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A Purposeful Approach to Student Conduct with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Learners

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2016

Abstract

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MA, Gallaudet University, 1999

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Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

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Abstract

Teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students spend more time in conflict resolution than their general education colleagues do. Although emerging research suggests that both students and teachers benefit from an approach to student conduct that is more purposeful than traditional behavior modification models, further research was necessary to clarify how such an effective purposeful program would work. The purpose of this inquiry was to explore how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students perceived and used a purposeful approach to student conduct. Deutsch's conflict resolution theory served as the conceptual framework. A single case study design was selected for this qualitative study conducted in a rural residential school for deaf and hard of hearing students in the western United States. Data were collected from interviews with six teachers, observations, and documents. Data were analyzed using line-by-line coding and the constant comparative method to construct categories for each data source, and examined across all data sources to determine emergent themes and discrepancies. Results indicated that teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students used a two-step approach to collaborative conflict resolution that included engaging in perspective-taking and engaging in solution generation. This study promotes positive social change by informing school administrators on how to plan effective teacher training on using a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners.

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Dedication

I dedicate this to my parents, who instilled in me the importance of education at a very young age, modeled what amazing teaching looks like, and continually supported me as I balanced work, school, and life. Even when I doubted if I was tough enough to complete this challenge, they never did. Their constant support of and belief in me is a gift I treasure.

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It takes a village to complete a dissertation, and I would like to thank my friends, family, and colleagues who helped support me along the way, provided me encouragement when I needed it, and asked about my progress. I am especially grateful for those times when they understood I needed to decline invitations in order to focus on my schoolwork. I think it is time we do some catching up.

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Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Introduction

Teachers are tasked with providing a high quality education to the students they serve. In order to do so, effective classroom management is an essential skill. Students who display disruptive behaviors negatively impact the entire class, as the teacher loses academic momentum while handling student misconduct (Roache & Lewis, 2011). Deaf and hard of hearing students often present with additional educational identifications, such as language impairments and developmental delays (El-Zraigat, 2013; Glickman, 2009). Because of these additional disabilities, this population often demonstrates a need for teachers with strong behavior management techniques. However, traditional behavior management techniques focus heavily on rule compliance, but do little to enhance the social skills of students (Fay, 2004; Glickman, 2011; Olive, 2010; Thompson & Webber, 2010).

This problem suggests that teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students may require an approach that is more purposeful in its intent, such as one with a goal of developing enhanced social skills and problem solving capabilities, in order to be effective (Sinnott, 2009). Acquiring enhanced social skills and problem solving skills improves time on task for deaf and hard of hearing students, leading to higher academic achievement. In addition, enhanced social skills often lead to more positively rewarding relationships, improving quality of life for these children (Harvey & Kentish, 2010). Beyond reaching compliance, a purposeful approach to student conduct may positively impact social change for deaf and hard or hearing learners and their teachers. Olive

(2010) stated, “Discipline programs do not change behavior at all; they give the appearance of change” (p. 5). In order to effect real change, it may be necessary to move beyond the traditional compliance-based discipline programs found in many classrooms today, especially for teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students.

This chapter is an introduction to this study. In this chapter, I present the background of the study, including a summary of current research related to the social-emotional needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. After extensively reviewing research related to the unique needs of this population, I also identified a gap in the research in that I found no investigation of a purposeful approach used with this population. Building on this background, I describe the research problem and the purpose of this study. In addition, I present the research questions, conceptual framework, and methodology of the study. I conclude this chapter with definitions, assumptions, scope and delimitations, limitations, and the significance of this study.

Background

Of the many responsibilities facing teachers each day, behavior management and conflict resolution are important priorities because they set the stage for student learning, lead to increased time on task, and educate students in appropriate social behaviors (Garberoglio et al., 2012; LaCour & Tissington, 2011; Sinnott, 2009). Effective behavior management is especially important for teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students, because this population of students presents more behavioral difficulties than their hearing peers (Dalton, 2011; El-Zraigat, 2013; Garberoglio, Gobble, & Cawthon, 2012). The increased social-emotional difficulties experienced by deaf and hard of hearing

students causes teachers of these students to spend more time in conflict resolution than their general education colleagues do (Genç & Hamedoğlu, 2012). Educators of deaf education teacher preparation programs in colleges and universities acknowledge that deaf and hard of hearing students experience more social-emotional difficulties than their hearing peers, but they place a heavy emphasis on behavior management approaches rather than effective conflict resolution approaches (Garberoglio et al., 2012). Behavior management approaches are designed to provide rewards and consequences for student behaviors, but do little to increase the social and emotional functioning of students or allow for conflict resolution (Funk, 2010). Such traditional behavior modification programs have been, at best, moderately successful in changing maladaptive behaviors of deaf and hard of hearing students (Glickman, 2009; Ziv, Most, & Cohen, 2013).

The review of research literature for this study showed a gap in knowledge about the use of more contemporary approaches to behavior management with deaf and hard of hearing students. Deaf and hard of hearing students experience more social-emotional difficulties than their hearing peers and have limited success with traditional behavior modification approaches (Dalton, 2011; El-Zraigat, 2013; Garberoglio, Gobble, & Cawthon, 2012). Current research suggests the need for a change in approach, but little research exists to explore the implementation of such an approach. This study was needed in order to address this gap in knowledge, providing current educators of deaf and hard of hearing students an in-depth exploration of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with this population.

Problem Statement

Deaf and hard of hearing children experience conflict in significantly different ways than their normally hearing peers do as a result of language and communication delays (Harvey & Kentish, 2010). Traditional programs such as token economy systems were likely designed with normally hearing students in mind, but may be implemented in programs serving deaf and hard of hearing students because they do not require advanced levels of language and communication proficiency (Funk, 2010). Talk therapies, such as counseling approaches used by mental health professionals are often unsuccessful with deaf and hard of hearing students because of language difficulties (Glickman, 2009). Glickman (2009) suggested an approach that engages the student in the process, proposing that including students in the process is a more pressing goal than gaining behavioral compliance. Engaging students in the process of changing maladaptive behaviors allows them to identify those behaviors and consider alternative approaches that may be more effective and socially appropriate. This approach changes the foundation of behavior management from one where the teacher is responsible for recognizing and reinforcing both appropriate and inappropriate behaviors to one where the student engages in self-reflection, problem solving, and learning. Sinnott (2009) agreed with Glickman (2009), finding that deaf and hard of hearing students miss out on incidental learning and therefore need direct instruction in social skills. Direct instruction in social skills may provide deaf and hard of hearing students with opportunities to increase their self-reflection and problem solving skills.

Missed opportunities for incidental learning may put deaf and hard of hearing students at a disadvantage in developing appropriate social skills, but the cause of their deficit may go beyond just those experiences. Vogel-Walcutt (2011) suggested that this population has more stimuli competing for their attention as they need to visually attend to signed communication, and therefore, they may miss social cues, causing them to lag behind their hearing peers in social adjustment. Guardino and Antia (2012) also recommended a change in approach to student conduct for teachers working with deaf and hard of hearing students, including a consideration of competing visual stimuli. Current research suggests that deaf and hard of hearing students face obstacles related to incidental learning as well as competing visual stimuli in their development of prosocial skills.

An extensive amount of research has been conducted related to the unique social-emotional needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners; emerging research suggests improved student conduct if teachers of this population change their approach (Glickman, 2010; Glickman, 2011; Harvey & Kentish, 2010; Muma & Perigoe, 2010; Rieffe, 2012). Some researchers have identified strategies and approaches to student conduct that have reduced disruptive behavior (Guardino & Antia, 2012; Obenauf, 2008; Sinnott, 2009). Bullock (2011) also explored teacher perceptions of student behavior after participating in training in a purposeful approach to student conduct. However, no research exists that explores how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage them in collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. This study was designed to address that gap. This study also represents a significant contribution to

research in the field of deaf education as the findings may be relevant to practicing educators and adds to the body of knowledge about the use of collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing learners.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage them in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. Prior research suggests the need for a new approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students and because teachers of these students spend more time in conflict resolution than their general education colleagues do, there is a need for increased understanding about the use of this nontraditional approach. The intent of the study was to describe how teachers used such an approach at a residential school serving deaf and hard of hearing students.

Research Questions

The primary and secondary research questions for this study were based on the theoretical framework of conflict resolution theory and literature review for this study.

Primary Research Question

How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct?

Secondary Research Questions

1. How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students perceive a purposeful approach to student conduct?
2. How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students use a purposeful approach to student conduct?
3. What do documents reveal about a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners?

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study was based on Deutsch's (1973) conflict resolution theory. The key concept of this theory is that while conflict is not preventable, it can be used as a constructive and positive force, engaging conflicted individuals in cooperative and collaborative problem solving processes. Deutsch (1973) stated that learning is enhanced when individuals apply problem-solving strategies and experience the consequences of their decisions. These concepts are the foundation of a purposeful approach to student conduct. The research questions examined teachers' use of this purposeful approach through the contextual lens of Deutsch's conflict resolution theory. The conceptual framework is relevant to the research design, because an understanding of how conflict resolution approaches are used in classrooms requires a qualitative investigation. The conceptual framework is described in more detail in Chapter 2.

Nature of the Study

I designed this qualitative case study to describe how teachers use a specific approach to student conduct with a specific population of learners. Qualitative research is

consistent with understanding a phenomenon, which is the primary focus of this study. Merriam (2009) described qualitative researchers as "interested in understanding how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences" (p. 5). Therefore, I used a case study research design for this qualitative research, because it allowed for in-depth analysis of a contemporary phenomenon, which for this study was a purposeful approach to student conduct that teachers use with deaf and hard of hearing students.

Yin (2014) defined case study research as an in-depth investigation of a contemporary phenomenon in its real-world context. The single case for this study was the purposeful approach to student conduct used at a residential school for deaf and hard of hearing students located in the western region of the United States. Participants included six teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students in Grades K-5 at the research site. I collected data from multiple sources, including:

- individual interviews with teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing,
- observations of the implementation of a purposeful approach to student conduct by these teachers, and a
- review of documents related to the purposeful approach, including
    - group summaries of discipline referrals with no identifying individual student information,
    - sample behavior contracts, and
    - written communications with families and teachers with no identifying information included.

No identifying information regarding individual students was included on the documents that I obtained. The superintendent of the school used as the study site provided permission to review this group data.

I analyzed the study data by first coding and constructing themes within each data source and then identifying the common themes and discrepant data that emerged from all data sources, which informed the key findings for this study. I also analyzed and interpreted data through the conceptual lens of Deutsch's (1973) conflict resolution theory. The central construct of this theory is that conflict is unavoidable, but can be used to increase skills in collaborative problem solving. Analyzing collected data through the lens of Deutsch's conflict resolution theory ensured that data analysis remained centered on the research questions.

Definitions

This study includes some specific terms, concepts, and constructs that may have multiple meanings. The definitions listed below were relevant to this study.

Behavior: The actions or reactions of persons or things under given circumstances (Skinner, 1974). Skinner (1974) stated that behavior could be modified by providing positive or negative reinforcement.

Classroom management: The strategies, procedures, and approaches teachers use in their classrooms that are designed to prevent student disruptive behaviors, respond to student disruptive behaviors when they do occur, and resolve conflicts that occur in the classroom (Roache & Lewis, 2011). This term refers to both skills and techniques implemented by teachers when interacting with members of their class and may include

tangible reinforcers such as those used in token economy systems as well as nontangible concepts such as attitude and empathy (Roache & Lewis, 2011). A combination of recognition, rewards, student involvement, and discussion often results in effective classroom management (Roache & Lewis, 2011).

Collaborative problem solving: A practice when two or more individuals work together to identify a problem, brainstorm possible solutions, and select a solution for implementation (Fay, 2004). When adults engage in collaborative problem solving with students as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct, they "work with students as opposed to doing things to students" (Fay, 2004, p. 12).

Conflict resolution: In the context of this study, an intervention aimed at alleviating or eliminating discord that occurs as a result of two or more people experiencing a difference of opinions, ideas, or perspectives (Deutsch, 1973). Deutsch stated that, "the point is not how to eliminate or prevent conflict, but rather how to make it productive" (p.17). In this study, conflict resolution is aimed at making the conflict that occurs in classrooms with deaf and hard of hearing students productive.

Consequence: The result of an action, whether positive or negative (Bullock, 2011). The consequence of studying is higher academic learning and grades, and the consequence of not studying is lower academic learning and grades (Bullock, 2011). These examples are natural and logical consequences and differ from teacher-delivered consequences such as time-out, removal of privileges, or physical punishment (Bullock, 2011). In this study, consequences are directly related to individual students' behavior and are natural and logical whenever possible.

Cooperative conflict: "the passion of disagreement nested in a caring community" (Kohn, 2011, p. 52). In this study, cooperative conflict is used as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing students and includes an expression of empathy when engaging in conflict resolution.

Deaf and hard of hearing students: Students who identify with the deaf community, use signed communication as a primary language, and may or may not use amplification devices (Luey, Glass, & Elliott, 1995). The amount of hearing loss an individual experiences does not determine this designation (Luey et al., 1995). Rather, individuals determine membership in this designation based upon cultural identity (Luey et al., 1995).

Discipline referral: In the context of this study, a written account of behaviors a student displays that interfere with the learning environment or the learning of others. The discipline referral is completed by a teacher or support staff and submitted to the administrator for review and follow up. A summary of discipline referrals contains no identifying information about individual students. Rather, the summary is a count of how many times various behaviors occurred and what the consequence was for each of these incidents. Schaubman, Stetson, and Plog (2011) stated, "Examples of referable behavior included, but were not limited to, fighting, cussing at a teacher or peer, refusal to follow adult directions, frequent talking out in class, constant off-task behaviors, and excessive tardies" (p. 85).

