

2016

Evaluating a Student Leadership Program's Impact on Elementary Students' Behavior and Academic Achievement

Stephanie Caracelo
Walden University

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Stephanie Caracelo

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2016

Abstract

Evaluating a Student Leadership Program's Impact on Elementary Students' Behavior
and Academic Achievement

by

Stephanie Caracelo

MA, Kennesaw State University, 2008

BS, Kennesaw State University, 2006

Doctoral Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Education

Walden University

August 2016

Abstract

Faculty members at a rural elementary school in a southeastern U.S. state have implemented a student leadership program called Leader in Me (LIM) in order to address increased behavioral disruptions and declining academic achievement scores and also better prepare students for the workforce. To determine the efficacy of the intervention, a mixed methods bounded case study of LIM was conducted. Watson's and Hull's theories of behaviorism support the objectives of the program. The focus of the research questions was on determining whether students' behavior, academic achievement, and leadership skills had changed based on their participation in the program. Quantitative data consisted of standardized test scores in the areas of reading and mathematics, administrative records, and a faculty survey. Qualitative data consisted of 10 interviews, which were conducted with a stratified purposeful sample of 3rd through 5th grade teachers participating in the program at the school. Quantitative data were analyzed using analysis of variance while qualitative data were coded and analyzed for common themes. Using these methods, a significant decrease in the instances of negative classroom behaviors was noted in relation to an increase in leadership behaviors of students in the LIM program. Interview data revealed the presence of a positive culture of leadership and learning in the classroom. Based on study findings, a policy recommendation paper advocating adoption of the leadership program was created. Adoption of the LIM program may help educators in better preparing students to be responsible individuals who use their leadership skills to positively impact their own learning and school and community cultures.

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Dedication

I would like to dedicate this work to my family. To my husband, Damian, I am grateful for your love and support through this process. Without your encouragement and commitment, this process may have never become a reality. To my daughter, Naomi, I appreciate your patience and encouragement along the way. You have always been a source of encouragement to me. To my son, Josiah, I know that you have only known me as a student, but I appreciate your patience with mommy as I work to achieve my goals.

This work is also dedicated to the memory of my mother, Janice Walters. You instilled the love and drive to pursue my educational dreams. Your determination to achieve your professional and educational goals was an inspiration to me. May your memory always be a blessing.

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First, I would like to thank God. It is from Him that all blessings, gifts, and talents flow. With God, all things are possible. His presence has been with me throughout this entire process and it's by His strength that I am able to accomplish this task.

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Table of Contents

List of Tables	v
List of Figures	vi
Section 1: The Problem.....	1
The Local Problem.....	1
Rationale	3
Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level.....	3
Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature.....	6
Definitions.....	7
Significance.....	8
Guiding/Research Question	10
Review of the Literature	13
Theoretical Framework.....	13
Review of the Broader Problem.....	15
Implications.....	20
Transition Statement	22
Section 2: The Methodology.....	24
Research Design and Approach	24
Setting and Sample	26
Student Population	27
Teacher Population	27
Qualitative Sequence	28

Quantitative Sequence	32
Data Analysis and Validation Procedures.....	37
Quantitative Data	37
Integration of Data	37
Qualitative Data	38
Measurements Taken for Protection of Participants’ Rights	38
Limitations of the Evaluation.....	39
Data Analysis Results	40
Structural Approach	40
Data Collection	41
Results & Findings.....	42
Project as an Outcome	57
Conclusion	57
Section 3: The Project.....	59
Description and Goals.....	59
Rationale	61
Review of the Literature	62
Support for Using a Position Paper as a Genre.....	62
Support for the Content of the Project	64
Project Description.....	72
Potential Resources and Existing Supports.....	72
Potential Barriers and Solutions.....	73

Proposal for Application and Timetable	74
Roles and Responsibilities of Others	75
Project Evaluation Plan.....	77
Implementation Evaluation.....	77
Progress Evaluation	78
Project Implications	79
Local Community	79
Far-Reaching.....	80
Implications for Social Change.....	81
Conclusion	82
Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions.....	83
Project Strengths and Limitations.....	83
Project Strengths	83
Project Limitations.....	84
Recommendations for Alternative Approaches	85
Scholarship, Project Development, Leadership and Change	86
Analysis of Self as Scholar	89
Analysis of Self as Practitioner.....	90
Analysis of Self as Project Developer	91
The Project’s Potential Impact on Social Change.....	91
Reflection on the Importance of the Work	92
Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research	92

Conclusion	94
References.....	95
Appendix A: The Project	113
Appendix B: Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale.....	131
Appendix C: Permission to Use the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale.....	132
Appendix D: Permission to Reproduce the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale.....	132
Appendix E: Interview Questions for Qualitative Sequence	133
Appendix F: Invitation to Participate in Follow Up Interviews	135

List of Tables

Table 1. Data Collection Related to Research Questions	12
Table 2. Discipline Incidences Resulting in Administrative Referrals	45
Table 3. Descriptive Statistics for Discipline Referrals	46
Table 4. ANOVA for Reported Discipline Incidences	46
Table 5. Scale Scores for Students in Third and Fifth Grades	48
Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Scale Scores in Reading and Math	49
Table 7. ANOVA for Scale Scores in Reading and Math	50
Table 8. Descriptive Statistics for the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale.....	51
Table A1. Scale Scores for Students in Third and Fifth Grades	117
Table A2. Descriptive Statistics of Scale Scores in Reading and Math	118

List of Figures

Figure 1. Bar graph of discipline incidences.	5
Figure 2. Bar graph showing the participants' attitudes about behavioral themes	53
Figure 3. Behaviors associated with the theme of responsibility.....	56
Figure 4. Behaviors associated with the theme of collaboration.	56

Section 1: The Problem

The “Charter Central School District” (CCSD) is located in the southeastern United States and serves over 108,000 students in 112 schools. As the 24th largest school district in the United States, CCSD employs over 13,500 faculty and staff (“about the CCSD,” 2012). The school district serves students from varied cultural backgrounds. Its population includes White (43.7%), Black (31.2%), Hispanic (16.9%), Asian (4.9%), and multiracial (3%) students. The graduation rate for the school district is 76.5%, and the student-to-teacher ratio is 19:1. In this section, I introduce and define the problem underlying my study, present my rationale and theoretical framework, discuss the significance of my research, and consider the implications of my research.

The Local Problem

CCSD has a mission of “creating and supporting pathways for success”; its vision is to “empower dreams for the future” (“About the CCSD,” 2012). In order to achieve its mission and vision, it needs to address certain obstacles. This section will focus on issues related to discipline and achievement gaps in the district.

With discipline incidences on the rise, students and classrooms are being affected adversely. According to Scholer, Hudnut-Beumler, and Dietrich (2011), violence is a major problem that stems from improper discipline in childhood. According to the discipline reports of CCSD, there was an increase of 77% in discipline incidences between 2010-2013 (YES, 2013). Discipline incidences are associated with inhibited academic growth and a greater likelihood of students dropping out of school and contributing negatively to society (Boneshefski & Runge, 2013). Discipline-related

interruptions not only affect those who are disruptive; they affect all learners and the learning environment. The time and effort associated with addressing disruptive behavior restricts learning, deters administration from other tasks, and precedes teacher burnout (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010). Managing student behavior and handling disruptions continues to adversely affect learning in the classroom (Boneshefski & Runge, 2013).

A greater emphasis is being placed on the school environment as academic achievement and discipline concerns grow. According to Osher et al. (2010), academic achievement is most successful in classrooms without discipline interruptions because discipline related interruptions are impeding learning. Since there is a focus on academic achievement, school districts are placing a higher priority on achievement through the use of accountability practices so these discipline-related interruptions are a focus of concern. Approximately 66% of the schools in the CCSD are receiving a score of 80% or higher on the statewide accountability system (“About the CCSD,” 2013). Since the climate of an educational institution is an important component of the classroom, the commitment to a high quality environment is needed in order for students, teachers, and stakeholders to be successful (Allodi, 2010). By reducing the time teachers spend on behavioral interventions for students, educators may be able to improve school climate and the learning environment for their students.

Teachers, as the classroom managers, are facing difficult behavior problems in their classrooms. Difficult behaviors represented in the classroom are an ongoing complaint among teachers (Osher et al., 2010). McCready and Soloway (2010) explain

that confronting difficult behavior in the classroom is a top priority for school districts. For this reason, many school districts provide resources to teachers in the area of classroom management, and professional development trainings often contain content related to handling student disruptions in classrooms because behavioral disruptions are often handled through teacher-directed discipline (Osher et al., 2010). According to Vallaire-Thomas, Hicks, and Growe (2011), the influx of behavioral problems in classrooms is rooted in deeper concerns, and therefore, is an impediment to the learning process. Teachers and students are directly impacted by behavior interruptions.

Rationale

In this section of the study, I provide justification for my assertion that discipline and achievement concerns are a problem in education at the local level as well as in professional literature. At the local level, individual teachers that I interviewed expressed the need to address these concerns. Additionally, professional literature cites evidence that discipline and achievement occur in a larger context. Interventions on behavior begin in the classroom and a sound structure must be established before academic achievement can become the focus of the learning environment (Sherrod, Getch, & Ziomek-Daigle, 2009; Kowalewicz & Coffee, 2013; Powers & Bierman, 2013).

Evidence of the Problem at the Local Level

CCSD teachers and administrators describe problems with discipline measures at the local level. According to administrators at “Yenning Elementary School” (YES), individual schools do not publish data related to discipline measures. However, YES admits it encounters numerous discipline issues even after increasing efforts to address

this growing concern (“T. Mitt”, personal communication, May 29, 2013). One attempt, The Positive Discipline Model, was implemented in 2008, but the results did not warrant continuation of the program so it was discontinued (T. Mitt, personal communication, May 24, 2013). Discipline incidences decreased from 2011-2012 to 2012-2013, but this change does not reflect progress because the change is attributed to a large special education unit transferring from YES to another school in the district.

The implementation of the unsuccessful Positive Discipline Model Program began when the administration researched methods to reduce student infractions within the classroom, opened a new school term with a book study of the book, *Positive Discipline* by Jane Nelson, and hosted a local principal who had used The Positive Discipline Model in her school. One YES teacher noted little buy-in from the staff and teachers as a result of not being part of the change process; teachers felt their authority was undermined by the program (“F. Jamberg”, personal communication, 2013). In addition, the program’s implementation, initiated by the administration, left the staff little time to adopt the philosophies of The Positive Discipline Model before the school year had begun. “The book study occurred after the school had announced the implementation of the program which gave teachers little time to prepare for this program and implement it in our own style” (“M. Acages”, personal communication, 2013). The time constraint resulted in very little success (see Figure 1). Discipline reports showed an overall increase of 77 discipline incidences from 2010-2011 to 2012-2013 (YES, 2013). Discipline incidences between the 2011-2012 to 2012-2013 school years decreased by 9 occurrences. This decrease is due to the reduction in enrollment of a special education

unit, thereby eliminating a few students who often appeared on discipline reports.

Therefore, the reduction is substantiated. For all of these reasons, the total number of incidences increased after administrators implemented The Positive Discipline Model.

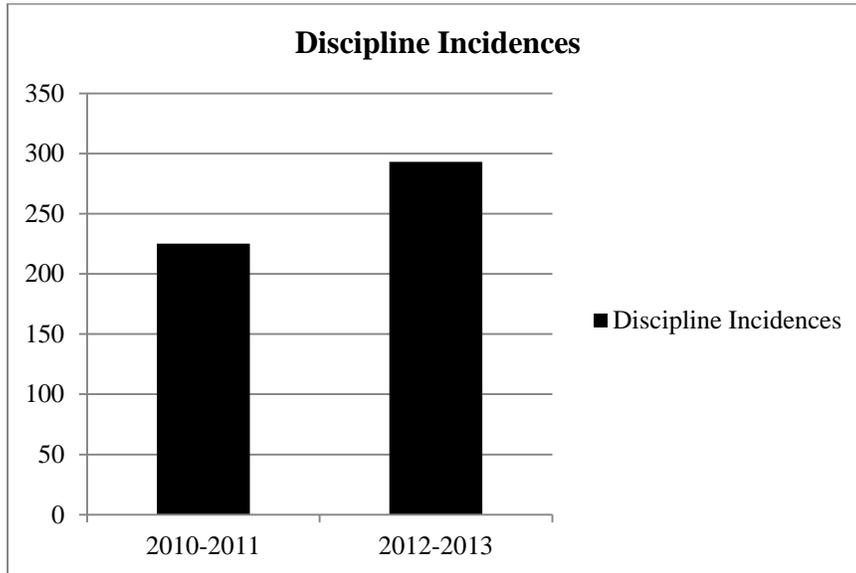


Figure 1. Bar graph of discipline incidences.

After the implementation of The Positive Discipline Model, YES experienced constant discipline issues. The highest number of incidences involved class disturbance, inappropriate horseplay, inappropriate language, and insubordination (YES, 2013).

Managing behavior was an ongoing concern for teachers, but in the end The Positive Discipline Model did not address the discipline concerns (M. Acages, personal communication, May 30, 2013).

At the beginning of the The Positive Discipline Model implementation, teachers initiated individual behavior management systems in their classrooms in an effort to address behavioral incidences. At YES, however, a school-wide, generalized behavior plan required teachers to follow a prescribed set of classroom interventions when dealing

with behaviorally disruptive students. However, behaviors did not change. When discipline problems continue beyond the generalized behavior plan, teachers used discipline referrals as an intervention to involve administration. Documented on customized forms, discipline referrals described the classroom incidences and were aimed at decreasing student disruptive behavior problems so that each student can focus on increasing student achievement (Sherrod, Getch, & Ziomek-Daigle, 2009).

According to YES (2013) administrative discipline records, the most prevalent discipline issues were the following:

- class disturbance,
- insubordination,
- horseplay,
- disrespect, and
- inappropriate language.

All of these behaviors are intrusive and often result in students being removed from the classroom. Faced with increasing behavior problems, administrators ultimately determined the need to make a fresh start and implemented a program with which other schools in the district have had success: Leader in Me (LIM).

Evidence of the Problem from the Professional Literature

Anything that impedes a positive school or classroom environment is considered a distraction or disruption by educators and has a negative impact on student learning (Allen, 2010; Powers & Bierman, 2013). According to Kowalewicz and Coffee (2013), a substantial amount of time is used in the classroom to handle disruptive behaviors.

Behavior related disruptions can be intrusive not only to the students exhibiting the behavior but also to those who are subjected to the behavior. Teachers are the first line of defense in handling classroom behavior, thereby reducing the time spent on instruction. In order to address these lost opportunities in the classroom, Allen (2010) suggested that the root of the disruptions be identified. Gregory, Skiba, and Noguera (2010) found that behavior disruptions in the classroom are often accompanied by academic underperformance, reduction of motivation, and decreased investment in school rules by students. Like the discipline policies at YES, Osher et al. (2010) noted that disruptive students are often given an external punishment, which offers a short-term outcome with a long term problem. For example, a student with a consequence of suspension is now responsible for missed instruction and class work. If students are disruptive to the learning environment, all of the students as well as the perpetrator are losing instruction.

Definitions

The following terms are used in this study:

21st Century leadership skills: Work and life skills such as self-management, problem solving, collaboration, critical thinking, and communication necessary for success in the workplace (Pellegrino & Hilton, 2013).

Academic achievement: The mastery of skills and knowledge and the performance and application of the acquired skills (National Center for Education Statistics, 2012).

Behavior: Patterns of conduct present during instruction (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010).

Classroom behavior intervention: Antecedent strategies used within school settings at both the class-wide and individual levels (Fried, 2011).

Discipline: A code of behavior that is characterized by beliefs and actions and shaped by one's legal and social context (Arum & Ford, 2012).

Discipline documentation: A regular and visible file of problematic student behavior that can be quantified, assembled, and evaluated dependably across various circumstances, students, and actions (McIntosh, Frank, & Spaulding, 2010).

Disruptive behavior: Technical or adaptive actions by students that are perceived by teachers as interruptions to learning (McCready & Soloway, 2010).

Disruptive students: Students who impede the learning process (Vallaire-Thomas, Hicks, & Growe, 2011).

Leader in Me: A transformation school initiative model that claims to equip students with 21st-century skills (Franklin Covey, 2015).

School climate: The perceived attributes of classroom surroundings (Gillen, Wright, and Spink, 2011).

Underachievement: A term encompassing a student's lack of attainment of instruction in a customary school setting (Iachini, Buettner, Anderson-Butcher, & Reno, 2013). A student who is not demonstrating understanding or not performing at an acceptable level is considered as having underachievement.

Significance

The findings of this study fill a gap in practice by means of describing the efficacy of an intervention to address the present concern of behavioral interruptions in

the classroom as well as its impact on student achievement. Implementation began in one school as early as 2008. However, most of the schools began implementing the program in 2011-2012. The findings describe the impact of the Leader In Me (LIM) program since its implementation in 2008 and the degree of influence on positive social change by improving individuals, the educational institutions, and the surrounding communities. Depending on the findings of this study, the schools may choose to continue to use their capital and human resources to continue to implement the LIM program or search for additional resources to meet the goals of increasing academic achievement while decreasing behavioral incidences.

