension. Camacho and Krezmien (2020) and Thompson (2015) argued that in-and out-of-school suspension, expulsions, and referrals for alternative placements, do not contribute to safer environments. However, legislatures set strict guidelines on how these rules should be applied; unfortunately, they did not foresee the detriment that could result from these laws.

Recognizing that students' regular attendance is essential, Hernandez-Melis et al. (2015) examined a pilot program, which was implemented to impede suspensions. The program's initial focus was for those students who were referred for severe offenses. However, the researchers' purpose was to maintain attendance for any students who experienced behavioral and emotional issues. The results showed that students who

participated in the intervention sessions showed a significant reduction in suspension and referrals than those who did not participate.

Teachers' Professional Development

Professional development for teachers is a process used to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills for the purpose of becoming an effective teacher. Svendsen (2020) found that professional development is a life-long process used to engage teachers in education so that teachers can continue to grow. Also, professional development consists of systematic activities to prepare pre-service and in-service teachers training for the job by way of training, induction courses and continuous development. Yenen and Yontem (2020) found that professional development is important because the training improves the quality of education, which contributes to maximizing student learning. Clearly, Svendsen's (2020) and Yenen and Yontem's (2020) studies are in congruence, showing how professional development is used to enhance teachers' pedagogical skills.

Need for Teacher Training

Teachers should be open to professional development training in order to provide students with quality education (Yenen & Yontem, 2020). One reason is professional development for teachers is considered as the central aspect used to transform teaching (Redman et al., 2018). Secondly, professional development training is expected to engage teachers and increase their knowledge (Svendsen, 2020). However, even though, professional development has positive benefits for teachers and a great effect on students' outcome, Yenen and Yontem (2020) found that teachers may be reluctant and unwilling

to attend professional development training because of organizations failure to recognize the needs of teachers.

Thirdly, with the diversity of the classrooms today, PD may help teachers develop the skills and knowledge that is necessary to effectively teach all students. For instance, the inclusion of students with emotional behavior disorders may present behavioral challenges for the teacher. Also, State et al. (2019) found that students with emotional behavior disorders need the support of knowledgeable teachers who can implement evidence-base academic and behavioral strategies.

Finally, sustainability is an important aspect of professional development and should be a mandatory requisite for developing and maintenance of high-quality teachers because educational practices are continually changing (Yenen & Yontem, 2020). Also, Redman et al. (2018) found that sustainability is important for both the teacher and student because stand-alone training can fail (Redman et al., 2018). Teachers need consistent support and training to meet the educational needs of students. Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) found that professional development in problem-solving, collaboration, communication, and self-direction highlights effective teaching skills and underpins that professional development must be sustained.

Professional Learning Communities

Professional learning communities are considered as an effective way for teachers to collaborate with peers and make decision on important issues for student support. Teachers may find that professional learning communities are beneficial in several ways. When teachers are engaged in professional learning communities, their professional

knowledge is increased, which fosters students learning (Svendsen, 2020). In addition, Prenger et al. (2021) pointed out that collaboration amongst teachers in professional learning communities improves the overall quality of education. Professional learning communities can also have a positive effect on teachers' well-being, such as teachers' satisfaction which produces a higher level of commitment and higher classroom morale. The high morale of teachers can transition into teachers' positive attitude towards the class which will produces a positive effect on the classroom environment.

Teachers come together to collaborate, share ideas, and critically interrogate their pedagogy skills concerning a common goal concerning a specific topic (Davis lll et al., 2020). A group of teachers from different disciplines could effectively collaborate because they have several of the same students. The collaboration amongst teachers can provide pertinent information that will benefit the teacher as well as the student. State et al. (2019) found that when teachers meet to discuss curriculum-specific problems, activities in the form of videos, reading resources, and reflective dialogue is used to enhance the discussion.

Conversely, although professional learning communities seem to have many positive characteristics, there are issues that can manifest amongst the educators that are involved. State et al. (2019) found that challenges could involve tension, fear of speaking openly, visions unsupported by others, and professional backlash, to name few. Choosing a leader who can efficiently control the atmosphere will be beneficial because the ultimate goal is to advance student learning.

Summary and Conclusions

The literature review included major themes in relation to teachers' struggles to address the challenges of disruptive behaviors and to effectively implement to reduce disruptive behavior. A conceptual framework based on Canter's theory of assertive discipline and several topics were used in conjunction with the corresponding literature to provide a complete assessment for addressing the challenges of disruptive behaviors. Some of the themes that emerged included: teachers' perspective of challenging behavior, problems teachers' face, teachers' intervention strategies, challenges posed by school policies and discipline, and the professional development. The review showed that the challenges of disruptive behavior are one of the most significant problems that teachers face in schools. The review of literature also provided an in-depth view of the entities that comprise the challenges of disruptive behavior and the implementation of interventions.

Many themes emerged in this review of the literature. The theme of teachers' perception of challenging behavior emerged because challenging student behavior affects students' academic achievement and is a risk factor for adverse student outcomes (Aldosari, 2017; Lum et al., 2017; Narhi, et al., 2017). Another important theme that emerged is the challenges teachers face with emotional heath. Kaye et al., (2020) stated that teachers do not have the knowledge nor skills to address emotional health challenges. Also, intervention strategies emerged and were found to be essential because teacher need to use preventative strategies rather than reactionary management when dealing with students that display disruptive behaviors (Korpershoek et al., 2016; Leach & Helf, 2016). Challenges posed by school policies and discipline emerged too. The zero-

tolerance policy was meant to eliminate the fear in the schools related to violence, drugs, and gang activity (DeMitchell & Hambacher, 2016; Simson, 2014; Vidal-Castro, 2016). Teachers' professional development emerged in this review of literature because teacher training is essential for enhancing teachers' knowledge and skills (Seema et al., 2021; Yirci et al., 2021). Also, a gap was found concerning the implementation of interventions that are used to support students with challenging behaviors.

This review of literature added to the current body of knowledge by exploring various topics that were in relation to the challenges of disruptive behavior. In Chapter 3, I explain how I used a basic qualitative design methodology to provide a detailed description by using interviews to gain the teachers' perspective of this unintended problem of the challenges of disruptive behavior.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this basic qualitative design was to examine high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom. The collected data provided insight into the problem and helped gain a deeper understanding of disruptive behavior occurrences. Also, teachers may benefit and understand how to manage disruptive behaviors and implement interventions, so the classroom climate is not impeded. This process may lead to the development of a classroom action plan and personalized plans that will demonstrably improve the classroom climate and may reduce students' removal from the learning environment.

In this chapter, I explain how I used a qualitative methodological approach to develop a detailed description from teachers' perspectives. I begin with the design and rationale for the study and then the questions posed to guide this study. Next, I describe the researcher's role, participant selection, and the instrument. I describe the process of data collection and analysis and the strategies for strengthening the trustworthiness of the study. Lastly, I discuss the ethical procedures to finalize the chapter.

Research Design and Rationale

I chose a basic qualitative design to provide rigor and to examine teachers' perspective and experiences with interventions used to reduce disruptive student behavior in the classroom. The following research questions were developed to ascertain a description of the phenomenon of disruptive behavior:

RQ1: How do teachers describe the challenges they have using interventions to reduce students' disruptive behavior?

RQ2: What are teachers' perceptions as to what can be done to improve the sufficiency of interventions currently in use?

A qualitative approach was chosen instead of a quantitative approach because qualitative research is an interpretive inquiry, as noted in Merriam and Tisdell (2016). Subjective views are formed not only from individual reactions but from the personal experiences developed through social interactions, historical events, and cultural aspects. Merriam (2009) noted that a qualitative researcher's goal is to visualize the perspective of those people who rarely have a voice. Therefore, I used a qualitative approach to elicit information in a social setting where information could emerge from the participants' views.

I chose a basic qualitative design because this method allows a researcher to gain an in-depth understanding and make an interpretation of participants' experiences (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The method is relevant because the design is used to address problems that are contemporary as well as historical. I also chose this method for this study because (a) interviews allow a researcher to obtain descriptive details from participants, and (b) a basic qualitative design is based on inductive reasoning; a researcher builds concepts and theories from the collected data (see Merriam, 2009).

A basic qualitative design is devoted to context meaning and requires an instrument (i.e., human agency) dedicated to unearthing a detailed description (Merriam, 2009). The basic qualitative design is built from a theory of constructivism, which means

the philosophical perspective of reality is constructed from individual interpretations

(Lodico et al., 2010). Also, in a basic qualitative design, a researcher's primary purpose is

to understand how people construct reality through their interpretations of their world.