Disruptive behavior: Any behavior that interferes with the learning environment or the learning of others (Hawken, O'Neill, & MacLeod, 2011). Examples include, but

are not limited to, angry outbursts, refusal to complete work, arguing with peers or teachers, and aggressive behaviors (Hawken et al., 2011). Hawken, O'Neill, and MacLeod defined disruptive behavior as "major non-compliance" (p. 557).

Empathy: Kohn (1996) defined empathy as identification with and understanding of another's situations, feelings, and motives. Empathy is different from sympathy, as empathy is more focused on being present and feeling *with* another person rather than feeling *for* that person (Fay, 2004). Empathic responses are the foundation of the *Love and Logic*© purposeful approach to student conduct (Fay, 2004; Funk, 2010).

Hearing impaired: An outdated medical term that is not often used in literature related to deaf and hard of hearing students. Individuals who are hearing impaired generally do not identify with the deaf community or deaf culture, and they often do not use signed communication (Luey, Glass, & Elliott, 1995).

Learning environment: Both physical characteristics such as lighting, furniture, and visual stimuli (Guardino & Antia, 2012), as well as psychological characteristics such as teacher and student attitudes, motivation for teaching and learning, and interpersonal relationships (Bernstein-Yamashiro & Noam, 2013; Kohn, 1996).

Love and Logic©: A purposeful approach to working with students that focuses on providing choices, using empathy, and employing natural and logical consequences (Fay, 2004). According to Fay and Funk (1995), "Love allows children to grow through their mistakes" and "Logic allows children to live with the consequences of their choices"(p. 7). Fay and Funk contended that empathy is the foundation of *Love and Logic*©.

Professional development: All learning opportunities that are facilitated by experts in the field and have increased knowledge and skills for school staff as a goal (Brock & Carter, 2013). Professional development is designed to support school staff in implementing programs with fidelity (Brock & Carter, 2013). For this study, professional development was the training teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students have completed related to implementing with fidelity a purposeful approach to student conduct.

Purposeful approach to student conduct: A strategy based on the philosophy of relationship-building, preventing student misconduct, and collaborative conflict resolution (Hawken, O'Neill, & MacLeod, 2011). This differs from traditional approaches to student conduct, as it does not rely on tangible positive and negative reinforcers such as stickers for compliance or loss of privileges for noncompliance (Hawken et al., 2011). Consequences for misconduct are natural and logical, and are relevant to the specific student behavior (Hawken et al., 2011). A purposeful approach to student conduct requires that the adult remain calm and empathetic when students experience a problem, and guide them through a process of deciding on a resolution to that conflict (Hawken et al., 2011). The goal of such an approach is to develop independent problem solvers who are internally motivated to make positive life choices (Hawken et al., 2011). While this approach has been shown to increase academic time-on-task and performance, it is primarily an approach to improved social-emotional functioning, and "does not target academic skills directly" (Hawken et al., 2011, p. 567).

Reinforcement: The process of providing tangible or intangible responses to behavior with the goal of either increasing or decreasing that behavior (Skinner, 1974). For example, a teacher may provide a sticker (tangible reinforcement) or a smile (intangible reinforcement) to a child who is on task. The same teacher may take away a sticker (tangible reinforcement) or nonverbally express disapproval (intangible reinforcement) to a student who is off task (Skinner, 1974). Traditional behavior management systems rely heavily on positive and negative reinforcement with the use of tangible reinforcers (Kohn, 1996; Thompson & Webber, 2010).

School support staff: In the context of this study, a category of nonteaching school staff including, but not limited to, guidance counselors, paraprofessionals, behavior specialists, social workers, nurses, administrators, custodial workers, and clerical workers. Instruction and support from school support staff should be "supplementary to instruction from a highly qualified teacher" (Brock & Carter, 2013, p. 217).

Assumptions

This study was based on several assumptions. The first assumption was that participants use the purposeful approach to student conduct with fidelity. This assumption was important because the data that were collected contributes meaningful knowledge to the field of deaf education only if participants used a purposeful approach consistently and with fidelity. The second assumption was that participants would answer the interview prompts fully and honestly. This assumption was critical to this study because truthful answers increase understanding of how a purposeful approach is used in a real-world context and provides credibility for the findings. The third assumption was that

educators at the research site would grant me access to group, not individual, summaries of student discipline referrals with no identifying information. This assumption was important to this study because an analysis of group summaries of discipline referrals allowed me to identify trends in student misconduct and conflict resolution strategies that were helpful in determining if a purposeful approach to student conduct was effective for these learners.

Scope and Delimitations

The scope of this study included six teachers who used a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students in a residential school for the deaf in the western region of the United States. Teachers who employed more traditional behavior management approaches were not included, nor were teachers from other schools who may also have used a purposeful approach with deaf and hard of hearing learners. I chose this focus because current research points to a need for a more effective approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students.

This study was also delimited or narrowed by time and resources. Data were collected during the spring quarter of 2016 during a visit to the research site. Because I was acting as a single researcher, time and financial resources presented practical limitations regarding how many interviews and observations I could conduct. I conducted one multi-day site visit during which I completed the interviews and observations and collected documents. I conducted data collection on site until I reached data saturation (Merriam, 2009).

Limitations

A possible limitation of this single case study was the inability to generalize or transfer findings to other programs serving deaf and hard of hearing students. This research was conducted at a residential school for deaf and hard of hearing students, which was a signing environment. Deaf and hard of hearing students throughout the country are also served in programs outside of the residential school, such as in mainstream programs in local public schools or in nonsigning environments. It is unclear if findings from this study have transferability to programs that are structured differently.

A second possible limitation of this single case study was that only a single case was presented. According to Yin (2014), multiple case studies result in more robust findings than single case studies do, and they should be used when time and resources allow. Presenting at least two cases allows for the possibility of literal replication, which may not be possible with a single case (Yin, 2014). Results of this single case study, according to Yin, do not allow for theoretical replication.

Another possible limitation of this single case study was related to the nature of the qualitative research, which relies heavily on the analysis and interpretation of data that can be influenced by the personal beliefs and values of the researcher (Merriam, 2009). Because I was the only individual responsible for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data and presenting the study findings, the potential for research bias existed. In order to address this potential bias, I described specific strategies in Chapter 3 such as reflexivity and member checking (Merriam, 2009) that I used to improve the trustworthiness of this study.

Significance of the Study

The significance of this study relates to advancing knowledge in the field, to improving practice, and to contributing to positive social change. With regard to advancing knowledge, this research study addressed a gap in the existing research by providing an in-depth description of how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engaged their students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. Understanding how such a process works added to the body of research that points to the need for such an approach.

In relation to improving practice, representing teacher voices in this study may influence professional practice by providing insights into a purposeful approach to student conduct from those teachers who used it with deaf and hard of hearing students. Understanding teacher beliefs and use of this purposeful approach to student conduct in relation to its impact on the social-emotional needs of elementary-aged deaf and hard of hearing students provides information to other educators about this student population. Those teachers who are struggling with how to provide an effective behavior management system or approach for these students may benefit from the findings of this study. Additionally, this research may assist school leaders in determining a course of action for addressing the unique social-emotional needs of these learners.

This study also contributes to positive social change. This purposeful approach to student conduct has the potential to effect positive social change through improved student conduct, increased time on task for academic learning, and enhanced problem solving skills that deaf and hard of hearing students use to resolve social-emotional and

academic problems. Students with improved academic learning and independent problem solving skills may make positive contributions to their school community, residential community, and family dynamics. When students engage in collaborative problem solving with peers, family members, and members of the community, relationships are strengthened. These relationships are especially important for the deaf and hard of hearing population because students with hearing loss often present with additional social-emotional needs, limited linguistic skills, and difficulty establishing and maintaining relationships in the community. Students who make meaningful contributions to collaborative efforts in their communities are likely to contribute to positive social change.

Summary

A considerable challenge in the education of deaf and hard of hearing students is meeting their social-emotional needs in order to decrease disruptive behaviors. Teachers of these students often spend more instructional time engaged in conflict resolution with their students than their general education colleagues do. Employing conflict resolution strategies that rely heavily on linguistic abilities can create additional challenges because deaf and hard of hearing students often present with language and communication delays. Even though significant research related to the prevalence of behavior problems with deaf and hard of hearing children has been conducted, few contributions to the field of study address using a more contemporary approach to behavior management.

Some researchers have suggested traditional talk therapies (Glickman, 2009; Glickman, 2010) while others have supported the implementation of a school-wide

positive behavior support system (Sinnott, 2009) or a consideration of visual distractions (Guardino & Antia, 2012). However, professional development programs still focus more heavily on traditional behavior management systems for deaf and hard of hearing students, and such programs are widely used throughout the country. Even though some programs use a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students, no research exists relevant to its implementation in these programs.

As an initial investigation into the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing students, this research used a qualitative approach and a single case study design in order to understand how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students use such an approach and their beliefs about this approach. The investigation focused on the primary research question: How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct? In order to address this question, the implementation of such an approach was observed, summaries of student discipline referrals were reviewed, and teachers were interviewed.

Chapter 2 includes a description of the strategies that I used to conduct the literature review and a more detailed description of the conceptual framework. The literature review of current research is related to the school conduct of deaf and hard of hearing students, conflict resolution with this population, teacher approaches to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students, and the relationship of this study to previous research. I conclude Chapter 2 with a discussion of the major themes and discrepancies that emerged from the literature review.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students spend more time in conflict resolution than their general education peers do (Genç & Hamedoğlu, 2012) but receive limited professional development specifically related to conflict resolution strategies (Garberoglio et al., 2012). Emerging research suggests that deaf and hard of hearing students engage in fewer disruptive behaviors during the academic day if teachers employ a more purposeful approach to student conduct (El-Zraigat, 2013; Glickman, 2010; Glickman, 2011; Guardino & Antia, 2012; Rieffe, 2012). Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engaged their students in collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct.

In this chapter, I describe the literature search strategy used to locate current research related to the school conduct of deaf and hard of hearing students, conflict resolution approaches used with this population, and teacher approaches to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students. I also describe the conceptual framework for this study, including an examination of how this framework has been applied in previous research. In this review of the literature, I analyze and synthesize current research related to student conduct of deaf and hard of hearing students and teacher approaches to student conduct and conflict resolution with this population. I conclude this chapter with a discussion of the major themes and gaps that emerged from this review.

Literature Search Strategy

For this literature search, I used various search terms to find current research relevant to the social and emotional functioning of deaf and hard or hearing learners and to teacher approaches to student conduct with general education students and deaf and hard of hearing learners. Search terms included *behavior*, *classroom management*, *discipline*, and *misconduct*. Combined search terms were *behavior* and *deaf*, *classroom management* and *deaf*, *student misconduct* and *deaf*, and *disruptive behavior* and *deaf*. Search terms for current research related to conflict resolution strategies with deaf and hard of hearing learners included *conflict resolution* and *deaf*, *problem solving* and *deaf*, and *collaboration* and *deaf*. A search for the phrase *purposeful approach to student conduct* yielded no results, so I used the search term *Love and Logic*, which yielded two Walden University dissertations.

In addition to using the Walden University Library database, I used the same search terms in the Flagler College Library database, which provided access to more peer-reviewed journals specifically related to deafness and deaf education. At both Walden University and Flagler College, I used the ProQuest Central and SocINDEX with Full Text databases. At Walden University, I also used Education Research Complete database. While reviewing articles, I kept my primary research question in mind in order to select current peer-reviewed articles that would be relevant to this study. Finally, I reviewed reference lists from the articles I selected as a guide to finding additional articles.

I identified additional resources through collaboration with colleagues working in deaf education and with Charles Fay, the president of Love and Logic©. By sharing my research interests, I was able to discuss current research and trends in the fields of deaf education and general education. Fay provided a list of research specifically related to the Love and Logic© approach.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework for this study was based on Deutsch's (1973) theory of conflict resolution. Deutsch (1973) examined the nature of human conflict, concluding that conflict is a healthy part of relationships. Using conflict as a starting point, Deutsch stated that individuals engage in collaborative problem solving that leads to improved relationships. Other positive effects of using conflict as a beginning point include solved problems, stimulated positive personal and social change, and enhanced creativity. Deutsch believed that these additional benefits of using conflict in this way present a strong case for the reduced use of destructive conflict resolution methods such as coercion and violence, which have a win-lose mentality. Instead, Deutsch and Coleman (2000) argued that individuals should approach conflict with a win-win mentality and engage in constructive conflict resolution.

Constructive conflict resolution approaches, according to Deutsch (1973), include active listening, creative problem solving, and viewing conflict as a joint problem rather than one belonging to only one individual. Active listening involves the listener restating the speaker's words to ensure agreement about what is discussed, and creative problem solving involves each member engaged in a conflict looking for ways that will create a

win-win situation for everyone (Deutsch, 1973). Covey (1989) also believed in seeking out win-win situations and suggested that creative problem solving includes a belief in the "third alternative" (p. 106). Covey explained that the third alternative "is not your way or my way; it's a better way" (p. 106). A strong aspect of constructive conflict resolution, Deutsch stated, is viewing the problem as one that belongs to everyone, and the belief that finding resolution to the conflict will benefit all individuals. In order to do so, individuals must approach conflict with a social mindset rather than a selfish mindset.