A program has been implemented based on the identified priorities of the school district: reducing discipline incidences and increasing academic achievement (CCSD, 2013). Six elementary schools within the school district have implemented this program. The local problem is increased behavior incidences and academic goals not being met by the students. YES (2013) indicated an increase of 77% in discipline incidences from the 2010/2011 to 2012/2013. Additionally, only 66% of the school district's schools are receiving scores of 80% or higher on the statewide performance indicator (About the CCSD, 2013). The LIM program implementation results will be provided to inform the stakeholders who include students, teachers, administrators, and district personnel. The final determination of the efficacy of the intervention can be achieved by a mixed methods study that examines the influence of the LIM program as an intervention focused on behavior and academic achievement in this educational setting.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The guiding research questions and hypotheses were as follows:

RQ1. Did the implementation of the Leader in Me program make a difference in the number of behavior referrals between the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years?

H₀₁: The Leader in Me program integration does not decrease student behavior incidences.

H₁₁: The Leader in Me program integration decreases student behavior incidences.

RQ2. Did implementation of the Leader in Me program make a significant difference in student achievement as measured by scores on the Criterion Referenced Competency Test?

H₀₂: The Leader in Me program integration does not increase student achievement on the Criterion Referenced Competency Test.

H₁₂: The Leader in Me program integration increases student achievement on the Criterion Referenced Competency Test.

RQ3. What student leadership qualities and behaviors as identified by teachers attributed to the Leader in Me program?

H₀₃: Teachers identify student leadership qualities and behaviors that are attributed to the Leader in Me program?

H₁₃: Teachers do not identify student leadership qualities and behaviors that are attributed to the Leader in Me program?

I collected and analyzed quantitative and qualitative data to answer my research questions and test my hypotheses (see Table 1). The first research question addressed school behavior data. The independent variable is the program integration and the dependent variable is the number of behavior incidences. The second research question used the standardized test scores from the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT). The independent variable is the program integration and the dependent variable is the achievement score on the reading and mathematics portions of the CRCT. With student achievement at the focus of YES, standardized test scores were used to evaluate this question. The third research question was addressed using the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES). The research recommendations include improved student achievement, attainment of 21st century life skills, and a learning culture where students feel safe and engaged in their learning. This question addresses the idea that LIM program influence could yield results that align with the necessary skills for successful students in the 21st century. In addition to the BAES, teacher interviews were conducted to determine the perceived influence to date of an intentional program on students.

Table 1

Data Sources and Variables Related to Research Questions and Hypotheses

Quantitative				
Research Question	Data Source	Hypothesis	Variables	
			Independent	Dependent
Did the implementation of the Leader in Me program make a difference on the number of behavior referrals between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years?	Administrative records provided by the research sites detailing the frequencies and details of behavior incidences	Leader in Me program integration decreases student behavior incidences	Leader in Me program integration	number of behavior incidences
Did the implementation of the Leader in Me program make a significant difference in student achievement as measured by the Criterion Referenced Competency Test?	Standardized test scores from the CRCT	Leader in Me program integration increases students' achievement on the CRCT	Leader in Me program integration	score on the reading and mathematics portions of the CRCT
What student leadership qualities and behaviors are identified by the teachers that are attributed to the Leader in Me program?	BAES	Teachers who work with students where the Leader in Me program has been implemented, have observed changes in student behavior.	Leader in Me program integration	observed leadership skills, reported on the BAES
Qualitative				
Research Question	Data Source	Hypothesis	Variables	
			Independent	Dependent
What student leadership qualities and behaviors are identified by the teachers that are attributed to the Leader in Me program?	Teacher interviews	The teachers who work with students where the Leader in Me program has been implemented, have observed changes in student behavior.	Leader in Me program integration	observed leadership skills, shared in the interviews

Review of the Literature

This review of literature was based on the theoretical underpinnings of behaviorism and motivation as well as current research on the broader problem. In the subsequent paragraphs, a description of the relevant aspects of behavioral theory are aligned with the design of the research questions.

Theoretical Framework

Behavioral and motivation theories provide a foundational basis for this study. This encompasses theories about why students may or may not be a behavior concern in the classroom. According to Watson (1913), behaviors are measurable, coachable, and adjustable. The goal is to increase or decrease a specific behavior. Through the process of reinforcement or punishment, an association is established between one's behavior and the consequences for that behavior. Skinner (1984) later expounded on the work of John Watson to include a greater understanding of behaviorism. Later referred to as operant conditioning, behaviors are changeable by consistent reinforcement or punishment.

In 1965, Glasser's reality therapy presented a different perspective on behavior by proposing that students should be responsible for their own actions and make appropriate choices. Glasser (1965) suggested that it was necessary for students to think through their problems while acting with appropriate mannerisms. For example, if a child was offended by another student, he/she would address the offender by expressing his/her frustration as opposed to a physical altercation. The goal of reality therapy is to understand that acting with disruptive behavior is neither demonstrating responsibility nor is it realistic to the

real world. Instead, students are supposed to recognize their individual complications, accept responsibility, and improve the behavior.

Maslow (1943, 1970a, 1970b) formulated a hierarchy of needs that addressed human behavior and human potential. These needs include physiological and biological, cognitive, esteem, safety, aesthetic, self-actualization, social, and transcendence. The idea undergirding this theory is that in order to achieve one level of the hierarchy, one must satisfy the need on the preceding level. In respect to classroom behavior, it is possible for a student to act in a disruptive manner if one of the needs or levels is not being met. Behavior, according to this theory, is purposeful and is motivated by the need for satisfaction of one of the levels. According to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, a student's cognitive needs cannot be met until their fundamental physiological needs are met. For example, a hungry and tired child will have a challenging time focusing on his/her education.

The theoretical framework presented supports this study. Each of the different theories presented a focus on oneself. They each require an intentional focus on the individual. Watson (1913) and Skinner (1984) stressed the importance of behavior and associated consequences. In this study, the research will look closely at the specific consequences of behavior. Glasser (1965) stressed constant awareness of behavior. This study will focus on the realization of actions and their associated consequences. Maslow (1943) stressed the importance of understanding that behavior is purposeful. This research will focus on motivation awareness.

Review of the Broader Problem

This portion of the literature review will look at the current educational legislature and reform as well as disruptive behavior and poor academic performance in the classroom. To better understand the broader problem, the current direction of education is an important component to understand. The purpose of the current educational reform supports addressing disruptive behavior and academic performance concerns. Potential causes of disruptive behavior will be identified as well as the implications it has on students involved. Additionally, achievement concerns as related to discipline incidences will be analyzed as well as the environment in which many of those incidences occur. The disruptions occurring as a result of behavior incidences in the classroom will be closely examined to determine underlying causes of behavior so they can be addressed.

Several methods of investigation were employed to collect research for this literature review. Beginning with the Walden University Library, the following databases were used for researching articles: Education Research Complete, Academic Search Premier, ProQuest Research Library, and SAGE publications. Additionally, textbooks were consulted along with Google and Google Scholar to aid in a search that is exhaustive and complete.

Boolean search descriptors include *disruptive behavior*, *disruptive students*, *classroom behavior interventions*, *discipline documentation*, *school climate*, and *underachievement consequences*. In addition to articles about American schools, research was also considered from Amsterdam, Iceland, and the United Kingdom. This research approach was utilized in an effort to reach saturation of the literature. The goal is to

approach each topic from varying perspectives. There are decades of research on behavior, academic achievement, and management of the classroom.

Educational Legislature and Reform. Former President, George W. Bush, implemented a reform called the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (NCLB). The NCLB initiative was designed to reduce and ultimately eliminate the achievement gap as well as reducing the discipline incidences for children in the United States (Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010; Colker, 2013). Contained in this initiative were a variety of accountability systems in an effort to produce higher achievement scores. The accountability portion related to schools that received Title I funds from the federal government. Schools began to focus on standardized testing as a means to measure achievement (Colker, 2013). An intense importance was placed on the proficiency levels of state tests and essentially created an accountability model.

The National Association of Education Progress (NAEP) demonstrated that NCLB's goals were not met and slowed academic achievement as reported by test scores (NCPEA, 2009). The results of the NCLB reform suggest the achievement gap remains a continued problem. In addition, dropout rates are still alarmingly high and thus creating a culture of delinquency (Neely & Griffin-Williams, 2013). With the current gap existing in a lack of readiness for society, education needs a second opinion. Schools need to work with students to produce individuals who have the skill set to contribute to society.

Current President, Barack Obama, presented a program in 2011 that waived many requirements of NCLB (Jennings, 2012). The waiver option provides states with the

flexibility to adjust their achievement goals and address their intervention strategies as needed. The waiver is granted to states if they adopt College- and Career-Readiness Standards also known as the Common Core Curriculum (CCC). In addition states needed to focus on 15% of their schools that were failing and adopt new guidelines for teacher evaluations that rely on student academic performance data (Jennings, 2012).

The main focus of the CCC is to produce students who are successful in the global economy (About The Standards, 2011). There is an emphasis on both life and career skills, acknowledging that not all students will attend college after graduation. Many students enter the workforce without postsecondary education. Therefore, schools and educational reform have shifted to a preparation for productive citizens of society.

Disruptive Behavior. According to Liber, De Boo, Huizenga, and Prins (2013), behavior that is disorderly in nature can have a damaging influence on child development and be associated with lasting negative outcomes. Disruptive behavior is defined as oppositional defiant behavior, conduct problems, reduced academic engagement, and antisocial behavior (Blondal & Adalbjarnardottir, 2012; Horner, Sugai, & Anderson, 2010; Liber et al., 2013). These behaviors can be characterized by fighting, yelling, aggression, bullying, inappropriate conversation, nonparticipation, arguing, and disrespect (Allen, 2010; Chitiyo, Makweche-Chitiyo, Park, Ametepee, & Chitiyo, 2011; Liber et al., 2013). There are a set of conditions that have been identified for students to be at-risk for increased behavior concerns. These include poverty-stricken, low income, and single-parent families (Reglin, Akpo-Sanni, & Losike-Sedimo, 2012; Vallaire-Thomas, Hicks, & Growe, 2011). Disruptive behavior is evident in classrooms today.

Classroom Behavior Interventions. When disruptive behaviors are elevated in students, office referrals are often used to increase the level of consequence for the student. According to Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, and Moore-Thomas (2012), continuous discipline problems resulting in suspensions or expulsions have additional consequences of missing class, alienation, and negative feelings toward school. Academic underperformance, characterized by academic withdrawal, loss of motivation, reduced investment in school work and school rules, is also a risk-factor associated with removal from the classroom (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). Implications of this type of behavior management system could result in students turning to activities that are illegal (Gregory et al., 2010). Academic disengagement in the younger grades has also been linked to fewer opportunities in the job market (Blondal & Adalbjarnardottir, 2012; Boneshefski, & Runge, 2013).

Discipline Documentation Data. A review of the data related to discipline problems indicates that some racial and ethnic groups have a higher representation in discipline data as compared to other subgroups of students. According to Gregory et al. (2010), Black, Latino, and American Indian students are often targeted as disciplinary concerns and are, therefore, subjected to a disproportionate amount of disciplinary measures. Racial disproportionality afflicts schools at all levels across the country (Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, & Moore-Thomas, 2012). The reasons for referral were more subjective for African American children than they were for White students (Gregory et al., 2010). A student's race or ethnicity can be a contributory factor in the teacher's perception of behavior problems. Some behaviors might appear more disruptive than

others in a learning environment (Bradshaw, Mitchell, O'Brennan, & Leaf, 2010; Parker, Skinner, & Booher, 2010). According to Chitiyo et al. (2011), the students exhibiting challenging behavior are also the same students who also experience poor academic achievement, evidenced by below average on their standardized test of achievement. There is evidence that discipline is an issue in many classrooms and across multiple races and ethnicities.

School Climate. The setting or situation in which effective learning can occur is important to creating an environment conducive to legacy building (Henry, 2012; Patrick, Kaplan, & Ryan, 2011). School climate has a great impact on students and performance. According to Seashore et al. (2010), a positive classroom environment is a crucial to having a great impact on student learning. With students spending so many years of their early lives in school settings, closer examination of that setting should take place to ensure the environment is properly preparing students for success. Eccles & Roeser (2011) describe elementary school as the beginning portion of a bridge between society and culture. Reyes, Brackett, Rivers, White, & Salovey (2012) assert a link exists between academic achievement and the emotional climate of the classroom.

Academic Performance. Economic growth is dependent upon education (Aturupane, Glewwe, and Wisniewski; 2013). Educated citizens are necessary for advancement of the economy. Students at risk for dropping out and exhibiting delinquent behavior are considered a detriment to the economy (Risser, 2013). Therefore, the impact that academic achievement has on students and communities is of high importance and reaches far beyond the classroom walls. Classrooms that are well-managed are often

linked to increased academic achievement and leadership opportunities in the students' futures (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle; 2010; Firmender, Gavin, & McCoach; 2014). As a result, recommendations have been provided to teachers in order to maintain engagement and positively impact academic achievement.

Underachievement Consequences. Students who are consistently receiving discipline referrals account for a large portion of student dropouts. Additional reasons for dropouts include life-changing events and the need to earn a living. According to Iachini, Buettner, Anderson-Butcher, and Reno (2013), there are documented numbers of negative, long-term consequences for both student dropouts and the surrounding communities. High school students who dropout are at higher risks for incarceration, as almost half of all convicted offenders have not completed high school. In addition to not completing their formal education, high school dropouts negatively impact the nation's economy by costing the United States over \$300 billion in future wages to take care of them (Iachini et al.; 2013). Studies have also revealed that lower rates of employment and decreased health are consequences of students who elect to drop out of school (Bowers and Sprott; 2012). The underachievement concerns must be addressed early.

Implications

The potential implications for this study are multifaceted. Increases in behavior problems could directly impact student achievement. Increases in 21st Century leadership skills could directly impact academic achievement. The intervention that Yenning Elementary School (YES) has chosen to address the problem is implementation of the Leader in Me (LIM) program. The LIM program is a school-wide transformation model

aimed at providing students a background in leadership skills in order to decrease behavior problems in classrooms which should lead to an increase in student achievement. Leadership skills are proposed as an answer to the problems experienced by YES because, if successful, students will begin to take responsibility for their behavior and demonstrate initiative by pushing themselves to be better students and community members. Leadership skills are suggested as a necessary component to remove behavior interferences from today's educational institutions according to the National Education Association (NEA, 2012).

Development of 21st Century leadership skills may potentially create a culture of leadership that would encourage learners to do their best, to be innovative, to share leadership through collaboration, and implement character habits (Covey, 2008; Marzano, 2003). This culture of leadership has the potential to impact students' families and the local community.

A mixed methods study was employed to examine the impact of the LIM program as an intervention. At the study's conclusion, I reported the findings back to the district personnel so informed decisions are made. If the development of leadership skills is found to lead to a decrease in classroom interruptions and increased student achievement, then other schools might be interested in replicating the implementation of this intervention.

From the findings of this study, local school leaders may better evaluate the efficacy of the LIM program. This could lead to an understanding of the value of leadership skills to all stakeholders. Identifying and integrating leadership skills for

students at an early age could eliminate unnecessary behavioral interruptions.

Additionally, district-level administrators may use the findings of this research as a basis for implementation at all local elementary schools. There is also potential for policymakers to employ state and national initiatives founded on the findings of this research.

Transition Statement

There is evidence of a gap in practice. The gap in practice include the lack of observable 21st Century leadership skills, the increase of discipline-related incidences in the classroom, and the impact of behavior-related interruptions on academic achievement. Identification of these gaps prompted an exploration of a program that has appeared successful in other locations. In an effort to address the observable gaps, YES implemented a program aimed at addressing the concerns. Research on the underlying theoretical framework has been performed to evaluate the efficacy of the program in addressing the problems impeding improvement in student achievement. The study's focus was directed at the success in meeting the goals of this setting.

In section two of this study, the methodology is explained to include descriptions of the research design, setting, participants, sampling, instrumentation, reliability, and validity. In addition, section two will also address limitations, assumptions, and ethical considerations of the research. In section three, a project will be outlined that uses both quantitative and qualitative data to determine potential levels of success achieved in meeting the behavior and achievement goals for which the LIM program was implemented. This section will also include suggestions based upon the data analysis. A

literature review related to leadership will be provided to show this as a valid direction to solve the problems YES has identified. In section four, project strengths and limitations will be given. Finally, any reflections on the doctoral process, the implications of the project for social change, and a conclusion will also be provided.

Section 2: The Methodology

This section includes the details of the mixed-methods research method used in my investigation. For the quantitative portion of my study, I analyzed data from administrative records, standardized test scores, and results collected from a published survey, the BAES. For the qualitative portion of my study, I analyzed data from interviews with teachers who participated in the program under review. An explanatory sequential design guided both the quantitative and qualitative parts of my study. This section that follows expands on the methodology used in my investigation.