Furthermore, researchers use inductive reasoning, a bottom-up process, to describe a

picture of the participants' reality. This process leads to data collection in which a

researcher observes the phenomenon, looks for themes, and generalizes by analyzing the

themes (Merriam, 2009). A basic qualitative design is an integral component that makes

an inference of the immense complexity of human experiences (Katz, 2015), which may

provide researchers with a comprehensive understanding of participants' natural settings.

I considered phenomenology as an alternative form of qualitative study. Merriam

(2009) expressed that all qualitative research is built from a phenomenological view.

Phenomenology is mainly concerned with the essence of everyday lived experiences (i.e.,

love, loneliness, anger), and the primary source for collecting data is interviews (Lodico

et al., 2010). I did not choose phenomenology because phenomenology is more

concerned with the essences of people's shared experiences, whereas a basic qualitative

study is based on understanding how people make sense of their life experiences.

I considered other approaches but decided they did not correspond to the

phenomenon being studied. A case study was not sufficient because the issue being

studied is not a bounded unit; grounded theory is based on building theory from the

collected data; narrative uses first-person experiences in a story format; and ethnography

is concerned with cultural descriptions and depends on lengthy periods of immersion

(Merriam, 2009). In contrast, I used a basic qualitative design because meaning is

constructed from participants' interpretations of their world. Therefore, the information for this study came from participants' perceptions, which makes basic qualitative design more advantageous for developing a detailed description of the phenomenon. Most importantly, a basic qualitative design is considered the most common approach throughout the disciplines of education, which may enhance this study's sufficiency.

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher, I am the primary instrument for the study. My role was as an observer–participant. Merriam (2009) stated that an observer–participant has access to various participants and a range of information. Therefore, I was responsible for collecting, analyzing, and coding the data for this study. I analyzed the data by identifying themes and patterns to effectively construct the meaning of the phenomenon. I was also responsible for developing a questionnaire and interviewing the participants.

I am a first-year employee for the high school site, where I am an English language development teacher. I do not work in a supervisory capacity. Prior to being hired as a full-time English language development teacher, I substituted for many schools within the district. In my role as a substitute teacher, I taught various subjects in Grades 9 to 12, which afforded me the opportunity to meet and engage with many teachers.

In this study, I interviewed teachers from ninth to 12th grade from various classes. I used an open-ended, semistructured interview protocol to gather data from the participants. Moreover, I understood how my experiences could influence this study because I may have had some preconceived perceptions concerning the participants or the site.

I ensured that participants understood that participation in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw from the study at any time. I used peer review to ensure the information was presented objectively and to improve the validity and reliability of the study. I also used a professor at a local university and a Walden University colleague, both knowledgeable with research procedures, to perform the peer review. These measures were necessary to guard against potential biases.

Methodology

Participant Selection

Participants for this study consisted of teachers from two different high schools in the same district. Both schools have indicated problems with disruptive student behavior. I chose purposeful sampling because this method allowed me to unearth the intricate issues from the participants' perspectives. Lodico et al. (2010) explained that the goal of purposeful sampling is to gather the richest information from places, persons, and things to help answer the research questions.

Participants were selected based on meeting the following criteria: Participants were full-time teachers with 1 year of teaching experience, taught in ninth to 11th grade, and represented one of the core courses (i.e., English, math, or history). I requested the principals provide a list of participants who met the criteria for participation. Both schools' student demographics were over 90% Hispanic.

I selected nine teachers to collect data from to understand the disruptive behavior problem comprehensively. School 1 had a population of 103 teachers. School 1 provided a list of 34 teachers who met the criteria. I sent letters of invitation to the 34 teachers, and

four teachers volunteered to participate in the study. School 2 had a population of 111

teachers. I invited eight teachers from the school directory who met the criteria, five of

whom volunteered to participate.

I requested a letter of cooperation from both principals that outlined the details

and the criteria for teacher inclusions. I also requested the principals send email addresses

of those teachers who met the criteria. Once I obtained permission, I invited teachers via

email, using the addresses provided by the principal of School 1 and the school directory

of School 2, to participate in the interviews.

Nine teachers were interviewed, and I reached data saturation. Fusch and Ness

(2015) and Young and Casey (2019) agreed that saturation can be met with a sample as

small as six. Data saturation was reached in this study after interviews were conducted

with nine participants.

Instrumentation

I functioned as the primary data collector and gathered descriptive-rich details via

interviews. I gathered qualitative data using semistructured interviews. The interview

protocol I used is provided in Appendix A. A qualitative interview is a conversation for

obtaining data on research questions (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007; Creswell, 2009; Lodico et

al., 2010; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). The semistructured protocol provided the

participants with an opportunity to illuminate an ongoing problem and provide a more

precise depiction of the problem.

For the procedure of validation of the interview protocol, two members of my

dissertation committee who are knowledgeable about the methodology served as an

expert panel and reviewed the interview protocol. The panel members ensured the interview protocol was in alignment with the central questions and checked for any inconsistencies. Merriam (2009) and Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated that peer-reviewing will enhance accuracy by providing alternate views.

Most interviews in a qualitative study are semistructured. An interview protocol is a list of prewritten questions that can be beneficial for keeping a list of specific questions that may need to be asked of every participant. Merriam (2009) stated that working from an interview protocol will allow a new researcher to obtain experience and confidence and enhance their ability to move on to open-ended questioning.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

I followed specific protocols for recruitment and participation. I requested a letter of cooperation from the school district and the principals to recruit a potential pool of participants by purposeful sampling. Then, I sought approval from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to conduct the study. I was granted IRB approval to conduct the study (#12-01-21-0512611). Once the IRB reviewed the study and granted permission, I sent the teachers who met the criteria an email invitation to participate in the study. The email included informed consent information. The informed consent form specified the risks and procedures involved in the study, that participation was voluntary; and that participants have a right to withdraw at any time.

Once I had collected informed consent, I began my data collection by scheduling the interviews using Zoom video conferencing. I used a semistructured interview protocol (Appendix A) to conduct the interviews. The interviews lasted approximately 45 minutes.

At the end of each interview, I thanked the interviewees for their participation. Each interview information obtained was transcribed immediately. I informed the participants that debriefing was used to re-examine the transcript for assumptions and to consider alternative ways of viewing the study.

Data Analysis Plan

Qualitative research analysis is inductive and comparative, composed of consolidating, reducing the data, and then making interpretations (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Therefore, I used *axial analysis*, a process used to identify and link data to reveal categories and themes (see Saldana, 2016). The first step is to develop a space that allows complete privacy. Next, I used open coding, which consists of assigning descriptions to each piece of data. Then I read and transcribed one document at a time into readable documentation, making sure to develop codes that align with each small piece of data.

I also analyzed the raw data for discrepant data. Merriam (2009) referred to discrepant data as emerging findings that may challenge current assumptions and enhance a study's confidence. Looking for data that are contrary not only adds variation to the study, but also is an indication of a researcher's integrity. Once I had completed the coding process, I began step two, which consisted of sorting the coded data into categories or themes. I placed each piece of coded data into a file folder with designated color-coded themes. Themes are important because they emerge from analyzing small bits or units of data that have meaning and are considered potential answers to the research questions (Merriam, 2009). The data collecting and sorting are important

because the information was compiled for easier understanding and was the overall factor

in deriving meaning from the collected data (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

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

Credibility

An important aspect of credibility involves validity. Validity was developed from

participants' perspectives and the researcher's ability to accurately create a tangible

rendition of the participants' reality of the phenomenon being studied (see Creswell,

2009). Also, validity consists of making sure that the researcher's interpretation is aligned

with the perspective of the participants. Therefore, I chose strategies that would be most

effective in strengthening the study's credibility.

The strategies that Creswell (2009) recommended for improving the study's

credibility are member checking and reflexivity. I used member checking to review the

overall findings. I emailed the participants a summary of the findings. Participants had

one week to review and provide feedback. Then I met with three participants for 10–20

minutes via Zoom to check the accuracy of the findings. I also used *reflexivity* because as

the researcher, I understood that there was the potential for researchers' bias. I disclosed

any bias or assumptions to prevent the possibility of influencing the research. I kept a

journal of beliefs and thoughts to engage in reflexivity. Reflexivity was important for

strengthening the integrity of the study (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Transferability

Transferability consists of the similarities between the focus site, and other sites

as deemed by the reader and transferability is dependent upon the study being thoroughly

detailed and extremely descriptive (Lodico et al., 2010). Therefore, when these elements exist, the reader is then able to make a comparison between sites. Therefore, I presented a highly detailed description of the participants and the site that the reader could examine for similarities.