Individuals should approach conflict with a social mindset, but Deutsch (1973) also believed that the benefit to the community when the conflict is resolved should be considered. According to Deutsch, humans are highly interdependent, and therefore highly capable of this mindset. Rather than try to prevent all conflict, Deutsch suggested preventing only destructive conflict and conflict resolution strategies, and embracing constructive conflict and conflict resolution strategies. In doing so, according to Deutsch, individuals initiate engagement in cooperation. When people engage in cooperation, Deutsch believed that their relationships are strengthened and their problem solving skills are enhanced. Experiencing enhanced relationships and problem-solving skills leads to opportunities for future constructive conflict resolution, strengthening the relationship further.

Deutsch (1973) contended that engaging in constructive conflict resolution requires that participants consider the strengths, personality, emotional state, and cognitive resources of others involved in the conflict. When conflict occurs between two individuals, Deutsch also suggested that both individuals must actively engage in

perspective taking of the other. When the conflict is serious, or when the individual is highly emotional, taking the perspective of another can be difficult. In such instances, Deutsch recommended the effective use of a third party. This third party should be a highly respected individual, who should aim to enable conflicting individuals to take the perspective of others and identify common ground. Deutsch also stated that the use of a third party typically indicates close-mindedness on the part of at least one individual.

Deutsch (1973) stated that close-mindedness also prevents constructive conflict resolution. In order to be open-minded during periods of conflict, individuals need to understand the variables that affect the course of conflict. These variables include:

1. the characteristics of the parties involved in conflict;
2. the prior relationship of these parties;
3. the nature of the issue causing the conflict;
4. the social environment in which the conflict occurs; and
5. the audiences interested in the conflict and the resolution (Deutsch, 1973, p. 8).

Each of these variables contributes in some way to the conflict, and recognizing those contributions allows for conflicting parties to more efficiently arrive at resolution. However, efficiency is not the only benefit of being open-minded; Deutsch also supported using open-mindedness as a means to constructive conflict resolution because it leads to solutions that were beneficial to all parties involved. Deutsch argued that such win-win solutions are the heart of constructive conflict resolution.

Recent research has supported Deutsch's (1973) claims about conflict in schools and conflict resolution strategies that teachers use support conflict resolution theory.

Deutsch (1973, 2000) also stated that conflict arises when incompatible activities occur. In educational settings, these incompatible activities occur when students engage in conduct that is incompatible with teacher expectations; therefore, teachers spend time in conflict resolution with students when student misconduct occurs. For example, Schaubman, Stetson, and Plog (2011) examined the use of a collaborative problem solving approach in an alternative educational setting for students in Grades 7 and 8 who had not been successful in traditional public school settings. Schaubman et al. found that disruptive behaviors decreased when constructive conflict resolution strategies were employed.

Several studies have also supported Deutsch's (1973) theory. For example, Farrell, Smith, and Brownell (1998) examined a level system that teachers used for students with behavioral and emotional disorders. In such a system, students are awarded increased privileges as they demonstrate prosocial behaviors and advance to higher levels of independence. Farrell et al. found that rigid systems rarely resulted in student success or improved behaviors, but most teachers rated them as useful. In a study about teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of level systems on the behavior of students identified with emotional or behavioral disorders, Farrell et al. (1998) suggested that teachers may not understand the level system and that the lack of success with it could be a result of a one-size-fits-all approach to conflict rather than a more collaborative approach. In a study about behavior management programs used in classrooms, Roache and Lewis (2011) suggested teachers engage in calm discussion of conflict and rule infractions as part of a classroom culture committed to constructive conflict resolution and building

relationships. According to Deutsch (1973), relationships are strengthened when individuals engage in such discussions. Teachers who engage in calm discussion with students during incidents of conflict help students develop collaborative conflict resolution skills while also strengthening the student-teacher relationship.

This study benefitted from Deutsch's conflict resolution theory because the purpose of this study was to explore how teachers used constructive conflict resolution with deaf and hard of hearing students. Building on the key concepts of this framework, the Love and Logic© approach to student conduct, based on strong teacher-student relationships and empathetic concern for others, aims to provide teachers with tools that provide opportunities for constructive conflict resolution and strengthened relationships. Understanding how such a purposeful approach is used with deaf and hard of hearing students contributes additional research related to conflict resolution theory.

Literature Review

In this review of the literature, I discuss current research related to managing student conduct and various approaches to student conduct that teachers employ. In relation to the research question about teacher perceptions of a purposeful approach to student conduct, I explore empirical research on that topic. Because a purposeful approach is centered on the school community as well as positive student-teacher relationships, I also analyze literature related to these topics. Finally, I examine current research relevant to managing student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students, because the research questions focus on this population. Thus, the literature review is aligned with the primary and secondary research questions for this case study about

exploring how teachers engage deaf and hard of hearing students in collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct.

Managing Student Behavior

Managing student behavior is a universal challenge facing educators, and effectively doing so requires a specific skill set. In an examination of preschool teachers' beliefs about the importance of social-emotional learning, Zinsser, Shewark, Denham, and Curby (2014) found that teachers believed behavior management is an important part of their daily responsibilities and that effectively implementing programs requires awareness of and attention to the social-emotional needs of students. Educators at the school district level, the individual school level, and to some degree, the classroom level have the autonomy to determine how to manage student behavior. While educators in some public school districts adopt a particular approach or program for implementation within all district schools, classroom teachers are responsible for following district policies and procedures about student behavior (Funk, 2010). In a study about behavior intervention and support teams, Boulden (2010) identified teacher actions as more powerful than school policy in managing student behavior. Spivak and Farran (2012) explored the impact of first grade teachers' behavior on student conduct and found that when teachers deliberately focus on incorporating empathetic language, encouraging students to share and explain their feelings, and publicly recognizing specific prosocial behaviors, students begin to develop empathetic and compassionate qualities.

Students who possess these qualities are less likely to engage in disruptive behaviors because they develop real concern for others. Way (2011) also examined

student conduct related to teacher approaches and found that when students believe teachers are caring and respectful, behavior improves. Roache and Lewis (2011) agreed in their examination of student perceptions of classroom management, using a 25-item survey. Their results identified classroom discipline as either coercive or relationship-based. In coercive environments, teachers are responsible for establishing rules and providing positive consequences for compliance and negative consequences for violations. In this directive, top-down model, teachers are authority figures and students have little input into classroom rules and routines. In a relationship-based model, Roache and Lewis found, teachers and students work collaboratively to develop rules, determine appropriate consequences for rule infractions, and discuss prosocial behaviors. In such environments, they found that teachers used discussion, hinting, involvement, and recognition and reward combinations, Additionally, Roach and Lewis found students in relationship-based environments rated their teachers more favorably than students in coercive and punitive environments did. In an investigation into student engagement and independence, Rubin (2012) suggested that students have very little control over the daily aspects of their schooling, including what, how, when, and where they will learn. Rubin recommended that educators offer students more opportunities for involvement and control. When educators ignore students' needs for independence and control, Rubin argued that they inhibit the growth of problem solving skills and prosocial behavior.

Problem-solving skills and prosocial behaviors are qualities teachers want to nurture in their students (Garberoglio, Gobble, & Cawthon, 2012). However, Rubin (2012) found that rule compliance is still the priority for educators, who demonstrate little

concern for developing skills of responsible citizenship. The term *behavior management*, widely used by educators, suggests that teachers are simply managing the behavior of their students, without doing much to effectively change the behavior. Olive (2010) discussed behavior management versus behavior change and contended that behavior change requires adults to educate and motivate students to change, but actual change is up to the individual student. Teachers and other school support staff members cannot make students change their behavior (Olive, 2010). Kohn (1996), a widely recognized theorist in internal motivation, noted, "Discipline programs can (temporarily) change behavior, but they cannot help people grow" (Kohn, 1996, p. 69). Similarly, Olive (2010) noted, "Discipline programs do not change behavior at all; they give the appearance of change" (p. 5). Because teachers believe that behavior management is a skill that effective educators must possess, it is important to examine research about specific approaches to student conduct that educators have implemented in K-12 public and private schools.

Approaches to Student Conduct

Many behavior management programs exist, and teachers often employ a variety of approaches to student conduct (Way, 2011). Some educators adopt a particular program or approach and require teachers to implement it school-wide. One such program is the Behavior Intervention Support Team (BIST), The BIST program is proactive, and encourages teachers to respond to disruptive behavior by considering what the student needs instead of providing a consequence (Boulden, 2010). In this way, the program is designed upon the principle that student misconduct is a result of an unmet

need, and teachers can change behavior if they can meet that need (Boulden, 2010). Further, student misconduct is considered a result of a skill deficit in the BIST program, and teachers can identify specific social skills that students lack and train them in those skills in order to improve behavior. At its core, the BIST program is a teaching philosophy, where teachers partner with students to guide them in developing prosocial behaviors (Boulden, 2010).

Hawken, O'Neill, and MacLeod (2011) also examined the impact of the function of maladaptive behavior on the effectiveness of a specific behavior education program that aims to engage students and teachers in learning experiences related to social skills. In the Behavior Education Program (BEP), teachers used a check in and check out procedure with 17 students who exhibited highly disruptive behaviors during the school day. Students were paired with an adult and checked in with the adult before the start of school and again at the end of the day. During the morning meetings, the adult reminded students of school expectations and personal behavior goals, ensured that they were prepared for class with necessary supplies, and provided a daily progress report so that the teacher could record student conduct and progress on the established behavior goals. In the afternoon, the adult reviewed the daily progress report and calculated how many points students earned during the day. After a discussion of their progress on goals, the adult offered students praise and encouragement and often provided them with a small reward for behavior compliance. Hawken et al. compared preimplementation and postimplementation office referrals for the 17 students involved in the program and found that 13 of the participants had a reduction in referrals. Hawken et al. concluded that this

program is considered an educative approach because adults are charged with teaching students how to set individual behavior goals and monitor their progress on those goals. However, the classroom teachers assign points on the daily progress report, and the check in/check out staff member calculates the point percentage and provides a reward. Even though some educative aspect to the program exists, Hawken et al. concluded that an unhealthy reliance still remains on extrinsic motivation in the form of rewards. It is unclear, therefore, if the meetings themselves led to a reduction in office referrals or if the rewards influenced this reduction.

Rewards are frequently used in classroom management systems, and token economy systems are popular in elementary schools (Covey, 2008; Funk, 2010). In such systems, students earn tokens for rule compliance and lose tokens for rule violations. At predetermined intervals, students count their tokens and "buy" a reward from the teacher. Some schools provide daily rewards, while others provide rewards at the end of each school week. In a study examining factors influencing the academic engagement of two primary school students, Hopewell, McLaughlin, and Derby (2011) found that a token economy system used for students with severe behavior problems increased their time on task and participation in learning activities.

Another behavior management system that is used frequently in schools is the level system. In this system, various levels have clearly defined set of requirements for student conduct, and when students demonstrate appropriate conduct for a predetermined amount of time, they move to the next level (Drumm et al., 2013; Kohn, 1996). Each level comes with more valuable rewards than the previous level (Olive, 2010). The level

system attempts to manage student behavior while also providing opportunities for students to develop internal motivation to behave in socially appropriate ways. This system is often effective because it provides opportunities for students to connect their performance with the positive feeling of earning greater rewards and privileges. However, in their study about teacher perceptions of the effectiveness of these level systems, Farrell et al. (1998) found that even though the system is effective in helping students accept the consequences of their behavior, it is not effective in getting students to comply with directions, follow rules, develop a positive self-image, or cooperate with others. Farrell concluded that the level system is effective only as a means to justify a predetermined consequence, not to change behavior. Farrell also concluded that the level system does not recognize individual student needs because teachers often implement the system in a standardized fashion, without regard to student skill deficits, unmet needs, or unique learning styles. Even though students may be successful in this program, Farrell believed that they do not learn the skills needed to be successful when the program is removed.

More recently, Drumm et al. (2013) investigated a level and point system used in a residential treatment facility for adolescent boys with behavioral difficulties. Thirty former residents were interviewed about their experiences in the facility. Without being asked directly about the behavior system used, all participants volunteered information regarding the system. Participants mentioned common themes related to the lack of individualization of the system and the frustrations students felt when losing points. Many participants reported that the system placed students at odds with adults and with

each other, encouraging competition over cooperation. At the residential facility, educators required students to earn a specific number of points in order to graduate from the program and to leave the facility. Study participants stated that they would behave only in order to get out of the program. Drumm concluded that this type of externally motivated behavior change is not behavior change at all because this points and level system did little to internally motivate students to behave in socially appropriate ways.

Even though Drumm et al. (2013) and Farrell et al. (1998) stated that extrinsic motivators do little to change student behavior, behaviorists believe in systems that are structured like the points and level system and that use token economies because they reward prosocial behavior and consequate antisocial behaviors (Doughty, Holloway, Shields, & Kennedy, 2012). Behaviorism emerged as a field of study in the 1950s, when Skinner (1953) linked the study of behavior with the science of observing and analyzing. In this approach, a positive or negative stimulus is provided after a behavior occurs, and therefore, the behavior is either positively or negatively reinforced. Skinner believed that people act in ways to achieve pleasure and avoid pain because of an innate struggle for survival, and therefore, parents and educators could effectively modify behavior through the use of reinforcers. For example, if a teacher wants to increase the frequency of students completing their homework assignments, the teacher may provide a reward such as a sticker or piece of candy for those students who complete their assignments. If the reinforcer is motivating to students, the frequency of completing homework should increase. The same teacher may also provide a consequence, such as missing recess, for those students who do not complete their assignments. If the motivation to avoid the

negative reinforcer of missing recess is strong enough, the frequency of completing homework should increase. Using a scientific approach to behavior modification, Skinner believed changing behavior was a matter of finding and using appropriate reinforcement.