Research Design and Approach

I chose a mixed-methods research design for my study because it combined the use of both quantifiable and qualitative data. Using this design, I was able to provide both numerical data to demonstrate quantifiable outcomes and descriptive data to describe more subtle changes in student behaviors as perceived by teachers in their classrooms. Mertens (2014) advocates mixed-methods because it's more comprehensive view of the data deepens the understanding of cultural and social interactions as it relates to students, thus magnifying the results of a single form of research. Combining research findings that were gained from deductive analysis with those gained from inductive explanation provides researchers with a deeper level of understanding of study phenomena (CITE).

The explanatory design allows the research to build from one phase to the other. According to Creswell (2012), using an explanatory sequential design establishes a system that allows the qualitative data to refine and extend the general picture provided by quantitative data. Qualitative research adds context to the data, which leads to a more

comprehensive understanding. Padgett (2012) describes quantitative analysis as a means to address population-level problems; however, researchers using mixed-methods designs are able to gain a grassroots perspective in addressing research problems. Therefore, qualitative research is collected to deepen the perspective and accounts for the missing context.

The qualitative component of my research is intended for complementarity (Tashakkori & Teddlie; 2010). For example, quantitative data is used to provide a change in behavioral incidences; however, qualitative data is used to provide an understanding of the circumstances surrounding the behaviors, which leads to a more in-depth analysis of the incidents. In this mixed-methods design, the qualitative portion is used by a researcher to follow up, enhance, and explain the first phase of the quantitative portion (Creswell, 2009). In addition, I used research questions to aid in narrowing the intention of the research and focus on the explicit questions. The research questions are addressed through the use of both quantitative and qualitative research because both types of data are necessary to fully explain the data and to provide the breadth and depth of understanding of my research.

An explanatory sequential design is being used in this study. The data collection occurred sequentially so one type of information could guide the next step. Quantitative data related to behavior and achievement were collected from the administrative records and surveys at five schools in CCSD. According to Wholey, Hatry, and Newcomer (2010), agency records are often used to accumulate data in research. Teachers in those five schools answered the survey questions that came from the BAES (Hughes & Coplan,

2010) and participated in the interviews that were conducted to collect qualitative data. Because both the quantitative and qualitative data were collected separately, the interface between the two did not occur until both sets of data were used in the interpretation phase of the study.

The overall design for this study is a nonexperimental design, which means that no control groups are part of this study (McDavid et al., 2012). I collected longitudinal test and administrative data related to behavior incidences and academic achievement. Qualitative data were used to provide information about and explain quantitative data as well as provide additional perspectives on any changes in students' behavior.

The performance measures for my study are multifaceted. The quantitative data came from an analysis of the CRCT standardized test scores as well as from the administrative records of behavior incidences of the students in the 5 participant schools. The test scores are available from the Georgia Department of Education and numerically illustrate any impact of the LIM program on academic achievement (Georgia Department of Education, 2014). The administrative records, available in each of the participant schools, contained behavior-related incidences used to determine any possible impact of the LIM program intervention on behavior incidences in the classroom. The qualitative data came from the surveys and interviews used to gather data on the leadership qualities of students and to determine whether the LIM program resulted in a change.

Setting and Sample

Two separate populations were used for this study: a student population and a teacher population. The student population consisted of Grades 3-5 students from five

CCSD elementary schools that have implemented the LIM program. The teacher population consisted of Grades 3-5 teachers from five CCSD elementary schools that have implemented the LIM program.

Student Population

The entire student population was used to collect quantitative data. This includes students who perform at varying levels, receive specialized instruction, and those who may have tested in small groups. Quantitative behavior and academic achievement data were collected via both administrative records and the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT).

Teacher Population

The quantitative data via surveys came from the accessible population of teachers in all five LIM participant schools. The teachers included some with many years of teaching and background experiences and those with much less time in the field. When I administered the survey at the participating schools, 74 out of 81 teachers completed the survey, resulting in a 91% participation rate. The survey administered is the BAES (Hughes & Coplan, 2010; see Appendix C and Appendix D).

Qualitative data, collected via interviews, came from a sample of the teacher population. Creswell (2012) defined stratified sampling as the selection of individuals that include specific characteristics. The characteristics I used included the following: select elementary teachers who worked at CCSD schools that had implemented LIM in the past 3 years and who taught third through fifth grade. A small sample size provides a researcher an in-depth perspective of the data while allowing for the time constraints

found both in meeting school schedules and in managing the complexity of the information (Creswell, 2012; Mason, 2010). Using stratified sampling, no more than two teachers from each of the focus grade levels were selected from each school. The 10 participants were interviewed to gain saturation of the teacher population. Saturation occurs once no new insights are being observed (Creswell, 2012). This sample size is used to assess the prevalence of leadership qualities with a reasonable degree of accuracy (Machin, Campbell, Tan, & Tan; 2011). The insights of the sampled teachers provided qualitative data necessary to focus on the research questions and help understand quantitative data, while representing the population of 81 teachers as a whole. The interviews provided data that are not collected by quantitative data, yielding additional information.

Data Collection Strategies

The strategy used for this research is called the explanatory sequential strategy. This strategy is distinguished by collecting and analyzing quantitative data before gathering and evaluating qualitative data (Terrell, 2012). This strategy allows for equal priority to be given to both phases of the research.

Qualitative Sequence

The qualitative phase of the research was given as much attention as the quantitative phase. The purpose of the Sequential Explanatory Sequence is to use the qualitative data to explore the quantitative results in more detail. In this research, interviews were held to better understand the outcomes of the quantitative phase. The interview questions are as follows:

1. In what ways do you feel your students contribute leadership attributes to your classroom?
2. In what ways do you feel students engage themselves in learning about leadership attributes in your classroom?
3. In what ways do you feel leadership behaviors are beneficial to your students and successful in your classroom?
4. What is the most noticeable difference that you have seen in your students since implementation of the Leader in Me program implementation?
5. Are there any specific behaviors that you would attribute directly to the Leader in Me program?

The interview questions provide additional data in relation to the efficacy of the Leader in Me program. These interview questions became final once the data from the quantitative collection phase of the research had been complete.

Role of the Researcher. I am an educator in the school district where the research was conducted, however I am not employed at any of the research sites. The motivation for conducting this study stems from personal concern over the increase in behavior incidences and stagnancy of academic achievement in the classroom. I established a rapport with the participants by introducing myself and the study in hopes of gaining their trust. The purpose was to generate knowledge as a means to answer and explain the third research question (Dundon & Ryan; 2010). I was responsible for contacting the district IRB director and the school administrators for the research study. I conducted all the interviews myself and collected all of the administrative records.

Establishing a Researcher-Participant Relationship. By following the guidelines provided by the Institutional Review Board (IRB), I presented myself in a professional and ethical manner. This occurred by using ethical responsibility with regards to interacting with the research participants and disseminating their data. I reminded the participants of the study information, informed them that their administration granted permission for the interview to take place and notified them that the interview may be discontinued by the participant at any time.

Gaining Access. The first step to gaining access was obtaining authorization from the Walden University Institutional Review Board (IRB) to collect data. Walden University's approval number for this study is 07-22-15-0300132. Conditional approval was granted on July 22, 2015. Once permission was granted, I applied for permission to conduct research from the school district. Preliminary administrative approval was granted on October 26, 2015. The next step was to contact the participating schools and receive signed consent. The school district granted full approval on November 11, 2015. The Walden University IRB granted full permission to conduct research on November 19, 2015. The next step was focusing on establishing a rapport with the administrators and teachers at each of the research sites. I presented myself to the administration and came up with a pre-determined timeframe to collect data. During the initial contact with the administration, the schedule of collecting data was clearly outlined. This included collecting administrative reports and administering the surveys. The Criterion Referenced Competency Test data was available publicly.

Interviews. One week prior to the assemblage of qualitative data, quantitative was collected and analyzed. During the quantitative data analysis, questions related to the research were finalized to use in the interviews. The time frame for interviewing the teacher participants was one week. I set up a schedule with the individual teachers for the interviews. Stratified sampling was used to identify and select 10 third through fifth grade elementary teachers who work in one of schools that has implemented the LIM program. Each participant was asked to interview with myself for one session and for a duration of no more than 20 minutes. Methodological triangulation was built into the interview procedures by asking the interviewee about some of the common themes identified from the previously collected quantitative data. Themes discussed with the interviewee were the following: contributing positively in class, completing assignments in a timely manner, being prepared to learn, working collaboratively, remaining on task, listening attentively, and actively participating in lessons. The goal of triangulation was to control biases within the data. This was achieved by asking the research participant whether or not he/she supported the interpreted results of the survey from the quantitative phase of this research. This provided triangulation and enhanced the precision of the study (Creswell, 2012). A copy of all of the interview questions, including triangulation and qualitative data collection are included in Appendix E.

The questions are as follows:

1. Do you feel that the themes identified in the survey such as contributing positively in class, completing assignments in a timely manner, being prepared to

learn, working collaboratively, remaining on task, listening attentively, and actively participating in lessons accurately describe your students?

2. In what ways do you feel those themes are associated with the Leader in Me program?

Quantitative Sequence

Quantitative data was collected and analyzed in a 2-week timeframe. This timeframe was selected as it allowed ample time to administer the survey at five different sites. This also allowed for unforeseen circumstances such as weather concerns and school closings. I arrived at the school during a faculty meeting to explain the research, review the protection of human rights, and administer the survey. I administered the survey and provided a folder for the surveys to be turned into. The participants submitted their surveys into the folder. This data collection occurred prior to collecting qualitative interview data. The quantitative data was collected from administrative records, public student achievement data, and surveys at the same time. The data analysis occurred as soon as I retrieved the data.

The collected data spans two academic school years: 2012-2013 and 2013-2014. Data collection occurred by multiple means. Quantitative data collection occurred through the use of discipline referral data from administrative records, student achievement data from the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT), and the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (Hughes & Coplan, 2010). The Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES) is a public domain document with restrictions (see Appendix B).

Surveys. One of the quantitative data collection methods was via surveys. All the schools involved in this study have already begun implementation of the LIM program. The surveys asked teachers for teacher perceptions of leadership skills in their students. The third research question required the use of a formal survey in order to address the research question to gather perceptions based on observed leadership skills (Appendix B). This appendix is the project of Hughes and Coplan (2010), who looked at behavioral expressions and academic achievement.

Raw ordinal data from the surveys is available and presented in tables. The software used to complete these tables is the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The central tendency is summarized by the standard deviation and median for the survey and variability is summarized by calculating the interquartile range. These specific statistics are recommended for reporting based on the idea that they are not affected by outliers (Wholey, Hatry, & Newcomer, 2010). Using descriptive statistics helps to provide understanding and insight into the scores of the participants (Creswell, 2012).

The survey instrument that was used is the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES). The BAES was constructed by using previous scales that address similar concepts, including the Classroom Performance Profile (Crosby & French, 2002), the Learning Behaviors Scale (Schaefer & McDermott, 1999), and Learning Related Social Skills (McClelland & Morrison, 2003). Evidence of the construct validity was based on correlation with other measures.

The BAES uses a 4-point Likert Scale to quantify the participants' responses to the following statements:

- Completes assignments in a timely fashion
- Comes to school with appropriate materials
- Contributes positively to class
- Stays focused on tasks
- Has materials ready in a timely fashion (books open)
- Shows an interest in learning
- Works well in groups
- Raises hand in class
- Listens attentively
- Tries to answer questions when called upon

The 4-point Likert Scale contained the following responses: Never, Sometimes, Often, and Always. This allows the participants an opportunity to record their responses to how often their class as a whole exhibits the behaviors mentioned on the BAES. Hughes and Coplan, (2010) articulated the reliability and validity of the BAES by presenting the results from exploratory factor analysis. The BAES demonstrated “strong internal consistency in the current sample with $\alpha = .96$ ” (Hughes & Coplan, 2010, p. 217). Given an elevated level of kurtosis in the research and the newness of the BAES, Hughes and Coplan (2010) suggested “future research to further establish its psychometric properties and validity” (p. 219). Therefore, my research included psychometric properties and validity.

According to Creswell (2012), good research uses measures that are reliable. In this research, internal consistency reliability was used. The BAES was completed by the

accessible population. The responses were analyzed to check that the responses on the survey are completed similarly by using the Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's Alpha was used due to its nature of simplicity and promptness. Researchers should establish validity from the instrument itself (Creswell, 2012). The study by Hughes and Coplan (2010) reported scores of the validity of the BAES and the interpreted scores are aligned with the intended use of the BAES. The interviews with the sample population were used to corroborate the responses of the survey participants by asking the interview participants if they supported the responses that were reported on the BAES.

Standardized Tests. Standardized test scores were retrieved from the Georgia Department of Education. The test used is the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT). The quantitative data represents the population of students from third grade through fifth grade. The CRCT was administered to students in third grade through fifth grade. The second research question data was collected via the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT) scores.

The CRCT is a standardized achievement test mandated by the state of Georgia. The CRCT is designed to measure student academic achievement on Georgia Performance Standards and the Common Core Standards. Georgia law required all students in third grade through eighth grade to be assessed in the academic areas of reading, English/language arts, math, science and social studies. Since the LIM program sites are limited to elementary schools, this study focuses on third through fifth grade longitudinal data.

The scores used for this research were the scale scores. The scale score is a mathematical interpretation of a raw score (GADOE, 2014). The scale score represents a uniform score used for interpreting the data with grade levels and areas of content. The academic areas used for this research were the scale scores for mathematics and reading.

The Georgia Department of Education establishes content validity. Field testing is used to confirm that all items are aligned with Georgia curriculum standards. The CRCT is considered highly valid due to the Georgia Department of Education (GADOE) administering the assessment. The reliability coefficient for the 2010 administration was .90 (GADOE, 2014; Randall, & Engelhard, 2010).

Administrative Behavior Reports. Administrative behavior reports were retrieved from administrative records. The population for the behavior reports was third through fifth grade students at the LIM program sites. The behavior data was retrieved from the LIM program sites and was used to respond to the first research question. The principals at each program site presented all reported data covering all behavioral infractions. The behavior data is not available publicly and was provided by the individual schools. The actual number of behavior incidences was used as raw data for the interpretation.

Behavior data is available from each individual school that uses the LIM program. The behavior data was used to look at the overall discipline incidence reports to determine the influence of the LIM program. The total number of incidents from the 2012-2013 to the 2013-2014 school years were compared to provide a quantitative

indication for any potential influence of the LIM program on the students behavior as documented by discipline referrals.

Data Analysis & Validation Procedures

Quantitative Data

A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data from both standardized tests and behavior data. The behavior data is presented in a table format, disseminated by location and type of incident, reported using raw data. The ANOVA is a parametric test that assumes the variations in each group are the same, the samples are independent, and there are normal distributions. The software used was the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The hypotheses presented for this portion of the data are as follows:

H_0 = the means are equal for each grade level for test scores

H_1 = there is a difference in one of the means of the grade level's test scores.

Individual questions on the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES) were analyzed, treating the data as ordinal data and presented in the form of tables. The central tendency was summarized by the median and standard deviation for the BAES and variability was summarized by calculating the interquartile range. Descriptive statistics were utilized to summarize the qualities of the data from all surveys, standardized test scores, and administrative behavior records.

Integration of Data

The quantitative and qualitative data were integrated in the intermediate phase of the research. Integration occurred when the data analysis of the quantitative phase guided

the collection of the qualitative data. The questions were already developed for the interview (Appendix E); however, triangulation questions were added after the analysis of the quantitative phase. The results of both phases of the research were integrated during the interpretation of the conclusions of the entire research study. The findings are grouped according to the quantitative outcome and the qualitative supporting analysis.

Qualitative Data

Interview data was analyzed by transcribing the interviews, coding the interview data and researcher notes, and by watching for common premises, patterns, and relationships among the data. The coded data was then used to make generalizations and elaborate on the existing body of knowledge from the quantitative research. The data is described in a narrative format. The themes and generalizations are also arranged in tables and charts, according to the analyzed data. Validation procedures included triangulation of different sources of data and member checking.

Measurements Taken for Protection of Participants' Rights

The Institutional Review Board (IRB) and the participants gave their authorization for data collection to commence. I clearly outlined all phases, risks, queries, and benefits related to the research study and data collection and reported all those details to the IRB. The research study meet the terms of Walden University's ethical standards and with all U.S. federal guidelines regarding research involving participants (Walden University, n.d.). The school district has a hierarchical system set in place to gain access to facilities and participants in the district. All school district application procedures were followed. Once authorization was established from the IRB, I adhered to all procedures

accurately and informed the IRB of any violations. Each participant was advised of his/her rights, risks, and advantages of his/her voluntary contribution and presented the option to accept or refuse participation before proceeding by means of written consent or assent. The students' test scores being used in this study do not have any personal identification information. Therefore, there was no need for consent from the students, parents, or legal guardians.