For this study, I used the participants' descriptions to provide a detailed description for the purpose of enhancing transferability. I chose these techniques because Merriam (2009) suggested that a detailed description of the participants, setting, evidence of quotes, documents, and notes could be used to make a comparison between sites. Also, these details are important for enhancing the possibility of transferability. Transferability is possible if the reader determines that the information provided aligns with other sites, and secondly, the readers was provided with enough details to determine or judge how the characteristics of the researcher's site align with the reader's site (Lodico et al., 2010).

Dependability

A study is considered dependable when the findings in a study are consistent with the data presented (Merriam, 2009). To achieve dependability, Lodico et al. (2010) stated that reseachers should track the procedures and the process used to collect the data; therefore, the researcher should provide a detailed description of the procedures of the data collection and analysis. I provided a clear depiction of data collection process and the step-by-step methods I used for analysis. I also used a journal to detail the steps of my study. By doing so, the dependability and trustworthiness of the study were strengthened.

Confirmability

Confirmability is a term that is synonymous with the word objectivity and is considered an integral aspect of trustworthiness (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). I used the strategy of reflexivity to maintain the objectivity of the study by explaining how I interpreted the data. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) explained that reflexivity is used to clarify the researcher's biases, dispositions, and assumptions because the researcher is considered a human instrument. Therefore, to obtain reflexivity, I kept a detailed journal to reflect on my biases and views to maintain a clear perspective of the study and to ensure that the narrative is a clear depiction that evolved from the participants' statements.

Ethical Procedures

I gave specific attention to ethical procedures for the purpose of trustworthiness because ethical procedures are achieved when close consideration is given to the method and process that a researcher takes to ensure that safeguards are in place, so the rights of the participants are protected (see Lodico et al., 2010). For this purpose, I obtained approval by providing the IRB with the relevant details of the ethical considerations that took place. I also provided the IRB with letters of cooperation for the research sites.

I provided the participants with informed consent that outlines the description of the study; the risk involved, the voluntary nature of the study, and that participants have the right to withdraw at any time, as suggested by Lodico et al. (2010). I kept the names of the participants confidential to protect their identities, and I will store all collected data for five years, such as notes, transcripts, and video recordings, in a secure place.

Summary

This chapter provided a description of the methodology I used to conduct the study. I developed research questions to guide the study and to examine teachers' perspective and experiences with interventions used to reduce disruptive behavior in the classroom. The questions were used to examine teachers' challenging with using current interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom. The methodology I chose was a basic qualitative study. I discussed my role as an observer-participant, and the participants who were chosen by way of purposeful sampling method. Also, I discussed the data collecting instrument, the data collection plan, the data analysis plan, and a description of various aspects I used to enhance the trustworthiness of the study.

In Chapter 4, I provide information on the results of the study. The analysis consists of the coding process and categorizing the responses into emerging themes. Next, I discuss the results, which include each research question and the supporting data. I end the section with the trustworthiness and the implementation of transferability, dependability, and confirmability.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this basic qualitative design was to examine high school teachers'

challenges with using current interventions and their perceptions on how to improve them

to better reduce disruptive student behaviors in the classroom. The collected data may

provide insight into the problem and help gain a deeper understanding of disruptive

behavior occurrences. Teachers may benefit and understand how to manage disruptive

behaviors and implement interventions, so the classroom climate is not impeded. The

central research questions that guided this study were:

RQ1: How do teachers describe the experiences they have using interventions to

reduce students' disruptive behavior?

RQ2: What are teachers' perceptions as to what can be done to improve the

interventions that are currently in use?

The chapter begins with an overview of the research design and the research

findings. First, the setting outlines organizational conditions that may have had an

influence on participants' experiences. I collected data for this study through

semistructured interviews using Zoom video conferencing method. Data were collected

to examine high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their

perceptions on how to improve them to better reduce disruptive student behaviors in the

classroom. Also, I discuss how the data were collected and recorded. The data analysis

process of analyzing the data, the results, and the evidence of trustworthiness are

addressed. The chapter ends with a summary.

Setting

I interviewed nine participants from two different high schools within the same district. The interviews were conducted from my home. I forwarded invitations to each participant by providing a Zoom conferencing link. The participants accessed the Zoom conference from their home by logging into the session using the link provided. The two schools under study are located in California. Both schools have a large Hispanic student population and are located in urban areas. The demographics of School 1 consist of 89.4% Hispanic and 10.66% various other ethnic groups. In School 2, demographics are 95.4% Hispanic and 3.4% other ethnic groups. There were no personal or organizational conditions I was aware of that may have influenced or affected interpretation of the study.

Demographics

The participants were a compilation of nine teachers representing two high schools within the same district. Four of the teachers worked at School 1, and five participants teach at School 2. Data from all teachers were combined to provide a comprehensive understanding of disruptive behavior from different perspectives. The ages of the participants ranged from 25–50. There were seven female participants and two male participants. All participants had worked in the district for at least 1 year. As the demographic data show, the range of teaching experience was 2 to 15 years, which suggests participants had sufficient knowledge concerning the problem to answer the research questions. Table 1 shows participants' identification numbers to preserve confidentiality and their ethnicity, gender, and years of teaching.

Table 1

Participants' Demographics

Participant	Ethnicity	Gender	Years teaching
1	White	Female	7
2	White	Female	5
3	Hispanic	Female	15
4	Black	Male	2
5	Hispanic	Female	3
6	White	Female	7
7	White	Female	7
8	Asian	Male	7
9	White	Female	9

Data Collection

For this basic qualitative study, I used a semistructured interview protocol (see Appendix A) to collect data from nine participants to gain an understanding of how they perceive the phenomenon of disruptive student behavior and implementation of available interventions. From my home, I used the Zoom conferencing application to record the interviews and I used a backup handheld recorder. Participants accessed the Zoom conferencing from their homes. The interviews took place over a period of 6 weeks, and each interview ranged from 35 to 80 minutes. I saved the data in a secure file. There were no unusual circumstances encountered while collecting data. At the end of each interview, I thanked the participants and informed them that a 20-minute follow-up interview may be necessary to clarify data.

Data Analysis

I conducted data analysis by following Merriam's (2009) step-by-step approach to make sense of the collected data. I used the Microsoft translation tool to create readable

transcripts. I began the analysis by reading each transcript line by line and checking against the audio to clear up any inconsistencies. I uploaded each interview to the qualitative software Quirkos to organize and manage the data.

I began by closely reading the data using an iterative process. The process of open coding was used by making notations to relevant bits of information (Merriam, 2009). I initially found 60 codes. Then I used axial coding, which is a process used to group similar codes to produce more efficient codes (see Saldana, 2016). After using axial coding, the list was reduced to 37 codes. Table 2 provides an overview of the codes and the categories that developed.

Table 2

Codes Developed Into Categories

A priori and open codes	Categories
Defiance and disrespectful	Types of interactions or interventions that
Disruptive behaviors	are being used to reduce disruptive
Difficulty aligning interventions	behavior
Emotional problems	
Implementation of interventions	
Loss instruction time	
More professional development	
Repetitive	
Teacher training	
Time consuming	
Administrator support	Disruptive behaviors that interfere with
Activities	the classroom climate.
Building relationships	
Changing seats	
Counseling	
Eye contact	
Extrinsic motivation	
Parent involvement	
Partnerships	
Private discussion	
Proximity	
Positive behavior intervention and support	
Send to another class	
Send outside	
Send to dean	
Change teaching style	Learning how to respectfully respond to
Extrinsic motivations	students that display disruptive behavior.
Grading	
Incentives	
Needs fulfillment	
Teachers 'patience	
Teach building relationships	
Engagement tolls	Sufficient lesson planning may produce
Learning games	positive outcomes.
Lesson planning	
Positive modifications	
Resources	

I analyzed the data to find emerging categories and themes, which are shown in

Table 3. Four themes emerged from the data in conjunction with the research questions.

Table 4 provides the themes that emerged. Finally, I analyzed the transcript for discrepant

data to find nuances of information that could provide an alternate consideration. There

were no discrepant data found.