In his research about human behavior and student conduct in schools, Kohn (1996) often disagreed with behaviorists. Kohn believed that extrinsic rewards do little to produce students who have a strong, moral character. Instead, Kohn believed, the use of extrinsic rewards and reinforcers develops students who are dependent on such reinforcers. The behaviorist approach to behavior modification has obedience and compliance as its goal, but Kohn believed educators should have loftier goals for their students. These goals include developing problem solving skills, independent thinking, and authentic, intrinsic motivation to succeed socially and academically. Kohn recommended that educators create collaborative, welcoming school communities, where students feel nurtured and supported. Lubelska (2012) described such schools at *peaceful schools*, where teachers and students spend most of their time collaborating about curriculum, the structure and pace of lessons, and appropriate problem solving approaches to discipline. The physical environment of these schools includes quiet rooms and gardens, while the social environment includes conflict resolution training, teachers and students practicing mindfulness, and all members of the school community working to spread peace in the community.

Brion-Meisels and Brion-Meisels (2012) were also interested in peaceful school environments. In an analysis of a peace-building workshop in Palestine, they found that principals who participated in the workshop were able to apply their learning in the day-

to-day operations of the school, and they reported feeling better equipped to listen to differing points of view, practicing greater patience, and having a deeper connection with students. Because of this connection and the modeling of peace-building efforts, student conduct was also more peaceable. Students and staff engaged in collaborative conflict resolution, with the understanding that conflict is considered to be a part of any change; but like Deutsch (1973), conflict can be constructive if handled in a way that supports social change. Brion-Meisels and Brion-Meisels concluded that the important difference between a peaceful school and a peaceable school is that a peaceful school is one without violence, but a peaceable school is one where a strong social commitment to nonviolence and social justice exists.

Love and Logic©, while not a structured behavior management program, is an approach to improving student conduct that aims to provide students with the tools they need to be empathetic, independent problem-solvers with a strong commitment to social justice. In this approach, adults provide genuine empathy to students when problems occur and then work collaboratively with students, guiding them in generating ideas that may solve the problem (Fay, 2004; Funk, 2010). If consequences for misconduct are assigned, they are delivered with empathetic concern, rather than anger, frustration, or lectures (Fay, 2004). In a related study, Bullock (2011) interviewed teachers who had been trained in the use of Love and Logic© and found that they reported fewer behavior problems, reduced arguing with students, increased positivity, improved ability to remain calm, and stronger relationships with students. Obenauf (2008) also examined teacher perspectives on the use of Love and Logic©, and found that the majority of teachers who

implemented Love and Logic© techniques with fidelity observed positive changes in student behavior. Teachers also reported feeling less stressed and more capable of handling disruptive behaviors than they did before learning about Love and Logic© techniques.

Thus, the existing body of research related to behavior management approaches in schools is mixed, with some researchers pointing to the benefits of token economies and others suggesting approaches more centered on intrinsic motivation and student-teacher collaboration. With a variety of approaches to student conduct established in schools across the country, teachers can become overwhelmed in determining which techniques to employ. Because teachers tend to trust other teachers, an examination of the literature related to teacher perceptions about varied approaches to managing student conduct was needed.

Teacher Perceptions About Approaches to Managing Student Conduct

Significant qualitative research has emerged that represents teacher voices regarding various approaches to managing student conduct used in schools throughout the United States. Because teachers often turn to other teachers in an effort to collaborate on effective classroom strategies to manage student behavior, an understanding of teacher perceptions about approaches to managing student conduct is a necessary part of this literature review. Understanding these teachers' perceptions may help educators identify an approach that is beneficial to students and that teachers can implement with fidelity.

Several studies indicate the importance of social-emotional learning for both general education and special education students. For example, Gable et al. (2012)

explored the views of special education and general education teachers about the importance of using evidence-based practices for students with emotional disabilities. They found that 80% of teachers believed a positive behavior support system was the most important practice to implement with such students. Zinsser et al. (2014) examined preschool teachers' beliefs about the importance of social-emotional learning and found that 83% of teachers believed social-emotional learning is a necessary component of effective education. Zinsser et al. (2014) also found that managing student conduct requires attention to social-emotional learning, as illustrated in one participant's remark, "When I talk to Kindergarten teachers, they say that at the top of their list is really that social-emotional aspect…because the educational part, it will come" (p. 482). These findings are corroborated by the results of a survey of 20,000 teachers conducted by Scholastic and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (2013). In this study, 100% of survey respondents stated that classroom management is an essential skill for effective teachers (Scholastic and the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013).

Collaborative problem solving is also an important tool in addressing student behavior problems. Schaubman et al. (2011) explored reducing teacher stress by implementing collaborative problem solving in a school setting. Schaubman et al. (2011) examined an effort to reduce disruptive behavior in which Grade 7 and Grade 8 teachers participated in 12 hours of training about collaborative problem solving. During this training, teachers gained an understanding that students with behavior problems often have delayed development in flexibility and adaptability, frustration tolerance, and problem solving. After being taught to approach problem behaviors as problems to be

solved rather than behaviors to be managed, the participating teachers began to positively conceptualize student misconduct, emphasizing a proactive approach, and honoring the student-teacher relationship. At the conclusion of the training, teachers reported decreased stress levels and a decrease in student discipline referrals. Both teachers and students reported decreased stress levels. Schaubman et al. also found that teachers do not always see their contribution to student misconduct, noting that teacher responses to misconduct can either escalate or deescalate situations.

The conceptual framework of Schaubman et al. (2013) was based on Deutsch's (1973) conflict resolution theory, and they found that collaborative and constructive conflict resolution generated beneficial results for all members of the school community. Like Glickman (2009, 2011), this study focused on skills that students could use to resolve conflicts. The teachers who implemented collaborative conflict resolution skills reported that engaging students in the use of those skills had a positive impact on classroom environment. Thus, providing instruction related to social-emotional skills and collaborative conflict resolution skills is beneficial to both students and teachers.

In another study about teacher perceptions, Singh, Lancioni, Winton, Karazsia, and Singh (2013) examined the impact of mindfulness training for teachers on the behavior of preschool students. Singh et al. believed that teacher training in approaches to student conduct is important because behaviors that are disruptive contribute to teacher burnout and stress. In their study, preschool teachers of students with mild intellectual disabilities attended an 8-week course on mindfulness, and they reported a decrease in disruptive behaviors from their students as a result of employing the skills they learned in

the course. However, Singh et al. found no increase in prosocial behaviors. Even though teachers reported that mindfulness training resulted in decreased student misconduct, students were not provided with information about appropriate ways of behaving. At the conclusion of the study, teachers engaged in informal interviews, and they reported that mindfulness positively changed their interactions with students and therefore positively changed the student-teacher relationship. Teacher participants also reported that mindfulness training reduced stress, enhanced their personal wellbeing, and improved their classroom management practices. In particular, teachers reported that the meditation practices included in the training changed how they treated themselves and others. As one teacher noted, "Responses arose from within" (Singh et al., 2013, p. 225) and became a way of interacting. Singh et al. concluded that mindfulness training became a philosophy, not a strict protocol to follow, and teachers recommended it to other teachers.

In related research, Obenauf (2008) studied teacher perceptions about a learning team, Love and Logic© techniques, and a school-wide positive behavior support program. Obenauf found that most teachers held positive beliefs about using Love and Logic© techniques, indicating that it improves student behavior, reduces teacher stress levels, and places the responsibility for solving problems on students. Teachers reported feeling more positive towards their students and less stressed when dealing with misconduct. Unlike Singh et al. (2013), Obenauf found that the use of the Love and Logic© philosophy both decreased antisocial behaviors and increased prosocial behaviors. Furthermore, teachers reported that when they used Love and Logic© concepts with fidelity, students were better able to solve their own problems.

In examining teacher perceptions about managing student behaviors, researchers have found that solving problems is an important academic skill that also contributes to the ability of students to interact in socially appropriate ways (Guardino & Antia, 2012). In a study examining the perspective of 76 teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students regarding students' self-advocacy skills, Sebald (2013) found that 96% of teachers believed problem solving is an important skill for students to have. However, not all teachers taught problem solving skills either directly or indirectly. Sebald concluded that a disconnect exists between what teachers think is important, what they actually teach, and what skills students learn.

In another related study, Collier and Henriksen (2012) examined teacher perceptions about prevention programs used to decrease student engagement in high-risk behaviors and found similar results. Teachers indicated that such programs are important, but when these programs are implemented inconsistently, they are unlikely to succeed. Collier and Henriksen concluded that teachers believe positive student-teacher relationships play a role in changing school culture and in changing student behavior. One teacher commented, "I'm not saying we're a touchy feely school because that sounds funny. But we are. You know we are a community. We address problems. We're forward thinking." (Collier & Henriksen, 2012, p. 13-14). This type of school community plays a role in changing student behavior and is the result of strong, positive student-teacher relationships.

School Community and Student-Teacher Relationships

The school community, with a focus on student-teacher relationships, is a foundation of the Love and Logic© philosophy. Fay (n.d.), President of the Love and Logic Institute, conducted an analysis of pretraining questionnaires and posttraining questionnaires with a 1,000 educators who participated in an eight-week Love and Logic© training program. At the conclusion of the training, teachers reported decreased stress and increased competence. In addition, teachers reported improved student-teacher relationships with the most behaviorally challenging students in their classes, and improved cooperation from those students. While these results appear promising, it should be noted that this article was not published in a peer-reviewed research journal and was conducted by the President of Love and Logic©. Therefore, empirical research is needed to determine the impact of improved student-teacher relationships on student conduct and academic performance because as Pierson (2013) stated, "Kids don't learn from people they don't like" (1:50). The student-teacher relationship appears to be important to both academic and social success.

Developing and maintaining positive student-teacher relationships requires teachers to have an empathetic mindset (Li-Jun et al., 2014). In a study about the ability to grow and strengthen empathetic concern, Schumann, Zaki, and Dweck (2014) found that individuals who hold a belief that empathy can be developed and increased were more likely to expend energy and effort responding to challenging situations with empathy and compassion than those individuals with a fixed mindset. In research about paraprofessional educational practices to improve outcomes for students with intellectual

and developmental disabilities, Brock and Carter (2013) found that teaching school support staff members how to engage students in more prosocial behaviors led them to feel more empathy and compassion for the students. Brock and Carter concluded that teaching communication and social skills removes barriers that students with intellectual and developmental disabilities face in regards to building strong relationships with others.

In support of Brock and Carter's (2013) findings, a growing body of research suggests that direct instruction in communication and social skills may improve the conduct of students with disabilities and may lead to the development of empathy (Boulden, 2010; Cochran, Cochran, Fuss, & Nordling, 2010; Drumm et al., 2013; Funk, 2010; Kohn, 1996; Mclean, 2012). Direct instruction may be especially important for students with hearing loss as they often present with more behavioral difficulties than their hearing peers do (Dalton, 2011; El-Zraigat, 2013; Garberoglio, Gobble, & Cawthon, 2012). Even though educators have implemented a variety of approaches to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students throughout the United States, a review of current literature suggests that a new approach may be needed to be more effective in decreasing misconduct and increasing prosocial behaviors for these students.

Approaches to Managing Student Conduct

Most et al. (2011) issued a call for special programs addressing the social and emotional needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. In a study about assessing the special needs of deaf and hard of hearing students in Jordan, El-Zraigat (2013) contended that deaf and hard of hearing students need specialized, unique instruction and support services that differ significantly from those services provided to the general student

population. Because these students often present with language and communication difficulties and limited social experiences as compared to their hearing peers, this population has greater social and emotional learning needs, and they benefit from direct instruction in social skills (Boulden, 2010; El-Zraigat, 2013; Glickman, 2011; Most et al., 2011). Without such an approach, El-Zraigat suggested that the social development of deaf and hard of hearing students will be negatively impacted, leading to difficulties with academics, communication, and cognitive tasks.

In a discussion about lessons learned from 23 years of working in a deaf psychiatric inpatient unit, Glickman (2011) used an approach developed specifically for severely emotionally disturbed deaf and hard of hearing individuals. Clients were engaged in treatment as a way to develop skills that would enhance both interpersonal and intrapersonal abilities. Using a collaborative approach that was strength-based in nature, Glickman found that clients were able to better understand their own emotions as well as the emotions of others as compared to more traditional behavior modification approaches. In addition, clients were better able to regulate their own emotions, which resulted in more satisfying social interactions with others. Glickman concluded that the successes of this program were directly related to the development of a unique program specially designed to meet the needs of deaf and hard of hearing learners.

In an examination of program-wide behavior support plans for programs in Illinois meeting the needs of students identified as deaf or hard of hearing, Sinnott (2009) suggested that deaf and hard of hearing students may benefit from a program that is not specially designed for this population, but is modified for their unique needs. Using

Positive Behavior Support (PBS), Sinnott found that deaf and hard of hearing students in Illinois showed a decrease in behavior problems after implementation of PBS as compared to before implementation of PBS. Sinnott stressed the importance of modeling and direct instruction in social skills for deaf and hard of hearing students because they often miss incidental learning opportunities. Additionally, Sinnott recommended that deaf and hard of hearing students should have multiple opportunities to practice their social skills. Like Glickman (2011), Sinnott suggested the use of a positive, educative, strength-based approach to social and emotional learning for deaf and hard of hearing students.

In related research, Garnefski and Kraaij (2011) also advocated an approach that is specially designed for deaf and hard of hearing individuals. In their research about adults with acquired hearing loss, Garnefski and Kraaij found that individuals who participated in a cognitive behavioral self-help program were more successful than those who did not with regards to managing their emotions, decreasing anxiety, and creating realistic personal goals. Even though this study was conducted with adults, parallels can be drawn between the approach used and its potential for younger individuals with hearing loss. Cognitive behavioral self-help programs may have a similar impact on elementary school students with hearing loss, although this area has not been explored in current research.