Limitations of the Evaluation

Mixed methods research has limitations. One limitation is my inability to manipulate the variables. For example, the sample could reduce in size due to time constraints or any potential weakness of the study outside of my control. This limitation has the possibility to restrict the generalizability of the results (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). Additionally, preexisting data was being used to aid in evaluation and there was no way to manipulate the variables or prevent what may have been threats to validity.

Limitations in a research study help to identify potential weaknesses. The limitations for this study include the following:

1. An unknown percentage of students may have previously had exposure to leadership development opportunities, which may have an impact on the teacher's perception ratings.
2. Students who attended one of the schools that implemented the Leader in Me Program may have elected not to participate. This would influence the ratings by not representing the population.

3. Students involved in this study may have had varying amounts of exposure to the Leader in Me Program which would not be representative of the population.

Data Analysis Results

Structural Approach

I determined the need to utilize multiple methods to draw conclusions for this research. According to Creswell (2009), quantitative and qualitative data sources inform research. Consequently, this research study utilized a mixed-methods model to address the research questions. Mixed-methods investigations are intended for a combination of quantitative and qualitative research. Combining both qualitative and quantitative research helps to deepen the understanding of a single form of research (Mertens, 2014). Combining deductive driven research results with inductive explanations provides a deeper level of understanding of the research results. According to Merriam (2009) mixed-methods data analysis is an interpretive process that necessitates inductive and deductive reasoning together.

Specifically, this research followed the model of an explanatory design. Explanatory sequential design allows the research to build from one phase to the other. Creswell (2012) stated the sequential explanatory design is an approach that encompasses assembly and examination of quantitative information followed by the gathering and examination of qualitative research data, resulting in two distinct phases. Qualitative data refines and extends the broad picture yielded by the quantitative data by illuminating the quantitative results (Creswell, 2009; Lodico et al., 2010). Quantitative research alone

may not provide an extensive understanding of the perspective of the data and qualitative research accounts for the missing context.

Data Collection

The data collected in this research followed the design of the sequential explanatory design. This design necessitates quantitative research to be collected and analyzed prior to qualitative research being collected and analyzed. This occurred over a three-week timeframe, allowing for data entry and analysis in between phases.

After obtaining authorization from the Walden University Institutional Review Board, approval number 07-22-15-0300132, I contacted the five community partners to set up a meeting to discuss administrative reports and collect survey data. At each of the five meetings, a school administrator determined the time and place to conduct the surveys. I received either a printed copy or an electronic copy of school discipline records. Additionally, the administrators directed me to the Georgia Department of Education website for academic achievement records. A copy of all the behavior reports and achievement records were maintained securely in a locking file and will be kept there for 5 years.

The survey was administered at the five contributing elementary schools to the third through fifth grade teachers available that day. I presented the study and the role of the participants. The survey consent form was handed out to the accessible staff who were invited to participate. The participants that consented reported to a specified location as to eliminate the perception of coercion. Once at the specified location, I collected the survey consent forms and handed out the Behavioral Academic Engagement

Scale and a pen to each of the participants. The participants completed the surveys and returned them to a folder and dismissed themselves. Once all the surveys were complete, I entered the survey data into the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The hard copies of each survey and consent form were placed securely in the locking file and will remain there for 5 years.

Once the data was collected and analyzed, stratified sampling was used to select one teacher from each school, in grades three through five to be invited to contribute their thoughts and experiences in a follow up interview (see Appendix F). 15 invitations were given and 10 participants responded, yielding at 67% consent rate. The interviews were scheduled and carried out at a convenient time for both the participant and researcher. The consent form was reviewed and discussed with each participant. Once the form was signed, I began the interview. The interviews were recorded by me. I also provided a thank you gift of a pen and pad of paper. I later transcribed the recordings, coded the data to make generalizations, and determined themes.

Results & Findings

A brief review of the steps leading to the results and findings follows. I developed research questions based on the rising concerns of behavior in the classroom. Local schools and professional literature iterate the necessity to address these concerns. According to McCready and Soloway (2010), dealing with difficult behavior in the classroom is a top priority among school districts. Interventions are cited as a means to decrease student disruptive behavior problems so student achievement can remain the focus (Sherrod, Getch, & Ziomek-Daigle, 2009).

I learned about a school-wide intervention which has been implemented in a number of elementary schools across a school district. The Leader in Me (LIM) program became a source of investigation as an intervention on the growing discipline concerns. Research questions were designed to determine the effectiveness of the intervention and examine the impact of the LIM program on behavior and academic achievement in the educational setting. The research questions and hypotheses addressed in the study are as follows:

1. Did the implementation of the Leader in Me program make a difference on the number of behavior referrals between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years?
 - Hypothesis (H₁1): The Leader in Me program makes a difference on the number of behavior referrals between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.
 - Null Hypothesis (H₀1): The Leader in Me program does not make a difference on the number of behavior referrals between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years.
2. Did the implementation of the Leader in Me program make a significant difference in student achievement as measured by the Criterion Referenced Competency Test?
 - Hypothesis (H₁2): The Leader in Me program makes a significant difference in student achievement as measured by the Criterion Referenced Competency Test.

- Hypothesis (H₀₂): The Leader in Me program does not make a significant difference in student achievement as measured by the Criterion Referenced Competency Test.
3. What student leadership qualities and behaviors are identified by the teachers that are attributed to the Leader in Me program?
- Hypothesis (H₁₃): The teachers who work with students where the Leader in Me program has been implemented, have observed changes in student behavior.
 - Hypothesis (H₀₃): The teachers who work with students where the Leader in Me program has been implemented, have not observed changes in student behavior.

Quantitative and qualitative data collection were used to address the research study questions.

Research Question 1. The first research question was addressed by quantitative school behavior data. Each school administrator provided myself with discipline referral data. The schools' data was entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) by school, incidence type and quantity of incidences. The discipline data is disseminated by the type of infraction. The data for all five schools is combined and summarized by table 2.

Discipline Incidences Resulting in Administrative Referrals

Reported Behaviors	2012-2013	2013-2014
Arson	0	3
Aggression	6	2
Battery	1	22
Being in unauthorized area	8	0
Bullying	1	7
Bus misconduct	30	16
Disrespect	38	0
Disruptive behavior	81	109
Falsifying information	9	2
Harassment	22	14
Horseplay	78	51
Incendiary devices	1	1
Insubordination	103	97
Leaving class without permission	7	0
Obscene/Inappropriate material	2	1
Other serious discipline incident	4	5
Physical violence	103	81
Profanity	77	48
Sexual offense	16	6
Theft	10	2
Threat / Intimidation	44	13
Vandalism	10	11
Weapons	3	3
Total Discipline Referrals	654	494

Once the data for each school was entered into SPSS, descriptive statistics and a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was applied to examine the data further. The data for the schools was entered by quantity of incident type, yielding 23 categories possible for each individual school. The total quantity of reported infraction categories is 115, based on 23 categories at five schools. Descriptive statistics are summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics for Discipline Referrals

	2012-2013	2013-2014
Mean	5.69	4.30
Mode	0	0
Std. Deviation	10.442	8.854

Note. n = 115

I conducted a one-way ANOVA test with a 95% confidence interval to compare the amount of discipline referrals in the 2012-2013 school year to the 2013-2014 school year. The one-way ANOVA was used to determine statistical significance between the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. The results of the ANOVA are listed in Table 4.

Table 4

ANOVA for Reported Discipline Incidences

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6418.275	23	279.055	10.086	.000*
Within Groups	2517.673	91	27.667		
Total	8935.948	114			

Note. *p < .05

In order to reject the null hypothesis, a p -value must be less than .05 to be statistically significant. The p -value of this one-way ANOVA was .000. A one-way ANOVA presumes the variances of the groups are all equal, therefore I ran a Levene test for homogeneity of variances. The p -value of the Lavene Statistic was .000. Therefore the assumption is justified. Given the results of this ANOVA, I have concluded a significant variance from the 2012-2013 to the 2013-2013 school year in the quantity of discipline reports and rejects the null hypothesis. The ANOVA results imply the means differ more than would be probable by chance alone. The results do not tell me about specific behaviors, just there are most likely real effects. I have concluded the Leader in Me (LIM) program is associated with decreasing the total number of discipline reports at these five schools.

According to Watson (1913) and Skinner (1984), behaviors are adjustable and changeable. The overall quantity of behaviors reported to administration decreased from the 2012-2013 to the 2013-2014 school year. With the LIM program implemented at all five elementary schools, it is statistically reasonable to contend the reduction in discipline incidences is a result of the LIM program.

Research Question 2. The second research question was addressed by quantitative school achievement data. The test used is the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT). The CRCT is intended to measure academic achievement on Georgia Performance Standards and the Common Core Standards.

The elementary schools' achievement data were entered into SPSS and analyzed.

The achievement data is detailed by the academic area and scale score by school. The data for all five schools is summarized by table 5.

Table 5

Scale Scores for Students in Third and Fifth Grades

Grade	School	Reading		Math	
		2012-2013	2013-2014	2012-2013	2013-2014
Third Grade	A	870	859	868	851
	B	860	855	867	864
	C	836	823	835	832
	D	854	855	861	860
	E	858	855	846	850
Fourth Grade	A	863	863	864	856
	B	851	856	853	854
	C	833	833	831	834
	D	853	852	847	858
	E	852	855	851	837
Fifth Grade	A	849	855	867	864
	B	850	847	861	860
	C	826	833	851	846
	D	846	849	848	855
	E	843	850	845	847

Once the data for each school was entered into SPSS, descriptive statistics and a one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data further. The data for five schools was entered by academic subject, school code, and grade level for each individual school. The total quantity of possible reported scale scores is 15, based on three grade levels at five schools. Descriptive statistics are summarized in Table 6.

Table 6
Descriptive Statistics of Scale Scores in Reading and Math

		n	Mean	SD	Std. Error	95% CI		Min.	Max.
						LB	UB		
Reading	3rd Grade	5	849.4	14.859	6.645	830.95	867.85	823	859
	4th Grade	5	851.8	11.256	5.034	837.82	865.78	833	863
	5th Grade	5	846.8	8.258	3.693	836.55	857.05	833	855
	Total	15	849.33	11.101	2.866	843.19	855.48	823	863
Math	3rd Grade	5	851.4	12.361	5.528	836.05	866.75	832	864
	4th Grade	5	847.8	11.367	5.083	833.69	861.91	834	858
	5th Grade	5	854.4	7.893	3.53	844.6	864.2	846	864
	Total	15	851.2	10.304	2.66	845.49	856.91	832	864

Note. SD = standard deviation; CI = confidence interval; LB = lower bound; UL = upper bound

After the descriptive statistics were generated, I conducted a one-way ANOVA test with a 95% confidence interval to compare the scale scores from the 2012-2013 CRCT test to the 2013-2014 CRCT test. The one-way ANOVA was used to determine statistical significance between the 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years. Additionally, I used the one-way ANOVA to look at the statistical significance between subjects. The results of the ANOVA are listed in Table 7.

Table 7
ANOVA for the Scale Scores in Reading and Math

	Reading				
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	62.533	2	31.267	.226	.801
Within Groups	1662.8	12	138.567		
	Math				
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	109.2	2	54.6	.476	.633
Within Groups	1377.2	12	114.767		

In order to reject the null hypothesis, a p -value must be less than .05 to be statistically significant. The p -value of this one-way ANOVA was .801 for reading and .633 for math. Additionally, the F ratio for both reading and math indicate the variation among group means is less than expected by chance. Given the results of this ANOVA, this researcher has concluded there is not a significant variance from the 2012-2013 to the 2013-2013 school year in the area of academic achievement as measured by the CRCT. Therefore, I accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative hypothesis.

According to Risser (2013) and Firmender, Gavin, and McCoach (2014), behavior and academics have a strong correlation. Therefore, the impact that academic achievement has on students and communities is of high importance. Increased academic success and leadership opportunities are often linked to classrooms containing strategies

of management (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle; 2010). The effects of the LIM program, in this research, do not show a significant difference as reported on CRCT data.

Research Question 3. The third research question required both quantitative and qualitative data in order to be addressed. The quantitative data came from the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES). This survey was administered to 74 participants and all questions on each survey was answered. The central tendency is summarized by the standard deviation and median while the variability is summarized by calculating the interquartile range. Wholey, Hatry and Newcomer (2010) recommended these specific statistics based on the idea that they are not affected by outliers. The descriptive statistics are summarized in table 8.

Table 8

Descriptive Statistics for the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale

Classroom Behaviors	SD	IR
Completes assignments in a timely fashion	.469	0
Comes to school with appropriate materials	.587	0
Contributes positively to class	.420	0
Stays focused on tasks	.521	1
Has materials ready in a timely fashion	.549	1
Shows an interest in learning	.435	0
Works well in groups	.561	0
Raises hand in class	.589	1
Listens attentively	.603	1
Tries to answer questions when called upon	.516	1

Note. Median for all behaviors is 3.00; SD = standard deviation; IR = interquartile range

The combination of central tendency and variation of the data were used to determine the relative degree of consensus for each behavior addressed on the BAES. The median for all of the classroom behaviors was a 3.00 on the 4-point rating scale, the standard deviations ranged from .420 to .589, and the interquartile ranged from 0 to 1. The descriptive statistics indicate a relatively high concurrence level surrounding the behaviors observed by the participants. The reliability of the responses were then analyzed to check that the responses on the survey were completed similarly by using the Cronbach's Alpha. The results of the Cronbach's Alpha were $\alpha = .845$, suggesting the items have a relatively high internal consistency. Due to a high internal consistency and the degree of consensus for each behavior on the BAES, I reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis.

Qualitative input is also essential to addressing the research question. Ten interviews with a sample of the population were conducted. Each interview began with two questions focused on triangulation of the data. Additionally, the interviewees were asked 5 questions about observable leadership characteristics. After transcription, coding and analysis, several relationships, patterns and themes were generated. The generalized themes were analyzed specifically to further explain the results from the quantitative portion of this research. The generalized themes from the participants' responses are responsibility and collaboration.

Triangulation. The first two questions I asked were used to verify the themes that were identified in the survey to control biases within the data. The first question specifically identified themes and asked if the themes accurately described their students.

Those themes included the following: contributing positively in class, completing assignments in a timely manner, being prepared to learn, working collaboratively, remaining on task, listening attentively, and actively participating in lessons. Half of the interviewees felt the description was accurate for their entire class consistently while the other interviewees indicated the descriptions were accurate for their class some or most of the time as summarized by Figure 2.

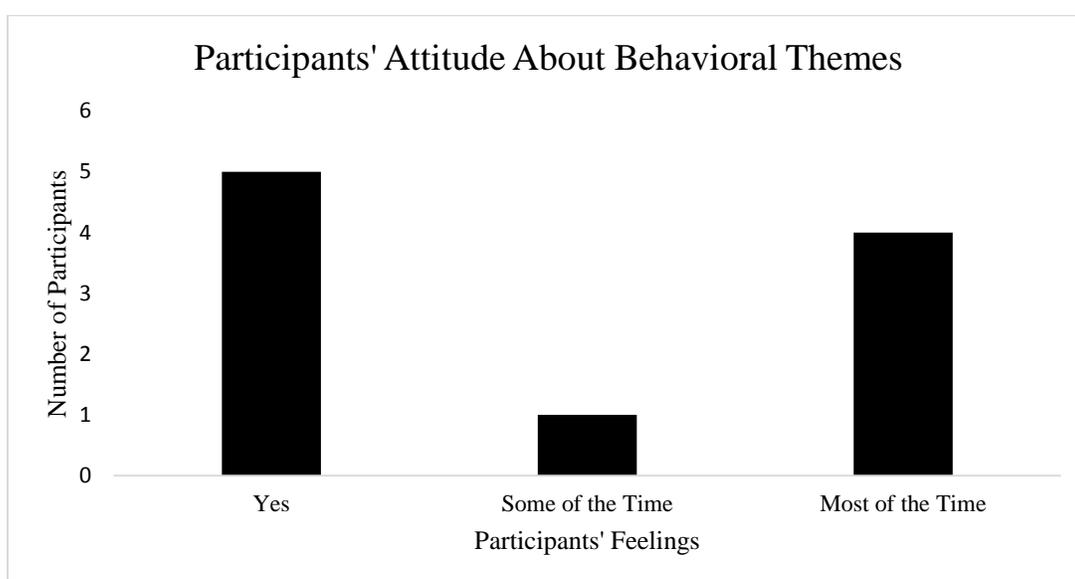


Figure 2. Bar graph showing the participants' feelings toward behavioral themes

The participants who expressed feelings other than yes expanded on their response. Interviewee A said, “On good days” indicating the students are not displaying these behaviors all the time. Interviewee D said, “for the most part, they do those things” indicating the behaviors may not describe all of the students in her classroom. The second question was aimed at identifying whether or not the participants felt the themes were related to the Leader in Me (LIM) program. Nine of the participants felt the LIM program was associated with many of the themes. One interviewee felt as though their students

displayed many of the behaviors but was unsure of the connection to LIM or other factors. The most common response was a program-specified habit or behavior. The habits included: working cooperatively, synergizing, thinking win-win, beginning with the end in mind, and being proactive. This methodological triangulation technique was used to validate the responses from the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale.