Table 3

Categories and Themes

Categories	Themes
Types of interactions or interventions that are being used to reduce disruptive behaviors.	Teachers believe that the challenges of disruptive behaviors have negative effects on the classroom climate and reduces opportunities for student learning when sufficient interventions are not in place nor implemented sufficiently.
Disruptive behaviors that interfere with the classroom climate.	Teachers use a variety of intervention strategies to reduce the challenges of disruptive behavior in the classroom but are finding that many of the interventions are ineffective.
Learning how to respectfully respond to students that display disruptive behavior.	Teachers perceive that training and professional development on implementation of interventions has been minimal and that more training is needed to improve teachers' skills and knowledge.
Sufficient lesson planning may produce positive outcomes.	Teachers believe that implementation of good engagement strategies will improve the efficacy of interventions when they work in conjunction.

Table 4

Themes and Research Questions

Themes	Research questions
Teachers believe that the challenges of disruptive behaviors have negative effects on the classroom climate and reduces opportunities for student learning when sufficient interventions are not in place nor implemented sufficiently.	RQ1: How do teachers describe the challenges they have using interventions to reduce students' disruptive behavior.
Teachers use a variety of intervention strategies to reduce the challenges of disruptive behavior in the classroom but are finding that many of the interventions are ineffective.	
Teacher perceives that training and professional development on implementation of interventions has been minimal and that more training is needed to improve teachers' skills and knowledge.	RQ2: What are teachers' perspectives as to what can be done to improve the interventions that are currently in use.
Teachers believe that implementation of good engagement strategies will improve the efficacy of interventions when they work in conjunction.	

Results

In this section, I describe the findings of the study in relation to the research

questions based on the data collected and analyzed. The semistructured interviews were

designed to elicit the most relevant information to be used to inductively build and

understand the reality from the participants' perspectives. Four themes emerged in

relation to the two research questions: two themes for RQ1 and two for RQ2.

Research Question 1

RQ1 was focused on determining how teachers describe their experiences using interventions to reduce disruptive student behavior. Participants' responses were integral to the development of the two themes that emerged: (a) teachers believe the challenges of disruptive behavior have negative effects on the classroom climate and reduce opportunities for student learning when sufficient interventions are not in place or not implemented sufficiently, and (b) teachers use a variety of interventions strategies to reduce the challenges of disruptive behavior in the classroom but find that many interventions are not effective.

Theme 1: Teachers Believe the Challenges of Disruptive Behavior Have Negative Effects on the Classroom Climate and Reduce Opportunities for Student Learning When Interventions Are Not in Place or Not Implemented Sufficiently

Theme 1 established teachers' perspectives concerning the challenges of disruptive student behavior and addresses the intricacies of interventions used to solve behavioral challenges. Teachers begin the school year by establishing classroom rules and procedures that explain expectations. As a reminder for students, participants indicated that rules and procedures are posted on classroom walls to maintain an effective classroom atmosphere. However, teachers found their attempts to maintain and keep an orderly classroom were still challenged due to behavioral problems and teachers' lack of knowledge pertaining to interventions. All participants described various challenges that were not conducive for an effective learning environment. Participant 2 recalled a situation that severely interrupted the learning environment:

I had a student who was not my student that just walked into my classroom. I had

called the security on him before. He is not going to do any major things, but it is

just annoying and to me my number one thing that really upsets me is to have me

stop doing what I am doing. Like interrupt my lesson flow. If you interrupt me, I

cannot complete my objective. That is what really gets me upset. So, that kid has

a friend in my class. I just said, "You need to go to class. I need you to leave right

this minute. You need to go." So, I had to lock my door. The problem was the

friend was in the back and was letting him in.

Participant 5 discussed a disruptive situation that had a major impact on the

classroom:

A couple of students got in a physical fight inside the classroom. I had no idea

what was going on. My back was turned, and out of nowhere, I just heard

shouting. The only thing I could do was call security and have the students taken

out of my class.

Many participants commented that one of the most challenging behavioral

problems is students' constant use of cell phones. Most of the participants agreed that cell

phone usage is the most challenging behavioral problem in the classroom at the high

school level. Participant 5 stated, "The most common behavior that I have in my classes,

are students being on their phone." Participant 6 stated:

My big pet peeve are those cell phones. I just cannot—but there's this thing called

pick your battles, so you got to learn which one you can win, and the cell phone is

not a winner because every day no matter how many times you tell them, they still

have a cell phone issue.

Teachers discussed that phone usage may have a place in the classroom if the

students used the phones as specified by the teacher and in accordance with the time

allowances that has been set. Participant 8 stated, "Cell phone usage in the classroom

should be limited because it does create a disruption, not only disruption but distraction,

in the learning environment." Still others were totally averse to the use of cell phone

usage and believed that phones do not have a place in the classroom. Participant 1

strongly expressed that students' usage of phones in the classroom were a big problem,

and they had become a bigger problem since COVID. Participant 1 declared, "I don't

want to see the phones out. I don't want to see students on the phones because again, my

main thing is that it is distracting them from doing what they need to be doing."

Most participants considered cell phone usage by high school students was a

constant and major behavioral problem in both schools. Teachers in the study referred to

the fact that there was not a standard rule nor policy for students' use of the cell phone

during class. Teachers have the discretion to decide what works for their class. The

teachers perceived the lack of a schoolwide policy or consistency from class to class gave

rise to student dissention.

Another behavioral problem was students' defiance. Participants viewed students'

defiance as behaviors that directly oppose and negate teachers' instructions, such as

verbal disrespect towards the teacher, reluctance to comply with teachers' directions, and

unwillingness to adhere to the authority of teachers. Participant 2 asserted that some

students absolutely refused to follow instructions. Also, they would openly refuse to comply in front of the entire class. They would make statements such as: "I am not going to be doing this. You're not going to make me. I'm going to fail this class and I don't care."

Many of the participants concluded that some students displayed defiant attitudes and seemed not to care about consequences, outcome, or how their behavior affected the classroom climate. Participant 6 stated that there are students who are so defiant that they make broad statements like "I'm just not going to do it by totally refusing to follow instructions." Participant 6 believed that when students act in this way, they have a defiant and unwavering disposition and stated, "Your heads are butting, and it is like a battle of wills. They are going to win every time because they are teenagers." Participant 6 referred to a different approach concerning defiant behavior: "For me…I can just defuse or find a middle ground." The participants concluded that finding the most effective way to solve their classroom situations is most important.

Participant 1 described a much stronger approach when students are defiant and recalled a conversation with a student. "You have two options you can give me your phone, or you can go to the dean's office." The student continued to be defiant by saying, "I'll take a referral." Participant 1 stated "So, at that point you're being defiant, and you know 'overt defiance' that gets a referral in my class. That's not tolerated."

There were other behaviors that were mentioned by the participants and fall under the defiance were walk outs, confrontational attitude, and disrespectful language. Participants believe that these behaviors placed hardship on the classroom climate

because the teacher has to use valuable instructional time attending to students that are not in compliance with the rules set for behavior.

Another concern emerged as to whether teachers had intervention strategies available to support the needs of the students when disruptive situation emerged. Participants said they used several techniques that could be considered as interventions to contain the students and to keep the classroom in a sufficient operating status. Participants expressed that they were not entirely sure as to what was considered interventions. Participant 8 noted:

> I think this is where teaching or classroom management becomes more of an art rather than a science. I think from a teacher's perspective, I think more training on some of these interventions and real-life examples of how these interventions can be applied in a real-life classroom. I think for the most part we think of it and operate in the abstract when it comes to interventions.

Participant 3 expressed a similar response by conveying: "I do not think I am generally aware of the interventions that I use." Whether interventions are considered as interchangeable with discipline, most of the participants described the steps that were used when there is a problem with disruptive behavior. Participant 1 asserted:

> The first round of defense is to build a relationship with students. If the behavior continues with the disruptions, I have a five-step program or five step discipline method in my classroom. So, the first one I just give a warning, the next one I place your name on the board, which is again like, hey! knock it off. The next one they get a check mark and then they have to move seats.

Participant 4 described a similar process for students that displayed defiant behavior:

> The first one is going to be seating arrangements. So that I would say definitely moving their seats away from distractions. Whether that be friends or sometimes the window is often the distraction for kids, but besides that, definitely seating arrangement, moving them closer to me.