In other related research, Guardino and Antia (2012) argued that deaf and hard of hearing students have a variety of visual stimuli competing for their attention during the school day, and as a result, they conducted a study to determine if altering the classroom environment had an impact on disruptive behavior. In an analysis of three elementary

classrooms of deaf and hard of hearing learners, researchers and teachers worked in collaboration to determine alterations to the classroom that had the potential to impact student engagement and disruption. After classroom modifications were made, Guardino and Antia observed students for disruptive behaviors. Guardino and Antia compared these observations with baseline data and found that the classroom modifications caused an increase in student engagement and a decrease in student disruption. One limitation of this study was that the behavior of the teacher was not studied, so it is unclear if teachers changed their approach along with their learning environment. However, during initial interviews, teachers reported that they were highly satisfied with the changes, and during follow-up observations and interviews, teachers were still implementing these changes. This research is particularly significant to this study because it is one of very few studies that explored teacher perspectives about a specific approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners.

Teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students manage student behavior in a variety of ways, though many rely heavily on school-wide rules and corresponding consequences for compliance and noncompliance. Teller and Harney (2006) surveyed program directors of programs serving deaf and hard of hearing students and asked them to describe how teachers manage their classrooms. Teachers described school-wide programs such as Positive Behavior Intervention and Support and token economies. In addition, at least one program director noted that rules and consequences are posted throughout the school. However, Fay (2004) and Funk (2010) suggested that having predetermined consequences for specific rule infractions restricted the individualization

that students need when developing prosocial skills and that having a list of rules and corresponding consequences for violating the rules leaves the door open for students to find loopholes. Kohn (1996) agreed and argued that educators should use intrinsic rewards with students more frequently than extrinsic rewards and consequences. When Teller and Harney questioned deaf and hard of hearing program directors about extrinsic rewards, 87% reported that teachers in their programs use such rewards and consequences when managing student behavior. Even though emerging research suggests students may benefit from classroom management programs that rely on intrinsic rewards more than extrinsic rewards, current practice in the education of deaf and hard of hearing students does not reflect widespread implementation of such programs.

In a discussion of evidence-based practice in educating deaf and hard of hearing students, Spencer and Marschark (2010) noted that the effectiveness of behavior management systems used in programs serving these students has little empirical support. In addition, this review of the literature found few scholarly articles describing teachers' perspectives on the use of specific programs for these students, and none specifically related to deaf education. Because much of the research points to a need for a new approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners, yet no qualitative inquiry into these approaches exist, a gap in the research was identified.

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter included a review of the literature, beginning with a discussion of the search strategies that I used to conduct this study. I also described the conceptual framework for this study in more depth, which was based on Deutsch's (1973) theory of

constructive conflict resolution. In addition, I analyzed and synthesized current research related to the following topics: (a) managing student behavior; (b) approaches to student conduct; (c) teacher perceptions about approaches to managing student conduct; (d) school community and student-teacher relationships; and (e) approaches to managing student conduct for deaf and hard of hearing students.

Several themes emerged from this review of the research. The first theme was that behavior management is a daily stressor for many educators (Oral, 2012; Schaubman et al., 2011; Singh et al., 2013), and therefore, effective behavior management strategies are needed to improve student conduct and academic achievement (Glickman, 2011; Guardino & Antia, 2012; Hopewell et al., 2011; Kilian, Hofer, & Kuhnle (2013); Kohn, 1996; LaCour & Tissington, 2011; Muma & Perigoe, 2010; Roache & Lewis, 2011). The research literature indicated that educators have implemented a variety of behavior management programs in schools, and even though some researchers disagree on which approach is most effective, significant agreement exists that without an effective approach to student conduct, teacher stress levels are elevated, student learning is impacted, and teaching time for academics is decreased.

Another theme that emerged from the literature was that teachers have some autonomy in their approach to student conduct, and therefore, teacher actions in the classroom have a more powerful impact than school policy does on student conduct (Boulden, 2010; Spivak & Farran, 2012; Way, 2011). Teachers who implement relationship-based approaches to student conduct and focus on being caring, respectful, and empathetic toward students found improved student-teacher relationships, an

enhanced school community, and improved student conduct (Lubelska, 2012; Roache & Lewis, 2011; Spivak & Farran, 2012; Thomas, Bierman, & Powers, 2011; Way, 2011).

Another theme that emerged from the literature review was that the education of deaf and hard of hearing students presents a unique challenge for educators because these students present with greater behavior difficulties than their general education peers do, and traditional behavior modification programs have not been shown to be highly effective with this population (Dalton, 2011; Garnefski & Kraaij, 2011; Glickman, 2011; Guardino & Antia, 2012; Harvey & Kentish, 2010; Muma & Perigoe, 2010; Musengi & Musengi, 2014; Rieffe, 2012; Sinnott, 2009; Zane, Carlson, Estep, & Quinn, 2014; Ziv et al., 2013). Several researchers have called for a new approach with deaf and hard of hearing students (Garnefski & Kraaij, 2011; Glickman, 2011; Guardino & Antia, 2012; Sinnott, 2009; Wright et al., 2012). One such approach is Love and Logic©, which is a purposeful approach to student conduct. Spencer (2008) examined the use of Love and Logic© by surveying teachers and administrators and found that educators hold a favorable view of the approach and its positive impact on student conduct, time on task, and school community. A related study showed the effectiveness of the Love and Logic© approach in terms of reducing student misconduct and increasing prosocial behaviors (Fay, n.d.). Additionally, Bullock (2011) and Obenauf (2008) both investigated teacher perceptions on the use of Love and Logic©. However, neither of these studies focused on deaf and hard of hearing students and their unique social-emotional needs, which is identified as a gap in the research. This study addressed this gap in the research by exploring how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engaged their students in

collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. This study expands the body of knowledge in the discipline by including teacher voices, a perspective that is currently limited in the body of qualitative research related to social conduct of deaf and hard of hearing students.

Qualitative inquiry is an appropriate approach for an initial investigation (Merriam, 2009). Therefore, this qualitative inquiry provided an initial investigation of a purposeful approach to student conduct that teachers used with deaf and hard of hearing students. Chapter 3 includes a description of the research design and rationale, my role as a qualitative researcher, and the methodology of this case study in relation to participant selection, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis. A discussion of issues of trustworthiness and ethical procedures in relation to qualitative research are also included.

Chapter 3: Research Method

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engaged them in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. Current research points to the need for a new approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students. Because teachers of these students spend more time in conflict resolution than their general education colleagues do, a need existed for an increased understanding about the use of this nontraditional approach (Drumm et al., 2013; Funk, 2010; Gable et al., 2012; Olive, 2010; Roache & Lewis, 2011). Therefore, to accomplish this purpose, I investigated the beliefs that teachers at a residential school for deaf and hard of hearing students have about a purposeful approach to student conduct and how they use it with students.

In this chapter, I describe the research design and rationale for choosing the design, including why other designs were not selected. I define my role as the single researcher for this study and describe participant selection, instrumentation, and procedures that I followed for recruitment, participation, and data collection. Finally, I describe the data analysis plan for each type of data that I collected and address issues of trustworthiness and ethical procedures for qualitative research. I conclude this chapter with a summary of the main points presented and a transition to Chapter 4.

Research Design and Rationale

For this study, I used the qualitative tradition and a case study design to conduct this research. Yin (2014) defined a case study as "an empirical inquiry that investigates a

contemporary phenomenon (the ‘case’) in depth and within its real-world context, especially when the boundaries between phenomenon and context may not be clearly evident” (p. 16). Yin further defined the features of a case study as including

- coping with the technically distinctive situation in which there will be many more variables of interest than data points, and as one result
- relying on multiple sources of evidence, with data needing to converge in a triangulating fashion, and as another result
- benefitting from the prior development of theoretical propositions to guide data collection and analysis (p. 17).

For this case study, the case was the purposeful approach to student conduct that teachers at a residential school for deaf and hard of hearing students used with these students. The name of this approach is Love and Logic©, and it is a relationship-based, purposeful approach to student conduct.

Case study was an appropriate design for this qualitative inquiry for several reasons. The first reason was because case study design focuses on one phenomenon that is “bounded enough to qualify as a case,” (Merriam, 2009, p. 41) and therefore, the researcher has the ability to produce thick, rich descriptions of the phenomenon under investigation. This study also focused on a single phenomenon, which is a purposeful approach to student conduct that teachers at a residential school for deaf and hard of hearing students used with these students. The second reason was that case study researchers collect data from multiple sources in order to explore a phenomenon in depth. For this study, I collected data from multiple sources, including interviews, observations,

and documents related to the purposeful approach to student conduct that teachers used with deaf and hard of hearing students.

Yin (2014) argued that an important consideration in choosing a case study design is the research question and that case studies are appropriate for answering *how* questions. The research questions for this study directly linked to each data source, which strengthened the case study design. Therefore, in alignment with this qualitative research design, the primary and secondary research questions for this study were based on the theoretical framework and the literature review for this study. The primary research question was: How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct? The secondary research questions were:

1. How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students perceive a purposeful approach to student conduct?
2. How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students use a purposeful approach to student conduct?
3. What do documents reveal about a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners?

For this qualitative investigation, I chose a case study design after considering and rejecting phenomenology, ethnography, and narrative research designs. Phenomenology is focused on understanding the lived experiences of a group of individuals (Creswell, 2013), and the purpose of this design would have been to describe the lived experiences of teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students who use a purposeful approach to student

conduct. The purpose of an ethnographic research design would have been to describe the shared culture of a group of teachers over a longer period of time using a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students. However, Creswell (2013) argued that a case study research design allows for the development of a more in-depth understanding of a phenomenon than either phenomenology or ethnography because multiple data sources are used. The purpose of a narrative research design is to describe experiences of an individual, which I considered for this study. Narrative research is often focused on personal stories. Those stories serve as data that is used to interpret how participants create meaning from their lived experiences (Patton, 2015). I did not select a narrative research design because I wanted to explore the purposeful approach to student conduct, rather than the personal stories of those teachers using this approach. In addition, case study design is appropriate for the initial investigation of a phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). An initial investigation resulting in an in-depth description of the case was appropriate because peer-reviewed research related to a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing students is limited.

Role of the Researcher

For this qualitative research, I assumed several roles. I selected the research site and the participants, designed the instruments, and assumed responsibility for all data collection and analysis. As Merriam (2009) noted, “The researcher is the primary instrument for data collection and analysis” (p. 15). In relation to data analysis, I constructed meaning from the data by analyzing all data sources in relation to the

research questions and interpreting the data in relation to the conceptual framework and the literature review. In each of these roles, I assumed the characteristics of qualitative researchers, which include being a careful observer, asking good questions, and thinking inductively.

Because I was the only person responsible for data collection and analysis, the potential for researcher bias existed. I was previously familiar with the reported benefits of the Love and Logic© purposeful approach to student conduct. To minimize the associated potential for bias, I used specific strategies to improve the trustworthiness of this case study. These strategies included triangulation of data collection methods, member checking to ensure I was interpreting participant responses appropriately, and reflexivity through "critical self-reflection by the researcher regarding assumptions, worldview, biases, theoretical orientation, and relationship to the study that may affect the investigation" (Merriam, 2009, p. 229). I also used the strategy of an audit trail, maintaining a researcher's journal that allowed me to reflect on my own biases and assumptions and clarify how I interpreted the data. I discuss these specific strategies in more detail in the section on trustworthiness.

Participant Selection

The participants for this study were six elementary school teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students who were employed at a rural residential school serving those students in the western region of the United States. In order to select these participants, I created specific inclusion criteria to determine potential participants. One criterion was that participants must be employed as teachers for deaf and hard of hearing students at

the identified school. Another criterion was that participants must be trained to use a purposeful approach to student conduct called Love and Logic©. A third criterion was that participants use the purposeful approach in their interactions with deaf and hard of hearing students. I consulted with an administrator at the site to determine those teachers who met the inclusion criteria. Due to the small size of the school, all six elementary teachers met the inclusion criteria.

I used a purposeful sampling strategy for this study. As explained by Merriam (2009), purposeful sampling is used when a researcher carefully selects the sample that will provide the most information about the phenomenon under investigation. Patton (2015) explained a typical purposeful sample as one that illustrates what is "typical, normal, and average" (p. 268) about a case. For this study, the purposeful selection of teachers who have been trained to use, and do use, the Love and Logic© approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students represented a purposeful sample.

The sample size for this study was small. However, because it included all elementary school teachers at the research site, saturation was possible because multiple data sources, including interviews, observations, and documents, provided insight into how these teachers used a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students at the research site. After conducting interviews with all six teachers, observing teachers using the approach, and reviewing documents related to the approach, saturation was reached because no new data emerged.

Instrumentation

I designed an interview protocol and an observation data collection form to collect data for this study. I aligned both of these instruments with the primary and secondary research questions. I also established an expert panel of several colleagues with advanced degrees in education who reviewed these instruments for alignment with the research questions. In addition, I included an alignment chart in Appendix E to demonstrate that these data collection instruments were aligned with the research questions, providing sufficiency of the instruments to answer the research questions.