Theme 1: Responsibility. The most frequently occurring theme in the interviews was responsibility. This theme is specifically associated with the LIM program, according to the interviewees. The sub-terms associated with responsibility are helping others to be successful, accountability, helping without being asked, choosing the right action, and accepting responsibility for their own mistakes. Interviewee J discussed the students as “being responsible for their own learning” by charting their progress as a learner and reflecting on it. One participant described the increase in responsibility by using the LIM habits to find their responsibility role. Interviewee A said, “If they say, well I’m in charge of me then I can listen, I can pay attention, and I can follow directions” to describe the trickle effect of the LIM program habits for the students. Interviewee C explained the increase in responsibility has much to do with leadership jobs in the classroom, stating “the students do 90% of the work. One participant explained the natural tendency in the students to help others. Interviewee G described the students as willing to step up and help new students find places in the building. Interviewees A, B, F, and J concur that the level of accountability is increased due to the LIM program being a school wide program. The language of the habits is spoken throughout the school and

therefore the students tend to demonstrate more accountability. The theme of responsibility further explains the quantitative data, thus supporting the quantitative data.

Theme 2: Collaboration. There are multiple themes, which emerged from the interviews. The second most frequently occurring theme was collaboration. This theme is specifically associated with the LIM program, according to the interviewees. The sub-terms associated with collaboration were group work, working collaboratively and synergizing. In discussion with the participants, a link between collaboration and leadership became apparent. Interviewee B discussed collaboration in terms of “leadership in action” and later expounded on this by sharing how the interactions with others helps their students to feel confident in being a leader. One participant expressed collaboration as a result of the LIM due to the students learning at a young age. Interviewee H feels “they've learned to synergize together, they've learned to be accepting of others' difficulties” as a result of following the LIM program. Interviewee A said, “The students feel comfortable with one another because they have leadership qualities that shows that they not only care about their success but their classmates' success.” Collaboration has been identified as an observable leadership trait as a result of the LIM program and further explains the accepted hypothesis.

Quantitative and Qualitative Connections. The goal of the explanatory sequential design is to gather additional awareness into the quantitative results (Lodico et al., 2010). The results from the quantitative and qualitative data are in alignment. The specific behaviors from the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES) have a connection to the LIM program and the habits advocated by the LIM program. Given the themes

generated from the interviews, the behaviors presented in the BAES are listed with the corresponding themes identified by the interviewees in figures 3 and 4 respectively.

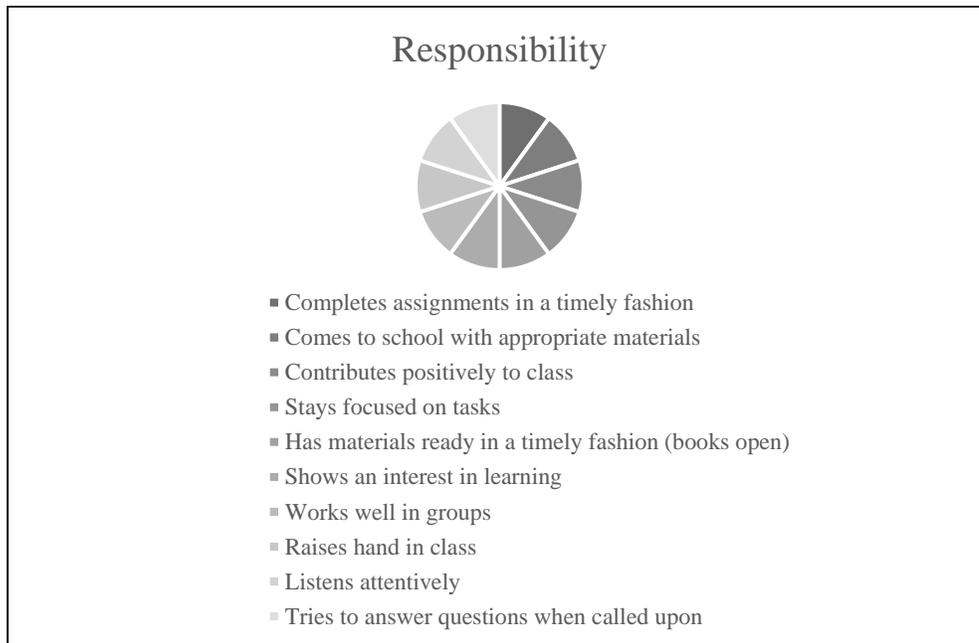


Figure 3. Behaviors associated with the theme of responsibility.

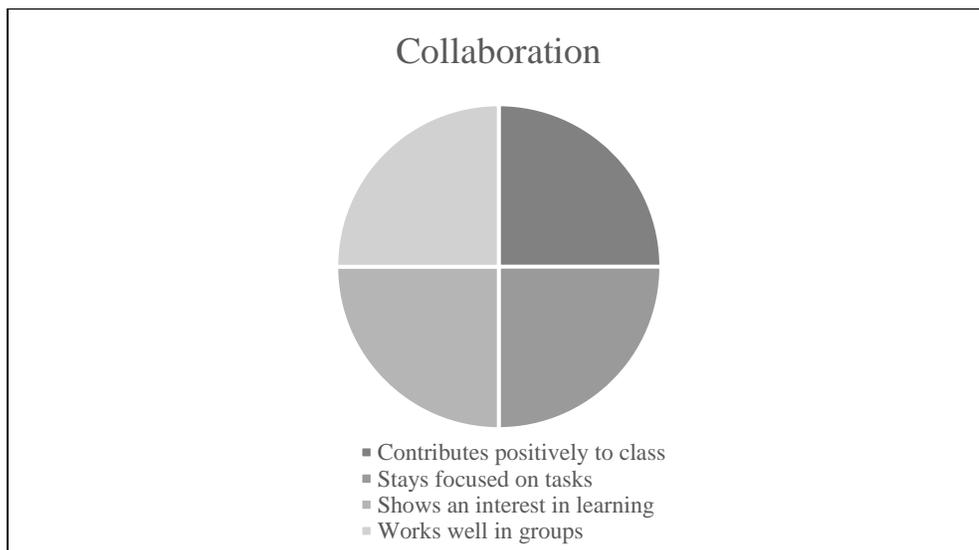


Figure 4. Behaviors associated with the theme of collaboration.

The themes further explain the observable behaviors in the classroom, as

described by the interview participants. Specifically, the behaviors described by the survey participants are supported by the qualitative responses of the interview participants. The themes of responsibility and collaboration resonate with the participants and the LIM program outcomes. The themes of responsibility and collaboration emerged during the qualitative segment of this study and were dominant enough among the interview participants to be included in the outcomes of project itself.

Project as an Outcome

The participating elementary schools located in the Charter Central School District began utilizing the Leader in Me program for various reasons. Due to the concerns expressed by educators at other locations and professional literature, the outcome of this research supports a policy recommendation in the form of a position paper. This will be provided to county-level and school level administration. It is critical for school administration and staff members to recognize the effects of a student leadership development program. It is also vital for the administrative teams to identify potential school culture changes and how they can come about through intentional behavior coaching. The position paper will be used to inform school leadership about recommendations based on the study results. In section three, a detailed explanation of the project based on research findings is presented. It includes an introduction, rationale, review of literature, project description, evaluation plan and potential implications.

Conclusion

A mixed-methods research methodology was presented in this section. An explanatory sequential research design was used to evaluate the Leader in Me (LIM)

program as an intervention tool. Five elementary schools, which have implemented the LIM program, are the population for this study. The population was surveyed using the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES). This 4-point Likert scale survey provided quantitative data about teacher perceptions of student leadership traits. Stratified sampling was used to select interviewees for qualitative data. Quantitative data was collected through administrative records addressing behavior incident reports and standardized test scores. This quantitative data was used to measure the impact of the LIM program as an intervention on behavior incidences and academic achievement. A one-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to analyze the data from both standardized tests and behavior data. Assumptions, limitations, scope, and delimitations were also outlined to give perspective into the research framework.

Section 3: The Project

In my study, I addressed educators' concerns about the effects of behavior interruptions by students in the classroom and the belief of many that interventions are needed (Kowalewicz & Coffee, 2013). The purpose of my study was to understand the impact of an articulated program of leadership instruction on behavior in the classroom and determine any impact on academic achievement. Demonstrating that coachable leadership skills can help decrease behavior incidences in the classroom, this project serves to inform stakeholders about the effects of the Leader in Me program as they consider intervention programs in their schools (Dean & Shepard, 2012). The findings of this study are provided in a position paper (see Appendix A). This section provides a description of the project, related goals, a rationale for the project genre, a literature review, a project description, an evaluation plan, and a discussion of limitations of the project.

Description and Goals

The project that I developed is a policy recommendation in the form of a position paper. The objective of a position paper is to “generate support on an issue” (Xavier University Library, 2014, para. 1). Detailed support for the problem is established in policy and practice recommendations. This position paper constitutes a guidance document to prompt stakeholders to implement the Leader in Me program in an effort to reduce behavioral interruptions in the classroom. The position paper includes background of the existing problem, a summary of my analyses and findings, and specific recommendations.

The recommendations that I make in the position paper come from my evaluation research of LIM as a classroom intervention. According to my quantitative findings, the LIM is associated with a reduction in the total number of discipline referrals. However, I also found LIM did not show a significant difference in student achievement. It is possible this outcome might need additional time to become measurable. Through the qualitative findings, the collected data indicated that the participants felt the themes of responsibility and collaboration had increased in students using the LIM program. Because the number of discipline referrals decreased and the teacher participants reported an increase in leadership behaviors, I recommended that CCSD continue offering LIM.

My main goals for the project are to (a) communicate the study's findings and recommendations to all stakeholders, (b) spur discussion among the school district's stakeholders regarding the effects of the LIM program and its effects on student behavior, and (c) recommend that other administrators in other school districts implement LIM in the future.

I found that directly teaching leadership skills led to a decreased incidence of behavioral interruptions in the classroom and contributed to an increase in student leadership behaviors. I expect that the outlined recommendations in the project will guide stakeholders to a greater understanding of the possible outcomes of implementing the LIM program. I hope that stakeholders consider the benefits linked to the intentional instruction of leadership habits. The project provides a framework for future research pertaining to leadership and behavior in the classroom.

Rationale

I believe that my research findings support the use of a position paper to help stakeholders in addressing behavior management in the classroom. There are four potential projects, and only one is a logical culmination of the findings of my research. The first, an evaluation report, is not an adequate project given the fact that this was not a program evaluation. The second and third proposed projects, a curriculum plan and a professional development plan, are not appropriate projects given the fact that I do not have access to the LIM program because these copy written and purchased materials are not accessible since I don't work for the LIM publisher. Implementation of LIM requires extensive training over multiple years and must be completed by a LIM trainer. So, I am not authorized to create LIM curriculum and professional development plans.

The fourth project, a position paper, is the best fit, in my opinion. Based on my research results, a policy recommendation in the form of a position paper to district-level administration and individual school administrations is provided. In this way, recommendations for a school-wide intervention to meet district and school level goals are delivered to school leaders and faculty. It is also vital for administrative teams to identify potential school culture changes and how they can come about through the direct coaching related to appropriate student behaviors. The position paper is used to inform school leadership within the CCSD about recommendations constructed on the study results.

Review of the Literature

This review of the literature has two purposes. The first purpose is to establish that a position paper was a suitable approach for my final project. The second purpose was to address the content of the project.

Assembling the research for this review consisted of several steps. Beginning with the Walden University Library, the following databases were used to locate research: Education Research Complete, Academic Search Premier, and SAGE Publications. Additionally, I accessed research from Google and Google Scholar to be assured the search was both exhaustive and complete. Because the review of the literature has two different purposes, the searches were executed differently and are presented in detail in the subsequent paragraphs.

Support for Using a Position Paper as a Genre

Reference literature equates position papers with white papers, argument papers, policy papers, and grey literature. The related genre references found in my research were reviewed and led to a determination of the following Boolean descriptors: *white paper*, *grey literature*, *policy paper*, *position paper*, and *argument paper*. Saturation of the literature entailed a comprehensive search of the available resources. The accumulated list of descriptors related to policy papers determined the quantity and quality of the information available. Topics for discussion and deliberation within a variety of markets including business and education culminated in the writing of position papers. In addition, business conferences and educational conventions often utilize position papers as a means of disseminating data.

Historically, position papers are limited in accessibility, and dissemination of the paper itself is of high importance (Osayande & Ukpebor, 2012). However, by comparison this position paper will be easily accessible. This review of literature provides the research to develop the policy paper, including the content. Initially, the Boolean phrases that I used in my research included the word *behavior* in the search. This type of search yielded limited results that could contribute to the purposes of this position paper. However, the results did include many valuable resources pertaining to the reasoning behind policy papers and the associated expectations. Additionally, the searches provided a variety of research topics and styles to allow for observation of successful articulation and presentation strategies (Ball, Hoskins, Maguire, & Braun; 2011; Skiba, Albrecht, & Losen; 2013). Information located within this search confirmed the terms *position paper* and *white paper* are used interchangeably (Graham, 2015). For the function of this literature review, the two terms may be used interchangeably.

The principle behind a position paper is to promote the idea in which certain perceptions could present a resolution for a specific problem (Purdue Owl, 2015). Ultimately, the goals of the project were to communicate the study's findings and be a catalyst for discussion among stakeholders regarding the effects of a student leadership program and its resulting effects on student behavior. Subsequently, a position paper is a suitable avenue to achieve the purposes of the project. The nature of a position paper provides a concise format by which discussions can be grounded for a broad spectrum of stakeholders (Cobb, Jackson, Smith, Sorum, & Henrick, 2013). Graham (2015) discusses

position papers as a means of promoting facts with a purpose. The purpose is clearly identified and justified for this project.

Support for the Content of the Project

The second purpose of this review of literature is to focus on how the problem is addressed throughout the details of the project. Searches using specific electronic databases were used to locate and research current literature. The Walden University Library was used to access the following electronic databases: Academic Search Complete, Education Research Complete, and SAGE Premier. Specific Boolean phrases included: *leadership*, *Leader in Me*, *student leadership program*, *21st Century leadership skills*, *7 habits*, *collaboration*, *student responsibility*, *student collaboration*, *Covey's Theory*, and *social and emotional learning*. Saturation was achieved by cross-checking and comparing references between the current research time frame of 2011 and 2016.

The content of this proposed white paper project is centered on the conclusions of the research. This research included both teachers' descriptions of changes in students' behavior due to the implementation of the Leader in Me (LIM) program and a report from local school administration noting the decrease in behavior incidences following implementation of the LIM program. The following review of literature is represented by four main sections. The first section of the position paper describes the program and shares common terms in order to facilitate clarity. The second section explains connections between the need to determine the efficacy of the intervention and the specific activities of the research. The third section describes the specific findings of the research and this final section makes recommendations for the future.

The findings of this research guided the development of the position paper as a project with goal-based outcomes. The first goal is to convey the study's findings and recommendations to all stakeholders. The second goal is to be a catalyst for discussion among the school district's stakeholders regarding the effects of the Leader in Me program and its resulting effects on student behavior. The third goal is to recommend future implementation of the Leader in Me program.

With the intention of clearly communicating the findings of the research, it is necessary to outline the general framework of the Leader in Me program and to share the common vocabulary utilized by the teachers, administrators, and students. This program, authored by Stephen Covey, was adopted and implemented to meet the demands of the individual schools. The LIM program uses the Seven Habits of Highly Effective People as its framework (Covey, 1989). These habits are the principles on which students are coached and guided in their Leader in Me (LIM) journey. The faculty, trained by LIM trainers, teach one habit at a time during their regular classroom lessons (Franklin Covey, n.d.). These habits provide the vocabulary that teachers and students use to communicate.

In order to clarify the common language used in the Leader in Me program, it is essential to examine the basis of the seven habits (Covey, 1989). Habit one, be proactive, is connected closely with self-awareness and self-efficacy (Covey, 1989). Being proactive is characterized by planning ahead and anticipating potential problems. The idea of being proactive helps students when they become overwhelmed with obstacles (Gabriel, 2010; Isaacson, 2015). Habit two, begin with the end in mind, is connected to developing vision and purpose. Korsmo, Barrett, Friesen, and Finnley (2012) state that a

vision is arbitrary if nobody is working toward it. Students are encouraged to have a plan and keep it in the front of their mind. This gives students purpose and encourages them to take action in reaching their goals. Habit three, put first things first, correlates with being a manager of priorities. Using a strategic management plan, students create a loyalty to their goals and mission (Ozdem, 2011; Mainhard, 2015). According to Koontz and O'Donnell (2011) creating a plan requires understanding of the procedures around them to include rules, methods, programs, policies and objectives. Habit four, think win-win, encompasses a mutual respect and mutual benefit for all involved. A student gives proper attention to both themselves and others in order to construct an option that is suitable for all students (Covey, 2008; Cywińska, 2013). This requires students to be able to handle conflict resolution. Habit five, seek first to understand then be understood, focuses on mutual understanding. Communication is necessary for students be able to discern the other person's position before reaching a solution to conflict. Habit six, synergize, is built on the concept of cooperation with others. By synergizing with others, students begin to value the differences in others by using individual strengths to create something greater, by creatively finding team solutions (Covey, 1989; Gray, 2011). Habit seven, sharpen the saw, is based on the belief of continuous replenishment. The goal of this habit is provide a means of reaching balance in life. Many of these habits are discussed in the findings of this research as well as guide the context of the position paper.