Participant 9 mentioned, "I do try to do a lot of positive praise." Whereby, Participant 8 shared, "I try to be consistent with all rules." However, Participant 6 had a different experience and believed that this simple technique could be considered as an intervention. The students asked the participant why teach at their school. The participant said that she would tell them that, "I like you guys." The intervention may be akin to building relationships.

Many of the participants described the sufficiency and or usefulness of the interventions that were being used in their particular classroom as unsure. Participant 3 stated:

> I do not think it is always the result of the intervention, but maybe from the student and the teacher…gaining a little more understanding of whatever is going on. Nevertheless, I do not think I am generally aware of the interventions that I use.

Some teachers become frustrated with the situation. Participant 2 contended, "Sometimes I have to bite that bullet. I tried everything I could and there is nothing else I can do about that. I feel like it is important to definitely have those interventions in your back pocket."

When asked about the sufficiency of interventions, Participant 6 expressed, "Interventions have been sufficiently implemented when the behavior has stopped, and peace has been restored."

Theme 2: Teachers Use a Variety of Intervention Strategies to Reduce the Challenges of Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom but Many Interventions Are Ineffective

Theme 2 was related to the use and effectiveness of interventions and whether interventions were being used sufficiently. There were several intervention strategies mentioned that teachers used daily for minor interruptions to help manage the classroom: (a) building relationships, (b) proximity, and (c) seat changes. However, determining whether the interventions were sufficiently used and effective depended entirely on the user's perspective.

There was a collective consensus amongst the participants concerning *building relationships.* They described building relationships as the most effective foundational approach for class management. Participant 6 and 4 believed that building relationships provided the teacher with an opportunity to interact with students. Students could then appraise the teacher from a more personal perspective which may make a difference in students' behavior. Participant 6 stated:

The intervention I use the most is simple relationship building. That is what I have found works. Pretty much 10 out of 10 times. Every once in a while, I'll get a student who is resistant even to that, but I have found that if you can build a relationship with students, they will pretty much do anything for you.

Similarly, Participant 4 commented:

One thing that I try to do at the beginning of the year is really try to build

relationships with them. So, I try to be on the proactive side…I'm having them fill

stuff out about themselves. They're doing PowerPoints about themselves. We're

doing all this kind of stuff and really trying to buildup relationship. I have found

that if you can do that, it just works.

Other participants mentioned building relationships but described a combination

of interventions were needed to sufficiently reduce the behavior: Participant 4 stated,

"Moving them closer to the teacher is the way to go. You want to build…It's going to

spur relationships." Whereas Participant 8 talked about using humor as an important

aspect for management and also stated, "Establishing relationship with student by

greeting them at the door."

Proximity seemed to be another intervention that participants used to reduce

disruptive behaviors. Still, this intervention may not be sufficient to maintain order in the

classroom but may be considered as more of a preventative measure. Participant 2 stated:

Some of the most common methods that I use is perimeter. Like just kind of

standing around them so that they notice. Like, hey, you're not doing something

right but I'm but not quite ready to give you a warning, yet. Giving small like

quiet warnings. Giving a little bit louder warning…those are probably the biggest

ones that I use.

Participant 6 also stated that proximity was an intervention that was used most

often: "I use a lot of like physical proximity. Like, I'm hardly ever at my desk. I'm

walking around constantly…I'm here, I'm listening, and that I'm pretty much just always

there." Participant 7 regarded the use of proximity as an essential intervention: "I think proximity is a big factor, and I've gone on trainings where that was one of the things was proximity and I used that, and it worked. I'm a big advocate." However, Participant 3 referred to proximity as an intervention that works but concluded that there may be consequences that could be considered ineffective.

> What works for me? I feel what works very well is proximity to the students. Not saying anything but getting kind of close to see that they are on task and not being confrontational. Like if, if I see that they are-that they're having their cell phone out, I may just point at the cell phone and say very quietly, put it away please and many times, I have, you know, a good response. But other times the students do get a little like angry.

Teachers use proximity to deter or stop potential disruptive behavior before the behavior can grow to create a bigger problem, However, teachers still may run the risk of aggravating students with the use of proximity. When proximity doesn't work, teachers may use seat changes as a remedy

Seat change emerged as an intervention used mainly after the interventions mentioned above had been attempted. Although seat changes could positively affect the classroom, seating arrangements and seat changes could also cause more disruption. Participant 4 asserted, "The whole class can get affected by one kid's seating arrangement." Progressive interventions are used to settle the students' behavior and keep the class functioning so as to not lose an extended amount of instructional time.

Participant 6 described students that used disruptive behavior as a reason to get their seat changed:

> High school kids are funny because when they get put in situations where they don't feel comfortable, they act out even more… I had just recently changed my seating chart because these kids were wild…they were too close to their friends. They weren't on task all the time, and this caused a huge issue.

> Hence, proper attention needs to be given to seating arrangements from the start. Teachers constantly make changes to seating to diminish disruptive behavior because many times students are sitting next to a friend. Participant 1 described the process that is taken when students are off task:

> I have five steps…the first one you just get a warning: the next one you get your name on the board which is again like hey, knock it off. The next one they get a check mark and then that one they have to move seats…moving seats away from their friends or whatever, but if it continues after that then the next one is to send them out of the room, you know, 15–20 minutes.

> Teachers use many forms of interventions to maintain order in the classroom. However, they found that many of the interventions have been ineffective. Therefore, teachers believe that when interventions are not working or effectively supporting the behavior in question, the class may not function in a way that is advantageous for student learning.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 addresses teachers' perceptions as to what can be done to improve the interventions that are currently in use. There were two themes that emerged from the interviews: (a) teachers perceive that training and professional development on implementation of interventions has been minimal and more training is needed to improve teachers' skills and knowledge, and (b) teachers believe that implementation of good engagement strategies will improve the efficacy of interventions when they work in conjunction.

Theme 3: Teacher Perceive That Training and Professional Development on Implementation of Interventions Has Been Minimal and More Training Is Needed to Improve Teachers' Skills and Knowledge

The theme delineated the importance of training and professional development for teachers for the effective management of student behavior. The participants reported that the district provided training and professional development; however, when asked about their knowledge regarding interventions, most participants' answers were ambiguous and indistinct. Participant 5 stated, "I feel like someone needs to go over it with me, yeah, at least and that way I could also ask questions and kind of get to know it a lot more." Participant 9 said, "I don't know that I've had a lot of professional training or professional development on intervention." Furthermore, the participants' believed they did not have the skills, knowledge, or experience in using interventions as specified. Participant 8 expressed:

I don't think I have-I don't think I've had any formal training on that. I think one

of my areas where I need most improvement in terms of classroom management

and behavior is being familiar with the three tiers of intervention.

When asked about positive behavior intervention and support (PBIS), which is a

universal method used for schoolwide support using 3 tiers, many of the participants were

familiar with the concept but had little to no working knowledge of the process. For

instance, Tier 2 interventions are used when students that need additional support because

not all students benefitted from Tier 1. Participant 3 pondered on the question of whether

the training or PD conveyed specific instructions for aligning interventions to a particular

problem. Participant 3 commented, "I would love to have that kind of training, but I don't

think that I have never received specific training to deal with a specific behavior."

Participants 6 and 9 had similar responses concerning types of intervention, but

Participant 6 did express familiarity with the tiered interventions. Participant 6 stated:

As far as trainings…I don't necessarily know that I've gone through any trainings

for the tiered. I mean, so, I'm part of our Tier1 intervention like team up and so

we help like come up with things and stuff like that but as far as like formal

training, I wouldn't say that I haven't received any. Well, but just by watching,

like coworkers."

Participant 9 expressed, "I don't know that I've had a lot of professional training

or professional development on interventions. Maybe, actually, probably during the

credential program… I had classes that talked about like making your behavior

management plan."

In contrast, Participant 2 had a more successful experience with training for interventions:

Well, the district hosts a lot of different trainings throughout the year. I remember during my first year of teaching, I like during my first like 3 months. I think-I went to eight different trainings. I've also-I've also been a part of our school's Tier 1 team where we specifically talk about interventions that can be done during the classroom and we really brainstorm as a group about what we can put out to teachers. Not necessarily as a training but just giving them like a sheet like here is minor behaviors. Here's major behaviors. Here's what you should generally do for these, and here's what you should generally do for these.

The theme addressed the type of training and PD teachers received regarding use of interventions. Most teachers referred to the fact that training was minimal, and they believed that they had not been sufficiently trained to meet students' needs. The sufficiency of formal intervention training could not be fully discussed because most participants were unaware of specific interventions such as PBIS. However, participants mentioned some examples of techniques used to deter disruptive behavior such as one-on-one conversations, group circles, and getting parents and counselors involved.