The interview protocol that I designed included the script I followed when conducting interviews and the interview prompts, and is included in Appendix C. The eight interview prompts I designed were based on a semistructured format and were open-ended in nature. Merriam (2009) suggested that this structure for interviews is most desirable, as it allows the researcher to respond to participants' answers with follow-up questions and additional probes when needed. Patton (2015) described six types of interview prompts including experience and behavior questions, opinions and values questions, feeling questions, knowledge questions, sensory questions, and background or demographic questions. For this study, interview prompts were primarily centered on experience and behavior questions, opinion and values questions, and feeling questions. These questions aligned with the research question: How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students perceive a purposeful approach to student conduct? Patton suggested that opinion and value questions should explicitly tell the participant that the researcher is interested in beliefs and opinions, not feelings. Feeling questions can be confused with

opinion and value questions, but should garner responses that are adjectives rather than opinions (Patton, 2015). I designed the interview prompts for this study to clearly indicate when I was interested in opinions and when I was interested in feelings.

The observation data collection tool I designed was divided into two sections: field notes and researcher reflections, and it is included in Appendix D. As recommended by Merriam (2009), the field notes should be highly descriptive, providing enough detail so that the reader is able to visualize the researcher's observations. The section related to researcher reflections included my feelings, questions, speculations, and initial interpretations of the data that I collected during the observations. This process led to some preliminary data analysis while also providing opportunities to document comments that were outside the descriptive, factual data describing what was happening during the observation (Merriam, 2009).

Merriam (2009) described six elements that are likely to be observed in any setting related to qualitative research. These elements include the physical setting, the participants, activities and interactions, conversation, subtle factors, and the researcher's behavior. For this study, observations of the physical environment involved looking for evidence in the physical environment that teachers used collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct, such as use of instructional space that is designed for collaborative problem-solving, use of technology, and use of print and nonprint materials, such as posters from Love and Logic©, and displays of classroom expectations. The participants, activities and interactions, and conversation were also important to my observations, because I observed how teachers used a purposeful

approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students, including a focus on the instructional activities, communication between the teacher and students, and among students to indicate student engagement, evidence of purposeful language during these conversations, and time spent in collaborative conflict resolution. Subtle factors included nonverbal communication and unplanned activities or interruptions to instruction, and they were especially important because nonverbal markers are a critical component of signed communication used with deaf and hard of hearing students. My conduct as the researcher was also a criterion of the observation data collection form and was recorded in the field notes, including student and teacher awareness of my presence in the classroom and my efforts to minimize my involvement in the instructional activities. Merriam (2009) recommended that researchers record their field notes immediately after leaving the observation for greater accuracy. I used this strategy to strengthen the field notes and reflections.

Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

Participants were recruited from a residential elementary school serving deaf and hard of hearing students in the western region of the United States. I met with the superintendent of the school in order to obtain a signed letter of consent indicating the school's willingness to be my research partner. The letter of consent is found in Appendix A. The superintendent provided me with a list of potential participants who meet the inclusion criteria, and I used that list for recruitment. The superintendent also provided me with an on-sight coordinator to assist in scheduling observations and interviews during my site visit.

Concerning participation, I contacted potential participants at the research site through the United States Postal Service mail to explain the purpose and scope of this research study. I included a letter of consent and asked potential participants to return copies of their signed letters of consent to me via the United States Postal Service, indicating their willingness to participate in this study. A sample letter of consent is found in Appendix B. None of the participants returned their signed letters of consent forms to me via United States Postal Service. However, the on-site coordinator informed me that the signed letters of consent were available to me upon my arrival at the research site.

In relation to data collection, I first contacted all participants to schedule the interviews during noninstructional hours, which included their planning period or before or after school, and the observations, which occurred during the instructional day. On the first day of my site visit, I toured the school and met the individuals with whom I would be working, and I worked to build rapport with study participants. I conducted three interviews on the first day of my visit, and I continued rapport building early in the interview process by being respectful and nonjudgmental (Merriam, 2009). I audio recorded the interviews and also took notes during the interviews. On the second day of my site visit, I conducted two more interviews and conducted observations of teacher implementation of a purposeful approach to student conduct. I recorded my field notes and reflections on the observation data collection tool. On the third day of my site visit, I conducted one final interview and reviewed documents.

I collected documents, which included website information, newsletter information related to Love and Logic© and the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct, sample behavior contracts, sample classroom expectations, sample classroom signs, and discipline action summaries that did not include any identifying information of individual students. I also collected Love and Logic© artifacts used in the classroom, such as posters highlighting the Love and Logic© approach, Love and Logic© items such as bookmarks, training materials from past professional development sessions related to collaborative conflict resolution and a purposeful approach to student conduct, and the school's Core Values poster, which stems from a Love and Logic© concept. I obtained these documents and artifacts from a school support staff member at the site. I used the third day of my site visit to collect these documents and artifacts and gather any necessary follow-up information or clarifications. Additionally, I conducted a debriefing session for participants, providing closure to the data collection, providing my contact information, and reminding them that I would ask them to review the tentative findings of this study for its credibility.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted at two levels. At the first level, I sent the interview data to be transcribed to a transcription service. Then I used line-by-line coding that Charmaz (2006) recommended for qualitative research to analyze the transcribed interview data and the observation data. Line-by-line coding allows the researcher to remain open to the data and to identify both implicit and explicit themes (Charmaz, 2006). I constructed categories from the codes, using the constant comparative method

that Merriam (2009) recommended. This method involves comparing pieces of data with others in order to identify similarities and differences within the data (Merriam, 2009). I used a content analysis for the documents and artifacts, which involves describing the purpose, structure, content, and use of each document and artifact (Merriam, 2009). I provided a summary table of categories that I constructed from each data source. I used qualitative data analysis software, Dedoose, to assist with data management during data analysis.

For the second level of data analysis, I examined the categorized data across all data sources to determine emerging themes and discrepant data, which formed the key findings for this study. These findings were analyzed in relation to the primary and secondary research questions and interpreted in relation to the conceptual framework and the literature review. Merriam (2009) suggested that data analysis is a process to answer the research questions, and therefore, conducting data analysis at two levels allowed me to answer all of the research questions.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is important in qualitative research because it ensures that the research has been conducted with a level of rigor, and results are likely to be valid and reliable (Merriam, 2009). Internal validity or credibility is established when research findings match reality, and it is especially important to fields such as education, because teachers are not likely to change their practice based on research that is not conducted with fidelity (Merriam, 2009). Reliability or dependability is important to other researchers who may wish to reproduce the study. Merriam (2009) suggested that

qualitative researchers consider credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability in relation to their study. I discuss those constructs in this section.

Credibility

Credibility or internal validity is concerned with whether or not the research findings are congruent with reality. Merriam (2009) recommended that researchers use some of the following strategies to improve the credibility of qualitative research: triangulation, member checks, adequate engagement in data collection, clarification of the researcher's position, and peer examination. For this study, I used the strategy of triangulation by comparing and contrasting multiple data sources. In addition, I used the strategy of member checks by asking participants to review the findings of this study for their credibility. I also used the strategy of adequate engagement in data collection by conducting the entire data collection process at the research site over a period of a week, until I obtained data saturation.

Dependability

Dependability or reliability is concerned with whether or not the research findings can be reproduced. Merriam (2009) recommended that researchers use some of the following strategies to improve the dependability of qualitative research: triangulation, peer examination, clarification of the investigator's position, and the audit trail. For this study, I used the strategy of triangulation by comparing and contrasting multiple data sources, as stated earlier. In addition, I used the strategy of clarification of the investigator's position by maintaining a researcher's journal in which I reflected critically on my research process, dispositions, and assumptions about the study I was conducting.

I also used the strategy of an audit trail by including a detailed description of the findings of this study that provides evidence of how the data were collected and analyzed, including how I made decisions throughout the course of the study.

Transferability

Transferability or external validity is concerned with whether or not the findings of a study can be applied in other situations. Merriam (2009) recommended researchers provide sufficient description of the study to improve the transferability of the study. For this study, I provided rich description of the purposeful approach to student conduct under investigation. I also provided a thorough account of field experiences. Merriam also recommended either maximum variation or typicality in the sample to enhance transferability. For this study, I used a typical sample. The research site was typical of a school serving deaf and hard of hearing students in the western region of the United States.

Confirmability

Confirmability or objectivity in relation to qualitative research is concerned with whether or not study participants or researcher bias shape the findings of the study. Merriam (2009) recommended a strategy called reflexivity, in which researchers reflect on the research study and explain their biases and assumptions about the research. For this study, I maintained a researcher's journal in which I critically explored my potential biases and assumptions and reflected on them.

Ethical Procedures

Ethical considerations are important to qualitative research because participants assume some level of risk through participation in the study. The researcher is charged with protecting the participants from harm, ensuring privacy and confidentiality, and providing details about the study purpose and procedures during informed consent (Merriam, 2009). Potential benefits of research must outweigh potential harm to participants, so ethical considerations were a critical component of this study. Merriam (2009) recommended that researchers carry out their study in as ethical a manner as possible and that they engage in both planning for the protection of study participants and managing ethical dilemmas that may arise during data collection and dissemination.

For this study, I submitted an application to Walden University's Institutional Review Board (IRB). I did not recruit participants or begin data collection until I received approval of the IRB application (Approval Number 02-04-16-0341794). In completing the application, I justified each component of data collection to define how potential benefits of the study outweighed potential risks to participants. I described how privacy and safety risks would be minimized during participant recruitment and how informed consent would be obtained. In addition, I described the measures I took to ensure the security of data collected, including storing electronic data on a password protected computer and storing hard copies in a locked file cabinet. Finally, I detailed how I would handle any adverse events that could occur during the course of the study.

Summary

In this chapter about the research method, I explained the rationale for the selection of a case study design for this study, justifying why this design is more appropriate than other qualitative designs. A case study design provides rich, thick description of teachers' perceptions and use of collaborative conflict resolution processes with deaf and hard of hearing students as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. I also explained my role as the researcher, how I recruited and selected participants for the study, and the methods of data collection. I described how data were analyzed on two levels. I addressed issues of trustworthiness for qualitative research, including constructs related to credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. Finally, I included a consideration of ethical issues that shaped my proposal and guided my work as I conducted this study. In Chapter 4, I present the results of the study, including a comprehensive analysis of multiple data sources, including participants' interviews, observations of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing students, and multiple documents related to this approach.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to describe how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engaged their students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct at a residential school serving these students. The primary research question was "How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct?" The secondary research questions were:

1. How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students perceive a purposeful approach to student conduct?
2. How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students use a purposeful approach to student conduct?
3. What do documents reveal about a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners?

This chapter includes the results of this study. In this chapter, I provide a description of the research site and participant demographics. I also describe how I collected data for the interviews, observations of the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners, and documents related to a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners. In addition, I describe the procedures used to analyze data on two levels. I present evidence of the trustworthiness of this qualitative research and an analysis of the results in relation

to the primary and secondary research questions, and I conclude this chapter with a summary and transition to Chapter 5.

Setting

The research site for this study was the Mountain Range School for the Deaf and the Blind (MRSDB; pseudonym). The school is located on 10 acres in the western region of the United States and is a residential school serving both deaf and blind students in Grades PK-12. In 2015-2016, 55 students were enrolled at this site, with 34 students served in a program for the deaf. MRSDB was established in 1893 and offers both residential and day programs for students who live in the state. During the time of data collection, the school employed 17 teachers, five paraprofessionals, and support staff, including a supervising teacher for the program for the deaf, a supervising teacher for the program for the blind, a school psychologist, a behavior specialist, an occupational therapist, a physical therapist, an orientation and mobility specialist, an audiologist, a librarian, a principal, and a guidance counselor. The residential program also employed a dean of students and residential instructors. A superintendent supervised both the education and residential programs. The elementary school in the program for the deaf served 24 students in Grades PK-5 and included eight teachers. The elementary grades in the program for the deaf were the focus of this study.

Only one organizational condition impacted the data collection process. The principal of the elementary program had posted two teaching vacancies, yet no substitute teachers were employed on campus, which meant that some teachers were providing instruction to two classes at the same time. One of the observations was rescheduled

because the teacher was providing instruction to two classes of students when I was scheduled to observe. I did not note any other organizational conditions that may have influenced data collection.

Participant Demographics

This study included six elementary teachers at MRSDB, which represents 100% of the elementary teaching staff. Teacher 1 had been employed at this school for 17 years and held a professional teaching certificate from the state department of education. In addition, Teacher 1 held a certification endorsement in special education for students in Grades PK-12. Teacher 1 taught elementary students in Grades PK-5 in a life skills class. Teacher 1 also supervised the Circles Program, a weekly meeting where students interacted with one another to learn socially appropriate ways of interacting.

Teacher 2 had seven years of teaching experience, but had only been employed by MRSDB for 5 months at the time of the study. Teacher 2 held a professional teaching certificate from the state department of education. In addition, Teacher 2 held certification endorsements in special education for students in Grades PK-12 and elementary education for students in Grades K-8. Teacher 2 taught students in pre-Kindergarten and provided outreach services to parents. Teacher 2 was not responsible for any after school activities.

Teacher 3 had 30 years of teaching experience at MRSDB and held a professional teaching certificate from the state department of education. In addition, Teacher 3 held certification endorsements in special education for students in Grades PK-12 and in elementary education for students in Grades K-8. Teacher 3 provided instruction to

students in Grades 2 and 3 and was not responsible for any additional classes or after school programs.

Teacher 4 had 6 years of teaching experience at MRSDB and held a professional teaching certificate from the state department of education. In addition, Teacher 4 held certification endorsements in special education for students in Grades PK-12, in elementary education for students in Grades K-8, in secondary education for students in Grades 9-12, and in speech and language impairments. Teacher 4 provided instruction for students in Grades 1 and 2 and also taught a violence prevention course to all elementary students. Teacher 4 was not responsible for any additional classes or after school activities.