The second section describes how the position paper is to be a catalyst for discussion among the school district's stakeholders regarding the efficacy of the Leader in Me program and its resulting effects on student behavior. Therefore, it is important to

make connections between the activities involved in the research and the validation of the efficacy of the LIM program. The efficacy of the program is related closely to the number of behavior incidences, teacher perceptions, and quality of implementation (Durlak, 2016). According to Bradshaw (2015), programs aimed at a specific outcome can have additional effects on other areas, even if that was not the intended focus. This research looked closely at the number of reported behavior incidences because of the identified concern within the school district that classroom interruptions distracted students from a focus on learning. By comparing the numbers of behavior incidences, the research was able to determine that the Leader in Me program implementation was related to a decrease in the number of classroom interruptions. Additionally, teacher perceptions, as measured through surveys and interviews, further supports that newly acquired leadership skills can also impact behavior in the classroom. The efficacy of the Leader in Me program is represented in the research findings and should be a necessary component of upcoming discussions based on the position paper.

Leadership Skills. The findings of this research illuminate leadership as a means of decreasing behavioral interruptions. Many descriptors were provided by the research participants. These descriptors align with the characteristics presented in this section. According to Marzano (2003), leadership has the potential to be considered the most important characteristic of school reform for administration, teachers, and students. FranklinCovey (n.d.) has a belief that all students are able to lead their own lives. This idea moves away from leadership titles and rankings (Bowman, 2013). The shift toward

this thinking empowers everyone involved to choose to take on a leadership position in his/her life (FranklinCovey, n.d.).

Leadership characteristics have taken on a variety of labels and identifiers in education. These characteristics include the following: critical thinking, creativity in problem solving, communication, collaboration, and an underlying theme of responsibility (Bowman, 2013; Carlgren, 2013; Rosch, Collier, & Thompson, 2015; The National Educational Administration, 2012). Leadership competencies, also referred to as 21st Century leadership skills, are being aligned in schools as current business leaders expect their employees to possess these skills (Ejiwale, 2014; Truschel & Reedy, 2015). Leadership is considered a means of viewing the world instead of an agenda of accomplishments (Bowman, 2013). In the teacher interviews in this study, teacher perceptions of identified leadership skills included a variety of characteristics displayed in a variety of leadership styles. Some of these characteristics included contributing positively in class, working collaboratively, remaining on task, listening attentively, synergizing, actively participating in lessons and being proactive.

Critical Thinking. Vieira, Tenreiro-Vieira, & Martins (2011) assert that critical thinking is a multifaceted concept. It can be viewed as using the logical aspects of thinking or as identifying thinking abilities (Rickles, Schneider, Slusser, Williams, & Zipp, 2013). The philosophical idea of using the logical aspect of teaching is best described as refining thoughts. Examples of this idea could be assessing the validity of an argument or detecting logic errors. The cognitive psychology idea of identifying thinking ability is best described as the teaching of thinking. The underlying thought behind this

concept is that deeper thinking can be promoted and improved (Kettler, 2014).

Accordingly, teachers are encouraged to foster deeper thinking rather than define it for their students (Nahachewsky, 2013). Responsibility with critical thinking challenges students to combine their deep thinking with others by seeking improvement in a student's own ideas and thoughts. This requires rigorous expectations of excellence for an individual (Calgren, 2013). Critical thinking is aligned with the Leader in Me program outcomes. The presence of critical thinking is identified by teacher perceptions as measured by surveys and interviews in this research.

Collaboration. Collaboration is an imperative element to teaching and learning (Common Core State Initiative, 2012; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2012).

Collaboration, also commonly referred to as collective intelligence, is defined as the capability to work successfully with others (Carpenter & Pease, 2013). Collaboration has the ability to enhance academic curriculum and create meaningful relationships with peers (Trail Ross, 2012). Collaboration with others encourages interactions in which students listen to others and develop other's interests through dialogue (Conant & Norgaard 2012). In order to demonstrate collaboration, a student must demonstrate responsibility of their learning and take charge themselves by being a component of the collaborative team and building trust with others (Bowman, 2013). Collaboration is also aligned with the Leader in Me program outcomes. The presence of collaboration is identified by teacher perceptions as measured by surveys and interviews in this research when the teachers describe working cooperatively and participating in groups.

Communication. Communication can be disseminated into many different meanings. These include intercommunication, conflict-management, interpretation of verbal and nonverbal messages, active listening, formulating and expressing oneself clearly, and interpersonal skills (Burt, Patel, Butler, & Gonzalez, 2013; Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2012; Pellegrino & Hilton, 2013). Students' backgrounds vary and exposure to good personal communication may be lacking; therefore, the need is great for students to be instructed in negotiation, problem solving, and conflict resolution (Miller and Slocombe, 2012). Once communication skills are taught, the opportunity for enhancement becomes a greater reality. Individuals who have strong communication skills tend to be more competent and successful (Erzokan, 2013). Responsibility with using communication effectively infuses the need to express an individual's thoughts with the understanding of other's thoughts using connections and relationships (Bowman, 2013). Communication is aligned with the Leader in Me program outcomes. The presence of communication is identified by teacher perceptions as measured by surveys and interviews in this research when teachers acknowledge that students are contributing positively in class.

Creativity. Creativity is a necessary component for an individual to be successful in both society and the working world (Partnership for 21st Century Skills, 2012). Creativity, also referred to as innovation and design thinking, is the ability to use original thoughts to design or improve something (Viviano, 2012). The ability to be creative is considered a necessary skill in order to make a strong contribution to the workforce and the world (Anderson, 2012). Creative thinking, also referred to as building creative

capacities, can have valuable impact on surrounding communities and should be encouraged in the classroom (Anderson, 2012; Ejiwale, 2014). A combination of responsibility and creativity encourage individual work and cause student leaders to view creativity as a responsibility (Bowman, 2013). Creativity is aligned with the Leader in Me program outcomes and is identified by teacher perceptions when teachers refer to students thinking win-win and solving problems creatively, as described on teacher surveys.

Social and Emotional Learning. One principle behind implementation of the Leader in Me (LIM) is based on social and emotional knowledge. According to Durlak, Weissberg, Dymnicki, Taylor, & Schellinger (2011), understanding the social and emotional health components is necessary in order to fully participate in a democracy and those that are denied access to this are being denied the opportunity to fully participate. The use of social and emotional education has provided evidence to prevent many of the behavior problems that plague students today and promote the well-being and success of students (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning (CASEL), 2013). Durlak et al., (2011) describe the necessity for social and emotional health as a better foundation for academic improvement, fewer discipline problems and improved academic success. Social and emotional knowledge is identified by the progression through which individuals learn to control their feelings, give attention to others, make good judgements, perform responsibly, cultivate positive associations, and accomplish goals (Weissberg & Cascarino, 2013). According to Elias and Leverett (2011), without a strong emotional intelligence, students' academic skills work in vain. Social and

emotional learning is aligned with the Leader in Me program principles. The presence of social and emotional learning is evident in this research as demonstrated by a decrease in unwanted behaviors and an increase in desired behaviors.

This review of literature demonstrates the project's material and structure is appraised by the reported analyses and by pertinent examination. Research was presented for the genre of the project as well as the content of the project. Saturation of peer-reviewed resources was achieved as evidenced by this literature review.

Project Description

The genre for this doctoral study was a policy recommendation with detail in the format of a position paper. The specific components of the project include potential resources and existing supports, potential barriers and solutions, proposal for design, roles and responsibilities, and an evaluation plan. The position paper is the artifact of this doctoral study.

Potential Resources and Existing Supports

Preparing to implement the policy paper requires specific resources and support. Specific to the first goal of communicating the study's findings and recommendations to all stakeholders, technology and time are necessary resources. Existing technologies including access to computers, software for reading and downloading the project, and email are needed to circulate and retrieve the position paper in order to yield effective dissemination (Gannaway, Hinton, Berry, & Moore, 2013). Time is also a vital resource necessary to review the paper.

There are potential resources needed to achieve the goal of being a catalyst for discussion among the school district's stakeholders regarding the effects of the Leader in Me program and its resulting effects on student behavior school discipline reports. In addition to reviewing the project, individual school discipline reports and academic achievement reports can be disseminated to examine the effects of the Leader in Me program more closely.

The third goal of the position paper is to recommend future implementation of the Leader in Me (LIM) program, therefore, potential resources are needed to achieve this goal. The stakeholders will need access to the LIM program website. The information contained in this site includes the program overview, program resources, funding options, and contact information for program representatives. While recommending the LIM program is a goal of the project, details of the LIM program are not outlined in this position paper, and therefore, a comprehensive review is essential to understanding the components of the LIM program.

Stakeholders in schools who have implemented the LIM program support the dissemination of the information in this study. Additionally, the school district has research priorities established in the area of school reform models, specifically leadership development. This establishes a district-level support.

Potential Barriers and Solutions

Potential barriers exist that could impact or delay implementation of the project. These barriers include ample time for effective discussion. Identification of potential

barriers is a means to be proactive in identifying potential hindrances, and therefore, planning ahead to address concerns as they arise.

Time. Stakeholder time is a potential barrier. In order for change to be implemented, individuals must desire to see change or recognize that change needs to be made (Watson & Watson, 2013). Teachers, students, and their families must take the time to read the position paper as they may be directly impacted by this program. Teachers and administrators are often concerned with using time effectively (Tagg, 2012).

Additionally, administrators and budgeting officials may not see discussion of this leadership program as a time-worthy priority. Therefore, support and sustainability of recommendations is also a time concern. Potential solutions to the barrier of time include communication of expectations from the administration allocating time to the discussion of the program, understanding of long-term potential program influences on instructional time, including stakeholders from schools who have implemented the program to be available for discussions, and using professional learning time to understand and appreciate the potential benefits of continued program implementation (Eaker & DuFour, 2015; Hastie, MacPhail, Calderón, & Sinelnikov, 2015). This would hopefully eliminate the pressure placed on teachers to review the project on their own time and make the work manageable.

Proposal for Application and Timetable

The final project, a position paper, will be submitted to the school district in which the research study was performed. The timeframe for this project to be read and discussed will be four to six months in the following timetable:

- The position paper will be sent as a PDF attachment to an email. This will be sent to the research department, school administration of the schools at which data collection occurred, and to the participants of the interview data.
- It is anticipated that the research department manager will forward the position paper to the Executive Director of Accountability & Research for review and approval to send to local schools for review.
- If the Executive Director of Accountability & Research determines the paper is suitable for distribution, the local administrators will receive a hard copy of the position paper prior to the April 15th deadline of finalizing school improvement plans. The local administrators will be encouraged to review and reflect on the potential effects a student leadership program.
- I will also contact the Department of Professional Learning and ask to present the policy paper to the department in hopes of securing a breakout session presentation for principal leadership.
- Once I am granted permission, I will secure a breakout session presentation time slot at the annual principal leadership conference where all administrators are required to attend.

Roles and Responsibilities of Others

The policy paper will become part of the responsibilities of many individuals and groups once it is in their hands. The following stakeholders have been identified as having key roles and responsibilities for reading and discussing the findings of the

position paper: the researcher, district officials, school administration, teachers, and local stakeholders.

The Researcher. As the point of contact and only researcher in this project, I am accountable for following through with the timetable and contacting the various individuals and administrators to ensure the project can be fully implemented. I would be responsible for presenting the policy paper and for facilitation of discussion of the impact on local schools, stakeholders, and the surrounding communities (Ary, Jacobs, Sorensen, & Walker, 2013). Personal contact and follow-up is one way to ensure the project is being circulated and has been received. This will be achieved through the use of email and phone contact. Once permission has been granted, I will be sending the project to the local schools for review and will work to secure a breakout session at the annual principal leadership conference.

In an effort to accomplish the goals of the project, I will need to request that each principal bring a copy of his/her individual school discipline reports and schoolwide achievement data. I will ask the principals at the Leader in Me (LIM) program sites to be available to discuss specific implementation information and confer with principals who are seeing discipline and achievement concerns in their school. I will also provide access to the LIM website so further specific program information can be obtained.

Other Stakeholders. Other stakeholders include district officials, school administration, and teachers. Their responsibility is to read the position paper and discuss the research findings and recommendations. As these professionals collaborate, discussions surrounding the research findings of decreased behavioral incidences and

increased leadership qualities will occur. Additionally, as the stakeholders align the project results with their individual school data, the collaborative discussions may become more meaningful. As the Leader in Me program implementation is recommended, the stakeholders will be responsible for any potential next steps. This professional dialogue and understanding of the Leader in Me program recommendations represents the end of the project.

Project Evaluation Plan

This project will be evaluated to see if the goals of the project were attained. The type of evaluation used for this project will be summative and include goal-based evaluation. This type of evaluation is concerned with the project's level of ability to achieve its goals. This type of evaluation informs stakeholders of the goals that were achieved and not achieved (The Pell Institute, 2015). The goals of this project are to evaluate if stakeholders received the study's findings and recommendations and if the project promoted discussion among the school district's stakeholders regarding the effects of a student leadership program and its resulting effects on student behavior. I suggest using two types of evaluation processes: implementation evaluation and progress evaluation. The purpose behind these two actions is to monitor both the project delivery and to what degree the outcomes are being achieved.

Implementation Evaluation

In order to assess the project's implementation, I have formulated questions to guide the evaluation process. The following questions will guide the evaluation:

- Have all the stakeholders received a copy of the position paper with time for a thorough review?
- Are stakeholders collaborating to discuss the research findings?
- Have stakeholders explored the Leader in Me program as an intervention?

Being that I am responsible for distribution of the project, this first question is directed toward myself. With a contact list of elementary schools in this school district, it will be imperative that I email the project to the principals and follow up by phone to encourage review of the project. A separate contact will be made, pending approval from the professional learning department, to personally invite principals to attend my breakout session at the annual principal leadership conference. It is at the breakout session that I can evaluate whether collaborative discussion surrounding the research findings is occurring. With the use of technology and administration from Leader in Me (LIM) schools, principals and school leaders will have the ability to ask specific questions related to the LIM program. Intentional implementation is vital to the project's success (Durand, Decker, & Kirkman, 2014). Having a plan for evaluation of the implementation will help ensure the implementation occurs.

Progress Evaluation

This type of evaluation is very similar to the implementation evaluation in that the questions are similar in nature. I suggest the following questions to facilitate the progress evaluation.

- Did the stakeholders use the position paper as a basis for a discussion about the efficacy and value of continuing the LIM project?

- Have school strategic plans included long-range plans of including the Leader in Me program?
- How is time being set aside for collaboration of discussion about the research findings?

At the breakout session of the annual principal leadership conference, implementation evaluation can occur. Specific reference to the position paper will either be present or not present, based on the conversations and discussions. Principals at schools where the Leader in Me (LIM) program has been implemented will be invited to discuss their experiences with the LIM program and what their plans are in the future concerning the LIM program. As principals align their discipline and achievement reports with those referenced in the position paper, the principals will be responsible for recommending any potential future steps toward including the LIM program in strategic plans. According to Thomas and Marvin (2016), having a plan to evaluate progress needs to be intentional, not complicated. By having a plan, the evaluation should be a natural part of the process. The responses to both phases of evaluation will inform the level of the project's effects. These two sections of the formative assessment are integral in determining implementation of project.

Project Implications

Local Community

The benefits of the LIM program as described in the position paper reach into the local community. The research sites, survey participants, and interview participants are evidence of the concern about behavioral interruptions in the classroom. The involvement

of a variety of stakeholders supports the need for change in our local communities. This LIM program implementation has implications for the entire school district, its individual schools, the faculty and staff members, the students and the surrounding community.

The benefits from the outcomes and research recommendations specified in this position paper provide school administration with solutions to a growing problem in local schools and professional literature. Teachers will benefit from the position paper because it describes the value of teachers' involvement with student leadership development and strengthens the desire for students to be leaders in their own lives.