Theme 4: Teachers Believe That Implementation of Good Engagement Strategies Will Improve the Efficacy of Interventions When They Work in Conjunction

Theme 4 addressed the practices of engagement strategies and whether engagement works in conjunction with interventions. Most participants believed intervention and engagement strategies are vital concepts necessary for effective

classroom management. Teachers are often reminded that classroom management begins with a good lesson plan. Most teachers built their lesson plans with engagement in mind because students needed to be constantly stimulated to keep their focus. When asked about engagement as a strategy to reduce disruptive behavior, some participants expressed they found that engaging students is more difficult now due to the inception of COVID.

At the time of the interviews, schools have reopened post-COVID, and students had returned to school. Participants commented that students were having a hard time getting accustomed to being back in school. Students came to school extremely late. They did not participate in class activities. They did not do the classwork, and they used their cell phones the entire period. Participant 2 explained, "I could do everything in my power to try and make something fun and interesting. And no matter what I do, there are just some kids that just will not engage." A few of the participants commented that when students cannot be contained, they may need support in the form of an intervention that is tailored to their specific needs. Also, Participant 5 stated, "So, engagement has been a tough one since the…well actually since last year with all the COVID stuff going on and then coming back to in-person class-classrooms. I feel like it's a lot more tough." During COVID, teachers had to use alternative measures to find ways to engage students, which proved to be difficult.

At the time of data collection, most schools were back in everyday operations. Therefore, participants could provide a more accurate response based on proximity to the student. Several participants seemed enthusiastic when they discussed engagement

strategies, and this may be because they may be more familiar, experienced, and knowledgeable about the practices, unlike the formal intervention. When asked about engagement as being essential for behavior management, Participant 1 provided an in-dept response and covered various points concerning engagement:

All of our first years of teaching is horrible. Yeah, because a lot of it is-we don't know how to-how to plan lessons well, and how to time things well. And when students are bored, they're going to act up, you know. So, a 100 percent engagement is huge and that's what-that's more of that proactive side of it. If you can keep them engaged…, you're going to have so much less, you know, less disciplined type stuff because they want to be in your class. They want to come to do what-whatever you're doing in the class. So, last year with distance learning…there was just zero engagement and obviously there wasn't disciplined stuff then. But every day for engagement we would play Kahoot every single day, and some of the times it was educational, but it was just to get them to play something and compete and so I could not believe how much more engaged they were on zoom.

Similarly, Participant 4 stated,

It really comes down to engagement. How engaging are your lessons? Do you have a Kahoot…are you allowing them to be creative? Are you asking them to be creative or are you asking them to take ownership of a-of a project and present it, you know…I would say it-that it really comes down to that?

The theme also referred to interventions working in conjunction with engagement. A few participants believed that engagement is a form of intervention because they both are used as strategies to diminish disruptive behavior. Participant 8 had an interesting perception concerning the connection between engagement and interventions:

There are two sides of the same coin. You can't have one without the other. I think if you…can't have one without the other. I mean, if you-if you take a look at the student, the student's brain is developing. It's not fully developed at that particular learner point. Particularly you know the adolescent learner and when the adolescent is stress, he or she will do one of two things. They will either shut down or act outright, and if your lesson is way too complicated and not engaging, then you're going…to have disruption, but if your lesson is engaging and it is cognitively appropriate for that adolescent learner, then disruption is minimized, or it's limited to an extent. So, I would say that-I would say that-those two concepts are two sides. At the same point, you can't have one without the other.

Participant 9 clearly believed that engagement is definitely needed to maintain an effective classroom. Participant 9 stated:

I wouldn't say that they are the same necessarily, but engagement does definitely help with behavior management in the classroom. I mean if I can make a lesson more engaging, I'm going to have less students off task. They want to be there. They want to participate. If I can hook them in the lesson, it helps. Sometimes not always possible to make everything exciting, but I try to integrate technology and different things that can maybe increase engagement.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility

The credibility of the study involves validity. Validity was developed from participants' perspectives and the researcher's ability to accurately create a valid rendition of the participants' reality of the phenomenon being studied (Creswell, 2009). Also, validity consisted of making sure that the researcher's interpretation was aligned with the perspective of the participants. Therefore, I chose strategies that would be most effective in strengthening the study's credibility.

The strategies that Creswell (2009) recommended for improving the study's credibility are member checking and reflexivity. I used member checking to review the overall findings. Also, validity ensures that the researcher's interpretation aligns with the participants' perspectives. I emailed a summary of my findings to all the participants. I informed the participants that they would have one week to review the results and verify the accuracy of the findings. Three participants agreed to participate in the member-checking process. I met with three participants for 10–20 minutes by Zoom to discuss the findings. The interviews were transcribed and analyzed to assess similarities or differences. Participants agreed the four themes sufficiently identified the key issues. All three participants agreed disruptive behavior does negatively affect the classroom environment. One of the key points discussed was, building relationships. The participants believed that building relationships are probably the most crucial aspect of reducing disruptive behavior in the classroom. Also, the participants reflected on professional development. Participants believed that professional development is needed

regularly to enhance teachers' skills and knowledge. Another similarity corresponded to engagement. The participants believed that engagement was a necessary component of good classroom behavior. One participant considered engagement a preventative intervention because disruptive behaviors are reduced when there is a good engagement plan. The findings were consistent with the participants' perspectives.

I also used *reflexivity* because, as the researcher, I understood the potential for researchers' bias. I disclosed any bias or assumptions to prevent the possibility of influencing the research. I kept a journal of beliefs and thoughts to engage in reflexivity. Reflexivity was essential for strengthening the integrity of the study (see Merriam & Tisdell, 2016).

Transferability

Transferability consists of the similarities between the focus site, and other sites as deemed by the reader. Also, transferability is dependent upon the study being thoroughly detailed and extremely descriptive (Lodico et al., 2010). Therefore, when these elements exist, the reader is then able to make a comparison between sites. Therefore, I presented a highly detailed description of the participants and the sites so that the reader could examine them for similarities.

For this study, I used the participants' descriptions to provide a detailed description to enhance transferability. I chose the techniques because Merriam (2009) suggested that a detailed description of the participants, setting, evidence of quotes, and notes could be used to make a comparison between sites. Also, these details are important for enhancing the possibility of transferability. Transferability is possible if the reader

determined that the information provided aligned with other sites and, secondly, the study

provided the readers with enough details to determine or judge how the characteristics of

the researcher's sites aligns with the reader's site (Lodico et al., 2010).

Dependability

A study is considered dependable when the findings in a study are consistent with

the data presented (Merriam, 2009). To achieve dependability, Creswell (2009) and

Merriam (2009) suggested an audit trail should be used to ensure that the reader has

enough information to assess the accuracy of the study and authenticate the findings. By

doing so, the dependability and trustworthiness of the study was strengthened. Audit trail

was used and a journal to detail the steps of my study. For example, I outlined the steps

of the methodology that I used and the process I used to solicit participants for the

interviews. I believe that these strategies helped to strengthen the dependability of the

study.

Confirmability

Confirmability is a term that is synonymous with the word objectivity (Merriam

& Tisdell, 2016) and is considered an integral aspect of trustworthiness. I used the

strategy of reflexivity to maintain the objectivity of the study by explaining how I

interpreted the data because Merriam and Tisdell explained that reflexivity is used to

clarify the researcher's biases, dispositions, and assumptions because the researcher is

considered a human instrument. Therefore, in order to obtain reflexivity, I kept a journal

of my biases and views in order to maintain a clear perspective of the study and to ensure

that the narrative is a clear depiction that evolved from the participants' statements.

Summary

In Chapter 4, I presented the research findings from the collected data. I analyzed the data to obtain information related to the phenomenon of disruptive behavior and the implementation of interventions. Four themes emerged, two themes for each research question. These themes directly corresponded to the research questions and provided vital information which is presented in the study's findings. Table 4 represents the four themes that emerged related to the research questions.