Teacher 5 had 3 years of teaching experience at MRSDB and held a professional teaching certificate from the state department of education. In addition, Teacher 5 held certification endorsements in special education for students in Grades PK-12 and in elementary education for students in Grades K-8. Teacher 5 provided instruction for students in Grade 3 and was not responsible for any additional classes or after school programs.

Teacher 6 had 20 years of teaching experience at MRSDB and held a professional teaching certificate from the state department of education. In addition, Teacher 6 held certification endorsements in special education for students in Grades PK-12, in elementary education for students in Grades K-8, and in library science for students in Grades K-12. Teacher 6 provided instruction for students in Grades 4 and 5, served as the school librarian, and taught a life skills course to all elementary students in Grades PK-5.

Teacher 6 cotaught this course with Teacher 1. Teacher 6 was not responsible for any after school programs. Table 1 provides a summary of teacher participants for this study.

Table 1

Study Participants Summary

Teacher	*Years*	*Certifications*	*Classes Taught*	*Other*
Teacher 1	17	Special Education PK-12	Life Skills PK-5	Circles Program
Teacher 2	7	Special Education PK-12 Elementary Education K-8	Pre-Kindergarten	Parent outreach
Teacher 3	30	Special Education PK-12 Elementary Education K-8	Grade 2 Grade 3	None
Teacher 4	6	Special Education PK-12 Elementary Education K-8 Secondary Education 9-12 Speech & Language K-12	Grade 1 Grade 2	Violence Prevention course
Teacher 5	3	Special Education PK-12 Elementary Education K-8	Grade 3	None
Teacher 6	20	Special Education PK-12 Elementary Education K-8 Library Science K-12	Grade 4 Grade 5 Life Skills PK-5	School Librarian

Data Collection

I collected data from three sources. These sources included interviews, observations, and documents. For the interviews, I asked participants a set of eight predetermined questions in a semistructured format. Observations were focused on collecting evidence of teacher use of a purposeful approach to student conduct, using specific criteria that Merriam (2009) recommended for observations conducted as a part of qualitative research. Documents were also collected, including documents related to training, discipline incidents, and positive behavior supports.

Interviews

I interviewed six teachers in their individual classrooms and audio recorded each interview with the consent of participants. I also recorded some brief field notes during the interviews. I interviewed three teachers on February 29, 2016, two teachers on March 1, 2016, and one teacher on March 2, 2016. Interview times ranged from 11 minutes to 27 minutes. I had planned to use a conference room on site to conduct the interviews, but teacher participants asked that the interviews be conducted in their classrooms instead of the conference room because they felt more comfortable in their classrooms. Therefore, I conducted interviews during teacher planning times, with no students present. I did not face any other challenges during the interview process. Table 2 provides a summary of the interview schedule.

Table 2

Teacher Interview Schedule

Teacher	*Date*	*Time*	*Length*
Teacher 1	February 29, 2016	8:30 a.m.	27 minutes
Teacher 2	February 29, 2016	11:30 a.m.	11 minutes
Teacher 3	February 29, 2016	10:37 a.m.	17 minutes
Teacher 4	March 1, 2016	9:40 a.m.	13 minutes
Teacher 5	March 1, 2016	11:00 a.m.	19 minutes
Teacher 6	March 2, 2016	9:40 a.m.	14 minutes

Observations

For each teacher, I observed instructional activities related to the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct in his or her individual classroom. Observations were scheduled at times convenient for teachers. I recorded field notes and researcher reflections on the observation data collection form for each observation. I conducted three observations of these instructional activities on February 29 and three observations on March 1, 2016. Observations ranged in length from 27 minutes to 34 minutes. Table 3 provides a summary of the observation schedule.

Table 3

Observation Schedule

Teacher	*Date*	*Time*	*Length*
Teacher 1	February 29, 2016	10:00 a.m.	30 minutes
Teacher 2	February 29, 2016	9:25 a.m.	33 minutes
Teacher 3	March 1, 2016	9:00 a.m.	30 minutes
Teacher 4	March 1, 2016	11:30 a.m.	27 minutes
Teacher 5	March 1, 2016	10:17 a.m.	34 minutes
Teacher 6	March 1, 2016	1:00 p.m.	30 minutes

Documents

I collected several types of documents related to the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing learners, including (a) documents related to training, (b) documents related to implementation, and (c) documents related to reporting student misconduct. Documents related to training included:

- a statement of the core values held at the school,
- a professional development resource related to using empathy with students,
- a handout that highlighted guiding principles of Love and Logic©,
- a handout that highlighted information about phrases leading to miscommunication versus phrases used during active listening, and
- reminder cards highlighting Love and Logic© approaches, such as sharing control and providing choices.

Documents related to implementation included three positive behavior support plans, a self-reflection form that students used to monitor how they were progressing in the development of their social-emotional skills, and "I need a break, please" cards that students use to indicate when they are feeling frustrated or overwhelmed. Documents related to reporting student misconduct included:

- a summary of discipline referrals with no individual identifying information,
- a blank student incident report form used by teachers and school staff to document occurrences of student misconduct and staff response, and
- a copy of an apology letter with the student's name redacted as evidence of a logical consequence.

The school's behavior specialist provided me with all documents on March 2, 2016. The only challenge I faced during document collection was that during the interviews, participants would sometimes refer to documents I had not yet reviewed, which created some difficulty in understanding those referenced documents.

In summary, I faced only a few challenges in collecting data. One challenge was that I had proposed to interview teachers in a common conference room with a door that could be closed for privacy. However, teachers asked that interviews be conducted in their classrooms without students present. I honored this request, and I closed their classroom doors to maintain confidentiality during the interviews. An additional challenge was that I had planned to conduct observations of instructional activities related to a purposeful approach to student conduct that would last 30 minutes, but three of the observations fell outside of that time frame by a few minutes. Teachers were made aware of these time changes. One observation had to be rescheduled at the teacher's request because she was providing instruction to two classes at the same time. This rescheduling posed a minor challenge because I had to rearrange a previously scheduled observation by a few minutes in order to accommodate this request. I collected documents at the end of the site visit, but perhaps I should have collected them at the beginning of the site visit so that I would have been able to reference them before conducting the interviews and observations.

Level 1 Data Analysis

This level of analysis involved coding and category construction for each of the data sources. I first coded the interview and observation data using line-by-line coding that Charmaz (2006) recommended for qualitative research. I analyzed the documents using a content analysis, which Merriam (2009) noted is a systematic procedure for describing the content of each document. For each data source, I used the constant comparative method that Merriam recommended to determine similarities and differences

in the coded data. I created categories for similar codes and presented summary tables of the categories that I constructed for each data source.

Analysis of Interview Data

The first interview prompt asked, "How did you begin implementing Love and Logic© in your classroom?" Teachers reported that they began implementing Love and Logic© in similar ways. Four teachers indicated reading a book about it, and two teachers identified professional development resources at the school as useful when they began implementing Love and Logic©. Teacher 4 discussed attending a training session in 2007 and becoming a Love and Logic© trainer in 2009. Two teachers recalled wanting to begin implementation because of their unsuccessful experiences managing students in traditional behavior modification programs.

Some differences emerged in how teachers described first implementing Love and Logic©. Teacher 3 believed that the approach was natural for her, because she had used it with her own children. Teacher 5 noted that she began implementing Love and Logic© as an outgrowth of her work in play therapy. Teacher 5 believed that the approach would be effective with young children because they would be learning social skills.

The second interview prompt asked, "What was it like for you when you began implementing Love and Logic© with your students?" Teachers gave similar responses to this question. Teacher 1 and Teacher 2 reported using a counseling approach to build student self-esteem through problem solving. Teacher 2, Teacher 4, and Teacher 5 recalled that the Love and Logic© approach was easy to begin implementing with their students, but they needed to learn how to remove their own feelings from incidents of

misconduct. Three teachers talked about how the Love and Logic© approach was natural for them because they had always used it. Teacher 4 stated, "I was glad to know there was a name for what I had been doing." Teachers also reported that they liked using the approach when they first began implementing it. Teacher 4 stated,

> And it became really clear to me that dealing with her in a regular sort of punitive manner that a lot of people do was just not gonna work. That sort of power struggle with her is not gonna be won.

Two teachers also reported that implementation of Love and Logic© was more effective than other approaches they had tried.

Teachers also reported different struggles with implementation in the early stages. Teacher 6 recalled that understanding natural and logical consequences was difficult in the beginning stages of implementation, because she believed that each incident of misconduct deserved a punishment. However, Teacher 6 also reported that she now realizes natural consequences often hold more meaning for the student. Teacher 4 stated that she did not have difficulty with implementation, although she needed to learn not to take misconduct incidents personally. Teacher 2 discussed the importance of thinking about the reasons underlying student misconduct more often in the beginning stages of implementation than now. Overall, teachers reported ease of implementation in the initial stages, even though some teachers reported facing some challenges related to specific Love and Logic© concepts, such as applying natural and logical consequences, not taking incidents of misconduct personally, and considering the reasons for misbehavior instead of focusing only on the misbehavior itself.

The third interview prompt asked, "Tell me about a typical application of the Love and Logic© approach in your classroom." Similar responses to this question centered on showing respect to students. Teacher 1 specifically mentioned the importance of respect, while other teachers described how they have developed respectful interactions with students. Teacher 2 recalled noticing that a student might be upset by observing nonverbal cues, asking what was wrong, and trying to understand the student's emotions. Teacher 3 discussed finding ways to build trust with a student so that he or she felt emotionally safe. Teacher 4 described showing an interest in a particular child as a way of showing respect, and Teacher 6 described validating students' feelings as a sign of respect. Four teachers also indicated that providing empathy to students was an important part of a typical application of Love and Logic©.

Teachers also described different applications of Love and Logic© in their classrooms. Teacher 1 talked about using the strategy of role-playing to help students learn how to solve problems. Teacher 2 described de-escalating a student's anger when the student had been upset about a comment that a teacher had made to her. Teacher 2 believed that she helped this student by providing empathy and understanding. Teacher 3 talked about providing empathy when a student reported difficulty completing homework the night before and offering choices to make students feel emotionally safe. Teacher 4 provided three different examples of a typical application of Love and Logic©, including using relationship-building strategies with one student, allowing another student to come to school late as a behavioral intervention, and suggesting to a colleague the idea of sharing tasks with a student in order to develop a positive teacher-student relationship.

Teacher 5 provided a specific example of using a logical consequence when a student pulled the fire alarm. Teacher 5 added, "I wanted a more logical consequence. I suggested that the student write a letter of apology to the fire department." Teacher 6 described a typical application of Love and Logic© as one where students' feelings are validated and empathy is provided.

The fourth interview prompt asked, "What is your opinion on the use of purposeful, relationship-based approaches like Love and Logic© used with deaf and hard of hearing students now?" All of the teachers reported positive perceptions about the use of purposeful, relationship-based approaches like Love and Logic© with deaf and hard of hearing students. Two teachers reported that they believed the Love and Logic© approach is sensible, and Teachers 2 and 6 used the word "great" to describe the application of Love and Logic© with deaf and hard of hearing students. Teacher 5 described Love and Logic© as a "good fit" for deaf and hard of hearing students. Teacher 5 commented, "It makes behavior management so much easier and it makes everyone just feel so good." Teacher 2 believed that the use of purposeful relationship-based approaches with deaf and hard of hearing students helps students understand that adults are there to support them. Teacher 2 added,

> Oh, I think it's great. It really is. It helps them understand that we are here to help and support them, you know, we're going to be empathetic and supportive but we are not going to judge or punish. It helps kids learn because it's not about punishing or getting even, it's about teaching kids what natural consequences are and how they happen. For deaf kids, it's the missing piece I think. So many

behavior problems with deaf kids, and I think this could you know, help some of them.

Teacher 3 reported that this approach encourages the development of strong, positive relationships with deaf and hard of hearing students, who are often missing such relationships due to language barriers.

Only one teacher spoke specifically to challenges related to using a purposeful, relationship-based approach like Love and Logic© with deaf and hard of hearing students. Facial markers used in American Sign Language are important to effectively convey information, and Teacher 4 believed that sometimes these facial markers do not look empathetic or neutral, which is important to these types of approaches. Teacher 4 also noted that students sometimes misunderstand facial markers for certain emotions, and therefore, it is necessary to find a balance between the effective use of facial markers and expressions important to American Sign Language as well as the neutral and empathetic facial expressions necessary for a purposeful, relationship-based approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students.

No other teachers reported any negative perceptions of such an approach. Each of the six teachers reported that students and staff responded positively to a purposeful, relationship-based approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students. Teachers agreed that approaches like Love and Logic© offer more benefits than challenges for deaf and hard of hearing students.

The fifth interview prompt asked, “Some people say that approaches like Love and Logic© are too time-consuming to implement with fidelity. What would you say to

them?" All teachers discussed the long-term gain of using approaches like Love and Logic©. Teacher 5 believed that the goal of such approaches is centered on building responsible adults. Teachers 1 and 2 talked about the long-term benefits of stronger, more positive relationships between teachers and students. Teacher 3 reported that this approach helps students manage their behavior during episodes of misconduct. Teacher 4 believed Love and Logic© may take more time in the beginning, but is worth the effort. Teacher 4 added, "We're growing better adults, and it might take time and be more difficult but they deserve our effort." Teacher 4 also believed that the time required to implement the approach decreases as teachers become more familiar with it. Teacher 3 agreed, describing how this approach becomes natural over time. Teacher 4 also indicated that the approach was more than a list of techniques to use, but rather a specific mindset. Teacher 4 stated, "Techniques will flow naturally from a mindset of empathy." Thus, no differences in teacher responses to this question emerged, because they all agreed on the long-term benefits of implementing a purposeful approach to student conduct with fidelity.