Far-Reaching

The literature review clarified the problem identified in this research study that behavior incidences have been increasing while academic achievement has been declining. This position paper may be useful to school districts and educators across the country who are experiencing similar challenges with behavior interruptions in the classroom. By including a variety of stakeholders and access to the research and program results, the discussions may be, a springboard for a multitude of effects. The findings of this research may encourage other educators to adopt programs or implement leadership-style techniques with the purpose of addressing behavior concerns. This school district and surrounding school districts may duplicate this study over many years to see if there are long-term effects of both behavioral concerns as well as academic achievement. Local stakeholders such as parents and business owners may seek to apply principles from the Leader in Me program in their homes and businesses, based on the impact of the project.

This project is an available resource to educators and decision makers across the country to address similar issues.

Implications for Social Change

Promoting social change is an important aspect of Walden University's charge to its students. The purpose of promoting social change is to influence others' lives through the "deliberate process of creating and applying ideas, strategies, and actions to promote the worth, dignity, and development of individuals and communities alike" (Walden University, 2015). This project contains recommendations for social change. The project contains strategies of transformation for all stakeholders involved. As students learn the 7 habits (Covey, 1989), they have the ability to transform their interactions with others and their level of responsibility for themselves.

Teachers are challenged with teaching leadership skills, which have the opportunity to impact the way teachers themselves handle their own interactions with others. As classroom teachers model leadership interactions, students will have access to role models and resources as they focus on transformation. The classroom has the possibility to reflect a culture of self-directed leaders who communicate effectively and treat others with respect. Students will have leadership roles and responsibilities in which they can be coached as a means of intentional leadership development. Administrators will have the opportunity to promote a culture of respect that reaches into their interactions with staff members, families and local community members. The expectation of respect for all people can be intentionally linked to all school communications as means of fostering inclusion. As students embrace leadership roles, there can be a

decrease in discipline incidences and a greater focus on achievement. With a focus on responsibility, students may transform their thinking and begin to create a culture of excellence. The level of influence of can be broadened as all stakeholders deepen their levels of communication and collaboration.

Conclusion

In section 3, an overview of the artifact, a position paper, was presented. A thorough rationale for the project and its content was provided with supporting literature. Details of the presented project include goals for the project, an implementation plan, potential obstacles and potential solutions, and suggested implications. The final section of this paper will present personal reflections. Specifically, this section will examine the strengths of the project, its limitations, and implications for the future. The final component of this section will include opportunities for additional research in terms of behavioral interruptions in the classroom and the effects of student leadership programs.

Section 4: Reflections and Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to assess the impact of LIM as an intervention for decreasing behavior disruptions in the classroom and the resulting academic achievement concerns. Based on my research findings, I developed a position paper to inform school leaders within the CCSD about my recommendations and, hopefully, spur a district-wide discussion about the LIM intervention. In this final section, I reflect on the research strengths and limitations. Alternative approaches to the local problem will be discussed. I will reflect and discuss my learning as a researcher, scholar, practitioner, and proponent for social change. Finally, I will provide recommendations for future research studies. The variety of roles in which I have served through the course of this research led to the range of viewpoints described in this section.

Project Strengths and Limitations

This section will highlight both the strengths and limitations of my project. One strength of this project is addressing the problem of behavioral disruptions as a gap in practice. Another strength comes from the relevance of the subject matter. The limitations of this project are the following: the project's inability to address the concerns related to academic achievement and the position paper as the project type. The project's strengths and limitations are explained in the subsequent paragraphs.

Project Strengths

The problem addressed in this project is one in which teachers and administrators are expressing concern over the growing number of behavioral incidences in the classroom and school buildings. The project contains a description of my study in which

a decrease in behavioral disruptions occurs. The project is a tool for communicating the findings of my research and providing evidence of practice where the gap can be lessened. The position paper includes recommendations for current districts experiencing the same problems.

The relevance of this subject is also considered a strength due to the widespread occurrence of teachers experiencing an increase in behavioral interruptions by students (Boneshefski & Runge, 2013; Kowalewicz & Coffee, 2013; Powers & Bierman, 2013). The qualitative portion of my research detailed a description of the teacher participants' perceptions of, and experiences regarding, management of student behavior in their classrooms. The project's goals are clearly communicated to potential LIM program sites as they move toward finding a solution to the problem of an increase in classroom disruptions that lead to a loss of instruction time.

Project Limitations

The limitations of this project include the project's inability to address the concerns related to both the academic achievement of the students and the position paper as the project type. Possibly due to time constraints, the quantitative findings in this study did not directly indicate an increase in academic achievement, but the qualitative findings indirectly promised a future increase because of a decrease in classroom disruptions. Therefore, the findings, which informed the project, did not directly address the academic concerns. Finally, a position paper has limitations so understanding this limitation will help decision-makers from potential LIM sites make informed choices about solutions to their problems.

One possible limitation is the position paper's effectiveness. Due to time constraints, administrators and decision makers may not read the position paper, yielding incomplete or inaccurate knowledge related to this study. Elementary school educators may find the project recommendations useful for their students whereas middle and high school educators may feel the project's recommendations are outside their scope. Awareness of this limitation is vital to understanding the potential impact of the position paper.

Recommendations for Alternative Approaches

Reflecting on the limitations of the project provided me with an opportunity to consider alternatives to my research design and project genre. The recommendations that I provided in my position paper are based on CCSD's use of LIM, an established cohesive program in which the successful implementation is specifically outlined in its publications (Franklin Covey, 2015). Additional options for research include examining other research sites where positive behavioral interventions have been implemented. Program models could be researched both independently and concurrently. Additionally, other stakeholders (e.g., administrators and parents) could be considered as study participants because they would offer different perspectives.

One alternative project approach is to create a professional development session. Discussion of the problem at large in such a session coupled with the presentation of available resources might better achieve the project's goals to (a) communicate the study's findings and recommendations to all stakeholders and (b) be a catalyst for discussion among the school district's stakeholders regarding the effects of a student

leadership program and its resulting effects on student behavior. The professional development session could not be centered on LIM due to my lack of certification as a trainer in the program. However, other researchers might be able to use this approach by inviting LIM program coaches to discuss and share how their programs have been used in classrooms and schools.

The increase of behavior-related incidences and its impact on academic achievement was the problem I addressed in this study. This problem was explored through dialogue with the participating classroom teachers and their observations. The review of the professional literature validated the local findings that this was an area of growing concern (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). However, other stakeholders may approach the problem differently. Examining classroom management techniques and their effect on behavioral interruptions might be an alternative way to address the problem. Alternative methods of addressing the problem of behavior-related incidences may provide additional data.

Scholarship, Project Development, Leadership and Change

The doctoral process has unlimited boundaries. Developing research that contributes to the existing body of knowledge is a process like none other. The process of completing coursework, developing a prospectus, and completing the dissertation and the project requires a persistence and perseverance that must be experienced rather than taught. Along this journey, I have learned many invaluable lessons.

I learned that previous academic success does not equate to a successful doctoral journey. I have experienced a range of emotions throughout this process and have

questioned my own abilities and talents along the way. A feeling of uncertainty was often in my mind as I worked through each step of my study and project. As each stage developed, I began to understand different components of this journey. Although I could look ahead into what lay ahead, it was in each stage that I began to understand what it meant to produce scholarly research even though I had various skills, which were helpful along the way. I also learned that I needed to develop many skills before I could apply them.

In developing my project, I learned that there is a difference between the purpose of the study and the purpose of the project. I learned that the direction and development of my project could not be fully realized until the research is complete. My intent of the research was to understand connections between the problem and the intervention. The intent of the project is to provide a resource for educators who have dealt with similar behavioral struggles in their classrooms.

Development of the project and the doctoral study taught me about scholarly inquiry. Additionally, I learned the importance of engaging myself in global research. This process was refined as I learned to investigate all sides of a topic. I have learned to closely examine research to identify missing or weak components. I will continue to pursue scholarship as I evaluate research as it applies to my own professional career.

The project, which emerged from this study, was a position paper focused on using leadership programs to help reduce behavioral interruptions in the classroom. Specific recommendations were offered to stakeholders with the goals of increasing communication about the problem and informing stakeholders of the research results. I

learned that development of the project is a thorough task, which requires detailed steps and considerations. Due to the nature of a position paper, I have learned that in order for the project to be effective, considerations of stakeholders' time is vital to the amount of information included. Due to the varied nature in presentation styles, content is the most important aspect of the position paper. Being aware of the time needed to read a position paper, it is necessary to deliver a position paper focused on what to do with the research results rather than the research itself. This required intensive planning to construct a deliverable that is valuable and useful.

Determining the appropriate project provided an opportunity to develop as a scholar and developer. Using an effective format required extensive research. After considering all the options, it was evident that the position paper was the most effective genre. Many revisions of the project required me to look closely at the research and what could be gleaned from it. Developing an evaluation plan required additional research. It is anticipated that peer evaluation will be necessary to further strengthen the project.

Leadership can have many roles. I have learned that leadership in my life begins with being a leader. I have learned that leadership can be used to motivate others to change. For me, this requires me to take responsibility for my research and use it to motivate others toward closing the gap in behavioral interruptions. Leadership combined with change will require collaborative efforts. Action will be necessary on my end, as I motivate others toward a culture of leadership. I am committed to pursuing opportunities for leadership roles in my professional career and associations. The roles in my school district and professional and personal associations provide opportunities to continually

develop and refine my leadership skills and ignite change in others in an effort to promote positive social change. As a current member of the building leadership team, I have an opportunity to work with our administrative team to look at school improvement plans and create plans to address the needs of our individual school. Additionally, I have also been added to the district recruiting team. This allows me to interact with potential new employees in a screening process where I am looked at as a leader in the school district. Each interaction with applicants and school administrative teams provides opportunities to reflect professionalism and passion for the education.

I plan on collaborating with key stakeholders in my school district on issues that impact student leadership related to my research. As I am applying for a leadership academy, I have an opportunity to focus on issues directly related to vision, leadership, student engagement, and positively impacting instruction and student learning. Specifically, I plan to be a catalyst for change as I seek funding alternatives to implement leadership programs aimed at reducing classroom disruptions. These efforts establish my commitment to Walden University's objective of social change.

Analysis of Self as Scholar

I have always been naturally curious. Throughout the doctoral journey I learned that my knowledge and understanding were very basic or only relevant to my personal journey. I learned to use evidence on which to base my opinions and thoughts on. I also find myself questioning others' opinions when they lack support. I have learned to think deeper and more critically. I have learned that my writing is process as I engaged in

multiple revisions and edits. I have grown to appreciate self-improvement and refinement.

I have grown as a scholar. Beginning with the coursework, I learned to apply a higher level of reading and thinking. I learned that collaboration begins with professional dialogue. I learned that relevant research is necessary in all areas of my life, not just those found in my research study. The demand of doctoral level writing is arduous. Previous experience in other programs did not prepare me for this type of academic writing. I have learned to revise and edit my writing and my style.

I am not the same student or professional that I was when I first entered this journey. I am in a better position to evaluate and practice my craft. I am convinced that I will continually change and evolve with the influence of this experience. I am stronger in both the skills that I had when I began this journey and the skills I have developed along the way.

Analysis of Self as Practitioner

As an educator, this study has had a great impact on my life. Many issues that arise in classrooms today have personally bothered me. Specifically, the increase in behavior has been one of great concern. Professional literature aided in my understanding of the problem and prompted research-based responses to that problem. My passion for education has deepened as I combine my practitioner hat with my researcher hat.

I plan to continue identifying research-based practices in my own classroom. I am better able to communicate effectively with other professionals in collaborative situations. I have the opportunity to use my understanding of critical research as I address

the needs of the learners in my classroom as well as when I collaborate with educators in my school district. As I collaborate with team members, I am able to demonstrate techniques to evaluate research and continually seek best practices. I am compelled to continually grow as a professional and as a teacher. I hope that I inspire others to do the same,

Analysis of Self as Project Developer

I have had previous experience developing projects. These include: include grant proposals, training manuals, job descriptions, and procedural guides. The doctoral study exceeded my previous projects. The required rigor was challenging beyond my expectations. Keeping myself focused was the means of survival. Working toward a solution to problems that I witness first-hand was a continual source of motivation.

The experience of developing a project of this magnitude is an honor. I feel accomplished to have worked through this project. I feel empowered to move forward and have an impact on social change. I have a voice in the field of education on a level far beyond one I could have imagined before. I now have the responsibility to continue moving forward and impacting the world around me with my newfound knowledge and understanding.

The Project's Potential Impact on Social Change

Using a position paper increases the awareness of the study's findings as it relates to the Leader in Me program as an intervention on behavior in the classroom. Positive social change can come about from the awareness of this resource. The evidence of the effectiveness of a student leadership program, such as the Leader in Me, demonstrates

that behavioral interruptions can be decreased through equipping students with skills and habits to become leaders in their own lives. This project can have a positive impact on social change by increasing leadership habits in the lives of students. Increased levels of responsibility could create a culture of students where they feel empowered to lead positively rather than negatively. Students may choose to act responsibly and focus their attention on learning. This could lead to an increase in academic achievement. Students armed with leadership skills may be more productive citizens of their communities as they seek to live out the 7 habits (Covey, 1989). Having this background in leadership may provide guidance for students to handle situations responsibly and avoid situations that could be detrimental in the future, thus impacting society in a positive way.

Reflection on the Importance of the Work

This research furthered the research of leadership interventions and the work of scholars and practitioners who observe behavioral interruptions in the classroom. The project is important as it provides recommendations, which expands the whole culture of leadership and growth in the school setting. The project supports improvement of student leadership and the learning climate by instilling leadership skills and habits. The importance of behavioral coaching extends beyond the school walls and inspires students to be leaders in every aspect of their lives.

Implications, Applications, and Directions for Future Research

The implications for this project include a social change aspect. Teachers and administrators are impacting the world of the students by beginning with their own classrooms. This project looks at principals and teachers to deepen their understanding of

leadership roles in the classroom and encourages professional development and collaboration.

Collaboration, a finding and recommendation from this research, begins with teachers and administrators. The collaborative environment is essential to fostering change within students, schools, the school district, and the local community. This position paper supports collaboration at all levels. The recommendations guide the beginning stages of a culture shift, from irresponsibility to responsibility. The potential effect of this research and this project could improve the experiences of students and teachers in the classroom.

In planning for future research, future studies could uncover additional leadership skills, which reduce behavioral interruptions in the classroom. As time progresses, longitudinal studies could explore academic impact and perceptions of leadership as students mature. If additional schools or the entire district were to implement the project, additional areas of research could determine the fidelity of leadership program implementation. Teacher and administrator experience, in terms of professional development, could be used as a springboard for future research.

The scope of this research is limited as it only provides data from three grade levels and one leadership program. Future research should consider all grades in elementary school to eventually look at program exposure and number of behavioral incidences. Perceptions of additional leadership skills from administrators, parents, and students may provide rich detail into observed leadership skills.

Conclusion

This research study and project represent an intense journey of learning and recommendations. The design of this doctoral program and dissertation provide opportunities for research, writing, collaboration, and expertise. This research study was initiated as a means to address the concern over disruptions in the classroom due to behavior and culminated in the investigation of leadership traits. The research sites where data was collected represent a community of professionals who are seeing an impact on behavior related interruptions. Therefore, additional schools in our district may collaborate with schools that are seeing increases in responsible behavior to foster a collaborative discussion on addressing those needs.

The last section of this research study delivers a reflection of the findings. The findings of this study suggest instilled leadership traits decrease the total number of behavior incidences. Additional findings suggest collaboration and responsibility as two habits found in schools where behavioral disruptions have decreased. By analyzing the themes of this study, a position paper was created to foster discussion among stakeholders and inform stakeholders of the research. The collaboration of professionals on this topic is supported by the social change initiative at Walden University.

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Appendix A: The Project

The Leader in Me Program as an Intervention for Decreasing Behavioral Interruptions in the Classroom and Increasing Leadership Among Students

Introduction

Challenging behaviors in the classroom have been an ongoing complaint among teachers. McCreedy and Soloway (2010) explain that dealing with difficult behavior in the classroom is a top priority among school districts. Behavioral disruptions in the classroom interfere with learning and are often handled through teacher-directed discipline (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010). With behavioral incidences on the rise, academic achievement scores have been declining. In order to address these concerns, the Leader in Me (LIM) program was implemented at elementary schools in Charter Central School District to determine if coaching students in leadership traits has an impact on behavioral disruptions in the classroom. This research study found a significant correlation between the LIM program and a decrease in behavior incidences in the classroom. This position paper, therefore, serves to acknowledge that coachable leadership skills can help decrease behavior incidences in the classroom. Therefore, this position paper serves to inform stakeholders of the effects of the LIM program as they consider intervention programs in their own settings (Dean & Shepard, 2012). The components of the position paper include the background of the existing problem, summary of the analyses and findings, and specific recommendations based on the

findings of the research. The specific details of the research including the methodology, as detailed in the research study, are available upon request.