The results indicated that the participants consistently used interventions to support challenging behaviors, such as building relationships, proximity, seat changes, and conversations to solve disruptive behavior problems. However, the participants also indicated that they had limited knowledge and or understanding concerning formal interventions (i.e., universal tiers for school-wide interventions) and how to use them sufficiently. Participants believed that training and PD are essential and should be implemented regularly. Participants also expressed their ideas concerning ways to improve disruptive behavior, such as engagement strategies. Chapter 5 addresses the findings, limitations, recommendations, and positive social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

In this basic qualitative designed study, I examined high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their perceptions of how to improve them to reduce disruptive student behaviors in the classroom. Data for this study were collected through interviews with participants from two different high schools in the same district, who could provide the most in-depth information. Merriam and Tisdell (2016) stated that a researcher is interested in the intricacy of a phenomenon and the meaning participants ascribe to their world. Most importantly, researchers can engage with participants, view their environments, and clarify any misinterpretations to obtain a detailed description. Collecting data from participants from two high schools within the same district increased the validity and credibility of the study.

I collected the data from nine participants through interviews conducted online via Zoom conferencing. The conceptual framework aligned with the findings and provided essential information related to disruptive behavior, interventions, and professional development. Also, the literature review was created from scholarly, peer-reviewed articles that provide relevant information to support the findings.

In this chapter, I address the findings that corresponded to the two guiding research questions:

RQ1: How do teachers describe the challenges they have using interventions to reduce students' disruptive behavior?

RQ2: What are teachers' perspectives as to what can be done to improve the interventions currently in use?

I also discuss, the study's limitations, recommendations for future research, and potential implications for positive social change. Lastly, I end the chapter with a conclusion.

Interpretation of the Findings

Several key findings emerged from the data obtained from participant interviews. The study's findings were achieved by coding the data and then analyzing the data to find emerging categories and themes. Canter's (1976) assertive discipline theory was used as a conceptual framework and reference for structured behavior strategies for positive classroom management. The findings directly relate to the four themes that developed from the data analysis to answer the research questions.

Research Question 1

Two themes emerged for each research question. The emergence of the two themes delineates the need for effective classroom management for assimilation of an effective learning environment. RQ1 addressed how teachers describe their experiences using interventions to reduce students' disruptive behavior. The first theme was the following: Teachers believed the challenges of disruptive behavior have negative effects on classroom climate and reduce opportunities for student learning when sufficient interventions are not in place or not implemented sufficiently.

The first key finding that emerged is that the challenge of disruptive behavior has an adverse effect on the classroom climate when interventions are not used sufficiently. Several researchers have reported that disruptive behavior is one of the most pervasive

issues affecting teaching (Atmojo, 2020; Narhi et al., 2017; Sezer, 2017). When the classroom is affected by disruptive behavior challenges, learning opportunities are reduced because teachers are spending time responding to students not in compliance with the rules and procedures of the classroom rather than teaching.

The participants in this study referred to behavior problems considered severe (i.e., physical fights, overt defiance, and blatant disrespect). These behaviors can affect student retention, which also decreases student learning opportunities. Students may be sent to other classrooms, suspended, and expelled, causing them to miss classroom instruction and learning opportunities. Schools should not continue to use removal for students needing additional support because preventive support is more beneficial (Horner & Macaya, 2018).

When student behavior interferes with teachers' instructional time, teachers must be able to intervene quickly and efficiently (Young & Martinez, 2016). Teachers may try various strategies and interventions to help negate the occurrence of undesirable behavior, but participants in this study indicated that most available interventions are ineffective. This finding aligns with Steinberg and Lacoe (2017), who reported that one third of secondary teachers nationally indicate that disruptive behaviors continue to occur in their classrooms regardless of the discipline measures or interventions implemented.

Most of the participants in the study indicated that managing students who display disruptive behavior is challenging because disruptive behaviors affect teachers' effectiveness, hamper teachers' competence, and affect teachers' psychological well-being (Liem & Chong, 2017). Farmer et al. (2019) determined that teachers are

responsible for managing the environment and keeping the classroom functioning efficiently, but researchers agree that management is the deliberate actions taken by teachers to maintain a suitable environment (Blake, 2017; Mkhasibe & Mncube, 2020). Effective outcomes are realized for student learning when the classroom climate is in order and free of disruption. Teachers can concentrate on instruction delivery, and students can better understand the lesson. For this reason, Canter (1976) asserted that teachers should have a systematic plan that outlines appropriate student behaviors and created a list of strategies and concepts (i.e., interventions) as a step-by-step guide for classroom management.

The findings indicate that disruptive student behavior alters the classroom environment. Teachers and students are exposed to an environment that is not conducive to learning, thereby hampering teachers' delivery of information, which impacts student outcomes. Maintaining an effective classroom climate is beneficial for student learning. Teachers' ability to manage the classroom is a significant contributor to student success.

The second theme that emerged in relation to RQ1 is the following: Teachers use a variety of intervention strategies to reduce the challenges of disruptive behavior in the classroom but find that many interventions are ineffective. The participants described several interventions that are beneficial for reducing disruptive behavior: (a) building relationships (getting to know the students); (b) proximity (moving closer to those students displaying negative behavior); and (c) seat changes (when students are not conforming to the rules).

Most participants in this study agreed that building relationships is the most effective intervention of the three interventions mentioned and concluded that when relationships have been established, students are more cooperative. Anyon et al. (2018) emphasized that when teachers build supportive relationships with students, teachers are essentially creating a positive school environment and reducing problem behaviors. Two more recent studies also align with my findings. Mosley et al. (2021) posited that academic and positive behavior outcomes are associated with building teacher–student relationships. Palmer and Noltemeyer (2019) explained that effective intervention strategies are mainly focused on a preventive and positive framework because these strategies support student needs and control the classroom atmosphere. In addition, Moreira et al. (2018) found that healthy psychological development is based on relatedness (warm interaction with others), which directly corresponds to having a positive teacher–student relationship.

In contrast, some participants in this study indicated that students are sent outside, to the dean, or to other classes as an intervention. These practices are often used but have not been established as practices that modify behavior. Collins et al. (2018) emphasized that 10%–20% of students are not reached using universal interventions, and those students will need targeted interventions to be successful. Often when students are sent out, they eventually return to the classroom and the adverse behavior starts over again. Many students may welcome being removed because they were bored or tired or did not want to do the work. Schools cannot continue to rely on punishment and removal for

students that need additional targeted support when studies show that prevention of

behavioral problems would be more beneficial (Horner & Macaya, 2018).

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 addresses teachers' perceptions as to what can be done to

improve the interventions that are currently in use. Theme 3 was as follows: Teachers

perceived that training and professional development on the implementation of

interventions have been minimal and that more training is needed to improve teachers'

skills and knowledge.

The third finding is that teachers perceive that PD for interventions has been

minimal and more training is needed. The result that emerged from the theme is

congruent with the research of Griffiths et al. (2019), who concluded that teachers do not

receive the proper training that is necessary to manage students that exhibit disruptive

behavior. Also, my findings were consistent with Canter (1976), who stated that reducing

disruptive behavior might be contingent on teachers being trained because teachers

believe that they have not received adequate training to manage students' disruptive

behavior.

Teachers believed that the school and the district provided some PD to enhance

the teachers' skills to curtail student behavior. However, the participants were unable to

specify specific training related to the implementation of interventions, indicating the

need for sustained training. The finding was also confirmed by Yenen and Yontem

(2020), who emphasized that professional development is essential because the training

improves education and maximizes student learning.

The central aspect used to transform teaching is professional development (Redman et al., 2018). More specifically, Marzano ad Marzano (2003) purported that students cannot learn in a chaotic and poorly managed environment. Some participants expressed that they would like more training and professional development to improve student behavior. The participants' perspectives correspond with McDaniel et al. (2017), who asserted that the facilitation of continuous training, coaching, and modifications would improve student outcomes. Also, consistent with the findings, Svendsen (2020) contended that teacher training is expected to engage teachers and increase their knowledge. Professional development is beneficial and progressive. Teachers need ongoing training to improve skills and to keep up with innovative ideas that pertain to intervention progression. Furthermore, Darling-Hammond et al. (2017) pointed out that professional development consists of communication, skills, collaboration, problem-solving, and self-direction and underpins that professional development must be sustained.

Most participants expressed that they had minimal knowledge of PBIS and little to no training concerning the implementation of interventions. The participants' comments align with Strickland-Cohen et al. (2019), who found that the interventions continue to be inconsistently implemented and are not likely to be successful. Hence, there is a need for training in order to improve the use of interventions. Kim et al. (2018) emphasized that fidelity of implementation is obtained when the interventions are being used with consistency and an adequate degree of accuracy according to how they were

designed to support student behavior. Only then can the effectiveness of interventions be determined.

The fourth finding that emerged was that teachers believe those good engagement strategies will improve the efficiency of interventions. The participants explained that engagement is a crucial concept used to help students stay on task and reduce disruptive behavior. My finding is consistent with Canter (1976), who emphasized that behavioral problems are less likely to occur when students are engaged. Also, Nguyen et al. (2018) explained that behavioral engagement is a vital component conceptualized by student participation, students' classroom conduct, and students showing interest in academics. Participants also indicated students are more engaged when the lesson plans incorporated fun and exciting activities. My findings were similar to Nguyen et al. (2018), who explained that the classroom activities' structure influences student behavioral engagement. Furthermore, engagement is one of the most relevant strategies for reducing disruptive behavior (Canter, 1976).

A few participants considered engagement a form of intervention because engagement and interventions are both used as strategies to diminish disruptive behavior. My findings are in alignment with the results of several researchers, Fredricks et al. (2019) and Moreira et al. (2018), who considered engagement a multifaceted construct that is a foundational component of a variety of interventions.

In addition, Moreira et al. (2018) found that there are perspectives throughout the literature that suggest teachers' support is vital for supporting student engagement. Participants indicated that strategies such as engagement and teacher-student interactions

could be used to control the classroom environment. Also, several participants mentioned

that teachers' planning and implementation of good engagement strategies might achieve

an environment free of disruptive behavior. Nguyen et al. (2018) posited that students'

engagement might be recognized when they raise their hands to ask questions, when they

are paying attention to the lesson, and when they contribute to the discussion. In contrast,

low engagement can correspond to significant challenges in the learning environment and

could place a burden on teachers (Liem & Chong, 2017).

Limitations of the Study

Qualitative research is a process that is conducted with rigor so others can be

confident as to the credibility and reliability of the study (Merriam, 2009). Several

limitations manifested in sample size, participant recruitment, and researcher bias. In the

study, I used a sample size of nine participants from two high schools in Grades 9–11,

which reduced the potential for transferability. I needed a larger participant pool of

teachers and administrators. Also, perhaps students' voices were needed to provide a

more accurate examination of the problem.

Limitation 2 concerned participant recruitment. I found that recruiting participants

for the study was challenging. I obtained four participants from the first research site.

Participants were reluctant because of time restraints and conducting the interviews via

Zoom due to COVID-19. I received permission from the URR to add a second site to

secure a sufficient number of participants.

The last limitation was the researcher's bias. I am an African American, and I

understand how my perception of disruptive behavior could influence this study because

disruptive behavior has been shown to affect minorities disproportionately. Therefore, I addressed my biases using a journal for self-reflection to enhance the study's trustworthiness.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, disruptive student behavior is a significant problem that contributes to the dysfunctionality of schools. A facet of this issue includes interventions and how they are used to mitigate behaviors that do not promote active learning, positive interactions, enhanced social skills, and a mindset that leads to educational advancement.

The first recommendation is that schools allocate daily or weekly time so that teachers can interact with each student to build teacher-student relationships, mainly in the first two months of school. A specific time set aside would be beneficial for the following reasons: (a) enhances communication with teachers and students, (b) reduces disruptive behaviors, (c) enhances students' engagement, (d) increases instructional time, and (e) reduces student removal.

The findings also indicated that some interventions might be ineffective and training for interventions is minimal. The second recommendation is that sustained training, professional development, and testing corresponding to interventions only should be scheduled regularly. Teachers will have a concrete understanding of the available interventions, how to implement the interventions, and how to align the intervention to support the needs of students so teachers can provide instructions without interruptions. The second recommendations will reduce reactionary discipline and the

need for student removal. Redman et al. (2018) asserted that the sustainability of training is essential for both the teacher and student because stand-alone training can fail. The third recommendation is that lesson planning should involve the students' voices regarding engagement tools. Students will be more engaged and involved, which could lead to the reduction of disruptive behavior. More emphasis has to be placed on the use of interventions for the management and improvement of disruptive behavior.

Implications

Disruptive behavior continues to be a significant problem in schools today. Teachers struggle with addressing the challenges of disruptive behaviors, the interventions, and the implementation. Based on the findings of this study, several recommendations were outlined as a framework for positive social change at various levels (e.g., organization, school, and individual). These recommendations may enhance the overall school atmosphere and create positive academic outcomes.

The results of the study contribute to positive social change at the organizational level. The organization may benefit by implementing sustained training and testing of teachers relating to the PBIS tiers. Sustained training is needed because preventative measures reduce the occurrence of disruptive behavior. Outcomes for the organization may reduce student suspensions, stop students from being expelled from school, and reduce juvenile delinquency. The organization may better understand the problem and what more could be done to resolve the issue of disruptive behavior. Also, the benefit may provide a school climate that is safe, secure, and conducive to learning.

The implication for positive social change might improve at the school and individual levels. The recommendations included training and professional development to improve teachers' skills and knowledge, procedures for implementing student-teacher interactions to build relationships, and lesson planning that included student input. When teachers are sufficiently trained and schools implement sufficient intervention strategies, teachers become more confident in their ability to manage the classroom because they are equipped with tools and techniques that reduce reactionary discipline. The school's potential benefit corresponds to less truancy, ditching, and students being expelled. Positive social change at the individual level may provide individuals with a classroom environment uninhibited by disruption, instructions presented clearly, more students on task, teacher preparedness, and less student removal. The occurrences of disruptive behaviors are reduced, and student learning is increased.

The result of this study provided data on how to handle disruptive behavior and the implementation of interventions. More information is needed to determine the effectiveness of currently used interventions. The study extended the body of knowledge relating to disruptive behavior. Still, more research is required to determine whether the interventions employed are helpful and whether the intervention has been sufficiently implemented.

Conclusion

Disruptive behavior has been an ongoing problem in schools for many years. Numerous interventions have been used to diminish those behaviors that have undesirable effects on the classroom climate. For this reason, Kim et al. (2018) and

Freeman et al. (2019) explained that the implementation of interventions is vital because these have a bearing on academic and behavioral outcomes. Therefore, the purpose of this basic qualitative design was to examine high school teachers' challenges with using current interventions and their perception of how to improve them to reduce disruptive behaviors in the classroom. The findings that emerged in the study were as follows: (a) the challenge of disruptive behavior has an adverse effect on the classroom climate when interventions are not used sufficiently; (b) teachers use a variety of intervention strategies, but many are ineffective; (c) teachers perceive that PD for interventions has been minimal and more training is needed, and (d) teachers believe those good engagement strategies will improve the efficiency of interventions.

As a result of these findings, I made three recommendations: First, schools should allocate daily or weekly time so that teachers can interact with each student to build teacher-student relationships, mainly in the first two months of school. Secondly, sustained training, professional development, and testing should be scheduled regularly. Redman et al. (2018) asserted that the sustainability of training is essential for both the teacher and student because stand-alone training can fail. Thirdly, lesson planning should involve the students' voices regarding engagement tools. These recommendations are essential for increasing teachers' knowledge concerning interventions, effective intervention usage, and minimizing disruptive behavior.

In conclusion, this study extended the body of knowledge concerning disruptive behavior and interventions. I used teachers to provide their perspective, reality of the classroom, and proximity to the students to understand the phenomenon. The literature

review was used as evidence to support the findings. In assessing the data, the main

contentions were teachers should improve their skills and knowledge regarding

interventions and implementation. The data also delineated the need for sustainability of

training and PD. When the students are engaged, disruptive behavior is diminished.

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Appendix A: Interview Questions

RQ 1: How do teachers describe the experiences they have using interventions to reduce students' disruptive behavior?

1. What are some of the most common interventions that you used to work with students who exhibit disruptive behavior?

2. Describe a time in your classroom when disruptive behavior was a challenge. What factors made this a challenge?

3. Describe a time when you successfully handled a challenging behavior situation? (Follow up question) What factors, do you think, contributed to make it a successful outcome?

4. Do interventions have an effect on the classroom climate? In what way?

5. What type of experience or training have you had in aligning interventions to a specific behavior problem?

RQ2: What are teachers' perceptions as to what can be done to improve the sufficiency of interventions currently in use?

6. What is your perspective regarding engagement strategies?

7. How can interventions support the various needs of student that display disruptive behaviors?

8. What type of intervention have you found to be most helpful?

9. How do you determine the type of intervention that is needed?

10. What is your perspective of sufficiently implementing interventions?