Background of the Existing Problem

With discipline incidences on the rise, students and classrooms are being affected adversely due to the disruption of learning throughout the school day. Discipline incidences are associated with inhibited academic growth, an amplified threat for dropping out of school, and individuals who contribute negatively to society (Boneshefski & Runge, 2013). The time and effort associated with addressing disruptive behavior restricts learning, averts administration, and precedes teacher burnout (Osher, Bear, Sprague, & Doyle, 2010). For these reasons, managing student behavior and handling disruptions continues to adversely affect learning in the classroom. According to Osher et al. (2010), academic achievement is most successful in classrooms without discipline interruptions. The climate of the educational institution is an important component of the classroom and must be perceived as high quality for the success of students, teachers, and stakeholders (Allodi, 2010). By reducing the time spent on behavioral interventions, there is potential to improve school climate, thereby creating an optimal learning environment for students.

Anything that impedes a positive school or classroom environment is considered a distraction or disruption. According to Kowalewicz and Coffee (2013), a substantial amount of time is utilized in the classroom to handle disruptive behaviors. Teachers are the first line of defense in dealing with classroom behavior, thereby reducing the time spent on instruction. Powers and Bierman (2013) described the influence of aggressive

student disruptions in the classroom as having a documented negative impact on student learning. Time spent on interruptions in the classroom, due to discipline incidences, are lost opportunities for academic achievement.

According to Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin, and Moore-Thomas (2012), continuous discipline problems that result in suspensions or expulsions have additional consequences of missing class, alienation, and negative feelings toward school. Academic underperformance, characterized by academic withdrawal, loss of motivation, reduced investment in school work and school rules, is also a risk-factor associated with removal from the classroom (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010). Implications of this type of behavior management system could result in students turning to activities that are illegal (Gregory et al., 2010).

Some behaviors might appear more disruptive than others in a learning environment (Bradshaw, Mitchell, O'Brennan, & Leaf, 2010; Parker, Skinner, & Booher, 2010). According to Chitiyo, Makweche-Chitiyo, Park, Ametepee, and Chitiyo, (2011), the students exhibiting challenging behaviors are also the same students who experience weak academic achievement, evidenced by performing below average on their standardized test of achievement. Strong connections exist between academic achievement and disruptive behavior.

School climate has a great impact on students and performance. According to Seashore et al. (2010), a positive classroom environment is a crucial to having a great impact on student learning. Eccles and Roeser (2011) describe elementary school as the beginning portion of a bridge between society and culture. Reyes, Brackett, Rivers,

White, and Salovey (2012) assert there is a link between academic achievement and the emotional climate of the classroom.

Summary of Analyses and Findings

Overview

Mixed methods research analysis provided both the numerical data to demonstrate the quantifiable outcomes and also the descriptive data that described subtle changes in student behaviors as perceived by teachers in the classrooms. The strategy used for this research is the Explanatory Sequential Strategy. This strategy is characterized by first collecting and analyzing quantitative data before collecting and analyzing qualitative data (Terrell, 2012). The Explanatory Sequential Strategy allowed for equal priority to be given to both phases of the research.

Mertens (2014) advocates mixed-methods research as a solution to deepening the understanding of cultural and social interactions as it relates to students, thus magnifying the results of a single form of research. According to Creswell (2012), by using an explanatory sequential design, qualitative data are used to refine and extend the general picture provided by the quantitative data. Quantitative research alone may not provide understanding of the context of the data. The qualitative component of this research is intended for complementarity and is used to follow up, enhance and explain the first phase of the quantitative portion (Creswell, 2009; Tashakkori & Teddlie; 2010). In addition, research questions helped to narrow the intention of the research and focus on the explicit questions.

Data collection occurred sequentially to address the quantitative and qualitative research questions. Quantitative data related to behavior and achievement was collected from administrative records and surveys. Administrative records were collected from the administration of five participating schools. According to Wholey, Hatry, and Newcomer (2010), agency records are a common source for accumulating data in research. The survey used in this study is called the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (Hughes & Coplan, 2010). Qualitative data was collected from interviews. The primary point of interface for this study occurred at the point of data interpretation.

Setting and Sample

Two separate populations were used for this study: a student population and a teacher population. The student population was 1,604 students, in 3rd through 5th grades, from five elementary schools in the district that have implemented the LIM program. The teacher population was 74, third through fifth grade teachers, who work at the five elementary schools in the district that have been trained and have implemented the LIM program.

Quantitative Data

Data was collected over the span of two academic school years and by multiple means: through school discipline and achievement records and through teacher-completed surveys and interviews. Quantitative data collection occurred through the compilation of discipline referral data from administrative records, student achievement data from the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT), and the Behavioral

Academic Engagement Scale (Hughes & Coplan, 2010). The specific details of each of the quantitative components are described below.

Surveys. The surveys asked teachers for their observations of leadership skills in their students. The Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES) uses a 4-point Likert Scale to measure the participants' responses to specific behaviors observed in the classroom. When the survey was administered at the participating schools, 74 out of 81 teachers took the survey, yielding a 91% participation rate of the accessible population. Interviews with the population were used to validate the responses of the participants.

Standardized Tests. Standardized test scores were retrieved from the Georgia Department of Education in the areas of mathematics and reading. The test used is the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT), a standardized achievement test. The quantitative data represents the population of students from third grade through fifth grade as detailed in Table A1.

Table A1

Scale Scores for Students in Third and Fifth Grades

Grade	School	Reading		Math	
		2012-2013	2013-2014	2012-2013	2013-2014
Third Grade	A	870	859	868	851
	B	860	855	867	864
	C	836	823	835	832
	D	854	855	861	860
	E	858	855	846	850
Fourth Grade	A	863	863	864	856
	B	851	856	853	854
	C	833	833	831	834
	D	853	852	847	858
	E	852	855	851	837
Fifth Grade	A	849	855	867	864
	B	850	847	861	860
	C	826	833	851	846
	D	846	849	848	855
	E	843	850	845	847

Administrative Behavior Reports. Administrative behavior reports were retrieved from administrative records. The population included in the behavior reports was third through fifth grade students at the LIM program sites. The behavior data was used to look at the overall discipline incidence reports to determine the influence of the LIM program. The total number of incidents from the 2012-2013 to the 2013-2014 school years were compared to provide a quantitative indication for any potential influence of

the LIM program on the students behavior as documented by discipline referrals detailed in Table A2.

Table A2

Discipline Incidences Resulting in Administrative Referrals

Reported Behaviors	2012-2013	2013-2014
Arson	0	3
Aggression	6	2
Battery	1	22
Being in unauthorized area	8	0
Bullying	1	7
Bus misconduct	30	16
Disrespect	38	0
Disruptive behavior	81	109
Falsifying information	9	2
Harassment	22	14
Horseplay	78	51
Incendiary devices	1	1
Insubordination	103	97
Leaving class without permission	7	0
Obscene/Inappropriate material	2	1
Other serious discipline incident	4	5
Physical violence	103	81
Profanity	77	48
Sexual offense	16	6
Theft	10	2
Threat / Intimidation	44	13
Vandalism	10	11
Weapons	3	3
Total Discipline Referrals	654	494

Qualitative Data

The purpose of the Sequential Explanatory Sequence is to use the qualitative data to explore the quantitative results in more detail. In this research, interviews were held to better comprehend the outcomes of the quantitative phase.

Interviews. One week after the quantitative was collected and analyzed, qualitative data was collected. The time frame for interviewing the teacher participants was one week. Stratified sampling was used to identify and select 10 third through fifth grade elementary teachers who work in one of schools that has implemented the LIM program. Each participant was asked to interview with me for one session and for a duration of no more than 20 minutes. Methodological triangulation was built into the interview procedures by asking the interviewee about some of the common themes identified from the previously collected quantitative data. The interview questions provided additional data in relation to the efficacy of the Leader in Me program.

Analyses and Findings

Research Question 1. The first research question is the following: Did the implementation of the Leader in Me program make a difference on the number of behavior referrals between 2012-2013 and 2013-2014 school years? The first research question was addressed by quantitative school behavior data. Each school administrator provided discipline referral data. A one-way ANOVA test was performed to relate the number of discipline referrals in the 2012-2013 school year to the 2013-2014 school year and was used to determine statistical significance. Given the results of this ANOVA, the conclusion is made that there is a significant variance from the 2012-2013 to the 2013-2013 school year in the number of discipline referrals. The ANOVA results imply the

means differ more than would be probable by chance alone. The results do not specify detailed behaviors, just there are most likely real effects. It is concluded that the Leader in Me (LIM) program is associated with reducing the total number of discipline referrals at these five schools.

Research Question 2. The second research question is the following: Did the implementation of the Leader in Me program make a significant transformation in student achievement as measured by the Criterion Referenced Competency Test? The second research question was addressed by quantitative school achievement data. The test used is the Criterion Referenced Competency Test (CRCT). After the descriptive statistics were generated, a one-way ANOVA test was used to compare the scale scores from the 2012-2013 CRCT test to the 2013-2014 CRCT test and to determine statistical significance. Additionally, the one-way ANOVA was used to look at the statistical significance between subjects. Given the results of this ANOVA, the conclusion is there is not a significant variance from the 2012-2013 to the 2013-2013 school year in the area of academic achievement as measured by the CRCT. The effects of the LIM program, in this research, do not show a significant difference as reported on CRCT data for the time being reported. It is possible that academic improvements could take additional time to become significant.

Research Question 3. The third research question is the following: What student leadership qualities and behaviors are identified by the teachers that are attributed to the Leader in Me program? The third research question was addressed by both quantitative and qualitative data. The quantitative data came from the Behavioral Academic

Engagement Scale (BAES). This survey was administered to 74 participants and all questions on each survey were answered. The descriptive statistics indicated a relatively high concurrence level surrounding the behaviors observed by the participants. Due to a high internal consistency and the degree of consensus for each behavior on the BAES, it is concluded that observable leadership behaviors are present in students where the LIM program has been implemented.

Qualitative input was also essential to addressing the research question. Ten interviews with a sample of the population were conducted. After transcription, coding and analysis, several relationships, patterns and themes were generated. The generalized themes were analyzed specifically to further explain the results from the quantitative portion of this research. The generalized themes from the participants' responses are responsibility and collaboration.

Theme 1: Responsibility. The most frequently recurring theme in the interviews was responsibility. The sub-terms associated with responsibility are helping others to be successful, accountability, helping without being asked, choosing the right action, and accepting responsibility for their own mistakes. The theme of responsibility further explains the quantitative data, thus supporting the quantitative data.

Theme 2: Collaboration. The second most frequently occurring theme was collaboration. The sub-terms associated with collaboration were group work, working collaboratively and synergizing. Collaboration has been identified as an observable leadership trait as a result of the LIM program and further explains the accepted hypothesis.

Quantitative and Qualitative Connections. The results from the quantitative and qualitative data are in alignment. The specific behaviors from the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale (BAES) have a connection to the LIM program and the habits advocated by the LIM program. The themes further explain the observable behaviors in the classroom as described by the interview participants. Specifically, the behaviors described by the survey participants are supported by the qualitative responses of the interview participants.

Recommendations

The recommendations for this project are directly correlated to the research findings. The themes of responsibility and collaboration are two outcomes and skills found in schools that have seen a decrease in behavioral incidences. Participants in this study found that many behavioral changes which have occurred fall under the umbrella of personal responsibility and collaboration.

With the implementation of a program, such as the Leader in Me, these skills can be taught and coached. The long-term commitment of a program affords the opportunity for these skills to be taught and coached year after year. The intentionality of a leadership program has results in which stakeholders are seeing results. Using a program can help stakeholders achieve their goals in decreasing behavioral interruptions in the classroom and impacting a culture of responsible citizens.

There are many opportunities for teachers and school leaders to impact students positively. Through the use of the Leader in Me program, professional development opportunities are intentionally employed to begin the process. Implementation can take

three years, which is important in identifying groups and subgroups who are not responding to the program (Covey, 2008). Representatives from the FranklinCovey organization are available to guide the process for the schools. This allows for consistency and leadership for program implementation.

Responses from teachers, indicating the positive influence of the Leader in Me program, guides the following additional recommendations:

- Implementing the Leader in Me program should begin in elementary schools. This will provide years of consistent reinforcement and leadership training that can then be carried into middle and high school years.
- Leadership opportunities should be given to students as much as possible so skills can be refined.
- School districts where the Leader in Me program is implemented should carry consistent program language into the middle and high schools, using a bottom up approach. The goal is to create a culture of leadership.
- Parents and local community members should be given the opportunity to attend seminars about the 7 habits (Covey, 1989) and leadership attributes.
- Intentionality of far-reaching impact could result in communities with a culture of leadership.

Conclusion

This position paper identified a problem in local schools. Behavior-related interruptions in the classrooms is a concern in which some school districts are seeking interventions. Data analysis has shown the Leader in Me program is helping schools work

toward solutions and is impacting students positively. Students are displaying responsibility in a number of areas and are using collaboration as a means of applying their leadership skills and habits.

By intentionally teaching leadership habits, teachers and administrators are recognizing positive changes in their students. A culture of leadership is emerging from schools where behavioral interruptions have dominated classroom instructional time. Teachers have expressed a direct correlation to the Leader in Me program and are desiring to continue the use of this program.

Students who exhibit characteristics of a culture of leadership have an opportunity to make positive contributions to society and be a catalyst for change. The change begins with a top down approach from administration and teachers influencing students. The students can then influence their families and the surrounding communities.

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Appendix B: Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale

Please add an introductory sentence that includes a parenthetical citation for this content, which was developed by others.

Please rate the current behavior of the students in your classroom by placing an X in the box that best describes their behavior after the implementation of the Leader in Me Program.

- 1 – Never
- 2 – Sometimes
- 3 – Often
- 4 – Always

	1	2	3	4
Completes assignments in a timely fashion				
Comes to school with appropriate materials				
Contributes positively to class				
Stays focused on tasks				
Has materials ready in a timely fashion (books open)				
Shows an interest in learning				
Works well in groups				
Raises hand in class				
Listens attentively				
Tries to answer questions when called upon				

Appendix C: Permission to Use the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale



Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale

PsycTESTS Citation:

Hughes, K., & Coplan, R. J. (2010). Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale [Database record]. Retrieved from PsycTESTS. doi: 10.1037/t01657-000

Test Shown: Full

Test Format:

The Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale consists of 10 items answered by teachers and scored on a 4-point Likert scale (Never, Sometimes, Often, and Always).

Source:

Hughes, Kathleen, & Coplan, Robert J. (2010). Exploring processes linking shyness and academic achievement in childhood. *School Psychology Quarterly*, Vol 25(4), 213-222. doi: 10.1037/a0022070

Permissions:

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Appendix D: Permission to Reproduce the Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale



Stephanie Caracelo <stephanie.caracelo@waldenu.edu>

Behavioral Academic Engagement Scale

Kathleen Hughes <khughes4@connect.carleton.ca>

Fri, Jun 12, 2015 at 1:45 PM

To: Stephanie Caracelo <stephanie.caracelo@waldenu.edu>

Hi Stephanie,

Congrats on your research. Yes, you may certainly use my measure of Behavioral Academic Engagement. Please make sure to cite the paper in which it is mentioned (Hughes & Coplan, 2010).

I hope this email is sufficient, but if not, please let me know what further information you require for my written consent.

All the best,

Kathleen Hughes, PhD,

Fredericton, New Brunswick, Canada

Appendix E: Interview Questions for Qualitative Sequence

Feedback from the survey:

1. Do you feel that the themes identified in the survey such as contributing positively in class, completing assignments in a timely manner, being prepared to learn, working collaboratively, remaining on task, listening attentively, and actively participating in lessons accurately describe your students?
2. In what ways do you feel those themes are associated with the Leader in Me program?

Questions addressing the research question:

3. In what ways do you feel your students contribute leadership attributes to your classroom?
4. In what ways do you feel students engage themselves in learning about leadership attributes in your classroom?
5. In what ways do you feel leadership behaviors are beneficial to your students and successful in your classroom?
6. What is the most noticeable difference that you have seen in your students since implementation of the Leader in Me program?
7. Are there any specific behaviors that you would attribute directly to the Leader in Me program?

Appendix F: Invitation to Participate in Follow Up Interviews

Dear Mr. XXX,

I am conducting interviews as part of a research study to look at the impact of the Leader in Me program on student behavior and academic achievement in the classroom. As a teacher who integrates the Leader in Me, you are in an ideal position to provide valuable, first-hand information from your own perspective. The interview takes around 30 minutes and is very informal. I am simply trying to capture your thoughts and observations on working with students while implementing the Leader in Me program.

Your responses to the questions will be kept confidential. Each interview will be assigned a number code to help ensure that personal identifiers are not revealed during the transcription and analysis of the interview.

For participating in this research, you will be given a pen and pad of paper to show appreciation for your time and thoughts. Your participation will be a valuable addition to my research and findings could lead to determination that creating a culture of leadership among students benefits both the individual student and his/her surrounding communities.

If you are willing to participate please suggest a day and time that suits you and I'll do my best to be available. If you have any questions please do not hesitate to ask. Thank you in advance for your consideration of being a part of this research project.

Sincerely,

Stephanie Caracelo