The sixth interview prompt asked, "Give me an example of how you have engaged your students in collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct like Love and Logic©." Teachers had similar responses to this question. They described a process that involved asking students to sit down with one another, talking about the problem that had occurred, and brainstorming possible solutions to the problem. Teachers also described asking students to select one of the solutions to try and making a plan to resolve the particular conflict. Teacher 3, Teacher 4,

and Teacher 5 indicated that an important part of this process is helping students to understand the feelings of others, and Teacher 6 stressed the importance of monitoring how students are listening to each other during this process. Teacher 2 reported that students do most of the work during this process, which is essential for developing responsibility for and ownership of their learning. Teacher 4 also noted that students work together to find a reasonable solution to the problem.

One teacher took the collaborative conflict resolution process further than the others. Teacher 6 was the only participant who discussed making a plan to prevent future problems between students as part of this process, noting how important it was to have a proactive plan for moving forward. Teacher 1 discussed a similar process for proactively preventing problems between students by asking them to sit in a circle and compliment each other. However, that activity was conducted at the start of each school day, and therefore, it was not a part of the collaborative conflict resolution process. Only Teacher 6 discussed proactive planning as part of the collaborative approach to problem solving when problems occur.

The seventh interview prompt asked, "What types of documents do you use to help support the culture of Love and Logic© in your classroom? Tell me about things like behavior contracts, classroom expectations, and parent correspondence." Teachers presented similar responses to this question. Five of the six teachers described using behavior contracts for students who need individualized behavior support. Three teachers also reported that school administrators provided resources and reminders about the implementation of Love and Logic© and keys to providing empathy through hand-outs,

emails, and posters for hallways and classrooms. Two teachers discussed a core values document that they used to support the culture of Love and Logic© in their classrooms.

Even though teachers gave similar responses to this question, two teachers described additional documents that they used to support this approach. Teacher 2 described positive behavior support plans as different from behavior contracts and considered them useful for students with specialized behavioral needs. Teacher 4 listed a variety of documents related to behavior that are in use at the school, including a written protocol for conferencing with students, student discipline incident sheets, and an "ABC" chart that asks teachers to consider the antecedent, behavior, and consequence during incidents of student misconduct.

The final interview prompt asked, "Is there anything else you would like to add, or something I forgot to ask that you would like to share?" Teachers answered this question in a variety of ways. Three teachers reported positive opinions about the use of Love and Logic©, including Teacher 3 who believed that the program helped her manage an efficient classroom. Additionally, three teachers used the word "dignity" when describing how the program preserves the dignity of students. Teacher 4 believed that Love and Logic© makes sense for deaf and hard of hearing students. Teacher 1 and Teacher 4 also believed that the language teachers use with students is important and can impact how they feel about themselves, particularly in relation to empathy and support. Teacher 5 added, "I live for Love and Logic©. I just love it!" Teacher 5 also discussed how staff members work together to maintain the culture of Love and Logic© in the school, reminding each other of the importance of the student's dignity and taking over

for colleagues who became frustrated or angry during incidents of student misconduct. Teacher 3 discussed the importance of natural and logical consequences as part of the approach and believed that Love and Logic© empowers students to acknowledge and solve their own problems.

Teacher 2 answered the final interview prompt differently than any of the other participants. Teacher 2 believed anger is a secondary emotion in incidents of student misconduct and that the primary emotion is usually shame, though guilt or anxiety could also be considered. Therefore, Teacher 2 believed it is important not to shame students through the use of punishment, because they may already feel shame. Teacher 2 stated,

> It is not just the anger because I've read, you know, anger is secondary I'm sure to almost every other thing. But it's shame. So punitive things shame children. And shame is what all of us try to get away from in everything we do. If someone starts to shame us, we are like, out of there.

Teacher 2 believed that shaming does little to maintain the dignity of the student. No other teacher discussed anger as a secondary emotion. No other teacher mentioned shame, though three teachers commented on the importance of maintaining the student's dignity during incidents of misconduct.

Table 4 is a summary of the similar categories that I constructed from an analysis of the interview data.

Table 4

Categories from Analysis of Interview Data

Interview Question	*Categories*
IQ1: How implementation began	Reading a book about it Attending training sessions Wanting a better approach
IQ2: Beginning stages	Using a problem-solving approach Believing it was natural for them Removing their own feelings from misconduct Liking the approach Understanding natural and logical consequences
IQ3: Typical application	Interacting respectfully Building trust Validating feelings Providing empathy Using natural and logical consequences
IQ4: Opinion on use with deaf students	Believing approach is sensible Encouraging positive relationships Balancing ASL facial markers with neutral expressions
IQ5: Length of time for application of strategies	Considering long-term benefits Supporting development of empathetic adults Investing time early for later pay-off
IQ6: Collaborative conflict resolution examples	Guiding discussion of problem Discussing possible solutions Helping students understand others' feelings
IQ7: Types of documents	Creating behavior contracts Using professional development resources Using core values document
IQ8: Additional comments	Maintaining student dignity Using empathetic language to solve conflicts Working collaboratively with colleagues

Analysis of Observation Data

Using the observation data collection form, I collected data about teachers use of a purposeful, relationship-based approach to student conduct in relation to six specific

criteria that Merriam (2009) recommended for conducting observations in any setting and that I adapted for this study. These criteria included setting, participants, activities, engagement and conversation, subtle factors, and researcher's presence. I analyzed the observation data in relation to each of the sub-criteria listed below for each of the six criteria.

Setting. I analyzed the data for this criterion in relation to (a) use of space, (b) use of print and nonprint materials, and (c) use of technology. In relation to use of space for the Love and Logic© approach, teachers designed classroom space for different types of work. In five of the six classrooms, teachers designated spaces for group work as well as individual work. Teacher 5 also designated an area for academic play in order to promote the development of social skills. Teacher 4's classroom included a library area with books on display that promoted prosocial interactions. In Teacher 3's classroom, students' names were written on chairs in both the group work and individual work areas, suggesting a strategy used to reduce disagreements about where to sit.

In relation to the use of print and nonprint materials, teachers used a variety of posters to maintain a print-rich environment and to support a Love and Logic© approach. Each room had numerous posters on the walls, most with motivational and positive sayings such as "Be kind," "Be thoughtful," "Teamwork works," and "Every day is a journey." Teacher 2 displayed a poster listing classroom rules that differed from the school-wide rules because it was a commercially produced product listing rules such as (1) Listen carefully, (2) Work quietly, and (3) Keep your hands to yourself. In all other classrooms, the school-wide rules were posted. These rules included (1) We are

responsible, (2) We are ready, (3) We are safe, and (4) We raise our hands to talk. Teacher 3 listed an additional rule on her poster, which was (5) We don't tell about our talks. This rule suggested that discussions about behavior between teacher and student were expected to remain private. Teachers also used nonprint materials in a variety of ways. Three classrooms included adaptive equipment in their classroom, and all classrooms included built-in desks in the back corner of the room and built-in cabinets along one wall.

Concerning the use of technology, teachers used technology to support the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct in a variety of ways. Teacher 4 encouraged students to use technology independently, with one student using an iPad and one student using a desktop computer. Teacher 1 used an overhead projector to display student work, and Teacher 2 used an interactive whiteboard for instruction. Teacher 3 also used an interactive whiteboard, but used it as a projector to show a video. Teacher 5 and Teacher 6 did not incorporate technology into their lessons during the observations.

Participants. I analyzed the data for this criterion in relation to (a) number of students, (b) number of adults, and (c) gender of both. In relation to number of students, classrooms included between three and nine students during the time of the observations. Teacher 5's classroom included four students at the start of the observation, and one student joined the class during the observation. Teacher 4's classroom included three students at the start of the observation, and one student also joined the class during the observation. In relation to number of adults, the classrooms were evenly divided. Teacher 1, Teacher 3, and Teacher 4 were the only adults in their classrooms, while Teacher 2,

Teacher 5, and Teacher 6 also worked with a classroom paraprofessional. Concerning the gender of participants, five of the six teachers were female. In Teacher 3's classroom, all students were male, while other classes were evenly divided between male and female students.

Activities. I analyzed the data for this criterion in relation to (a) use of problem solving strategies, (b) use of empathetic responses, (c) use of relationship-strengthening language, and (d) use of checks for understanding. Concerning the use of problem-solving strategies, teachers used questions to guide students in solving problems. Teacher 1 responded to a student who had banged loudly on the desk, "How do we respectfully get each other's attention?" Teacher 2 asked a pair of students who were complaining, "Can you two please solve that yourselves?" Teacher 2 added, "If you can't, I can give you some ideas after class." Teacher 3 asked students, "What can you do if you're feeling sad or unhappy?" Teacher 4 asked a student, "What caused the problem you had with completing your homework from yesterday?" Teacher 5 asked the group, "Can we show how we calm ourselves down when we're upset?" and Teacher 6 asked a pair of students, "How are you going to solve this problem? What will you do now?"

In relation to empathetic responses, five teachers used the phrase, "I'm sorry" or "I'm so sorry" in response to student complaints. Teacher 3 used the phrase, "Oh no!" to convey empathy to a student. Teacher 2 stated, "I'm so sorry. I bet some other people are tired today, too. Who else is tired?" in response to a student who complained of being too tired to complete classwork. Teacher 5 and Teacher 6 used nonverbal expressions of empathy as well. Teacher 5 maintained eye contact with a student who expressed a

concern and then provided a calming touch to the student. Teacher 6 used proximity by moving close to a student who was upset and sitting near the student until the student felt better.

Concerning the use of relationship-strengthening language, teachers used positive tones and encouraging words with students. Teacher 2 remarked, “This is a good idea, what you’re doing.” Teacher 3 said, “Good job! You threw it so far!” Teacher 4 told her students, “I made a mistake when I did that,” building trust with students by admitting that she also made mistakes. Teacher 3 and Teacher 6 spoke privately to individual students in order to point out positive choices they had made. Teacher 3 noted, “Thank you for joining,” and Teacher 6 commented, “Thank you for being soft.” All six teachers used positive and welcoming facial expressions and nonverbal communication to strengthen relationships.

Concerning checks for understanding, teachers used questioning to gauge student understanding. Teacher 2 asked, “What else could we do?” and Teacher 3 asked, “Okay, do we all know what to do?” Teacher 4 was the most direct in her questioning of student understanding by asking, “Did you understand what I said?” Teacher 1 used a questioning strategy, but also checked for student understanding through the use of directives, such as “Tell me what you’ll do next.” Teacher checks for understanding included soliciting information from students.

Engagement and conversation. I analyzed the data for this criterion in relation to (a) engagement and conversation between teacher and students, (b) engagement and conversation among students, and (c) other engagement and conversation. Concerning

engagement and conversation between teacher and students, teachers were often engaged in questioning students and soliciting information from them. Teacher 2 engaged in both academic and social questioning, while Teacher 1 engaged in academic questioning rather than social questioning. Teacher 5 demonstrated the most interaction with students, with nearly constant back-and-forth exchanges with students. Teacher 6 also interacted with all students, demonstrating responsiveness to their feelings by rephrasing what they said and acknowledging the emotions they expressed.

In relation to engagement and conversation among students, various levels were noted during the observations. Students in Teacher 2's class interacted with each other in inappropriate ways, such as writing on one another's papers, pushing peers away, and making inappropriate gestures to one another. Students in Teacher 1's class demonstrated limited engagement with one another. However, one student shared a story related to a movie she liked with another student. In the classrooms of Teacher 3 and Teacher 6, students were actively engaged with one another in a game. Teacher 5 monitored students as they engaged in parallel play. However, one student engaged with an upset peer by staying near him until he calmed himself. Even though no conversation occurred, clear engagement between these two students was evident.

In relation to other engagement and conversation, none was noted except in Teacher 5's classroom. In that classroom, Teacher 5 initiated engagement with me by asking where my research interest had begun and how long I had been interested in the social-emotional needs of deaf and hard of hearing students. I told the teacher we would talk later, and there was no further conversation or engagement.

Subtle factors. I analyzed the data for this criterion in relation to (a) nonverbal communication, (b) unplanned activities, and (c) interruptions. In relation to nonverbal communication, teachers tended to have pleasant and welcoming facial expressions during instruction. When correcting student misconduct, Teacher 1, Teacher 2, Teacher 4, Teacher 5, and Teacher 6 used raised eyebrows to communicate disappointment. Teacher 6 also used proximity to calm an upset student. Teachers mostly used nonverbal communication to redirect students to task or to indicate an awareness of student misconduct.

In relation to unplanned activities, several interruptions to instruction were noted during the observations. Teacher 3 used humor in responding to an unexpected event when a ball a student had thrown got stuck on top of a cabinet. Teacher 4 used a mistake she had made as a teachable moment for her students. Teacher 5 encouraged appropriate ways to make requests when students unexpectedly wanted to continue in their play activity for a longer period of time. Teacher 6 responded empathetically to a student by removing herself from the activity and providing nonverbal support by sitting near the student. Teacher 2 engaged in a lengthy unplanned activity when a student became frustrated, because she believed that Teacher 2 had misunderstood her answer, and she began banging her hands on the desk. Teacher 2 maintained a calm and neutral expression and stated, “I’m sorry, I misunderstood.” When the student repeated the response, Teacher 2 checked again for understanding, rephrased what the student said, and monitored the student for nonverbal signs of continued frustration.

In relation to unexpected interruptions, no interruptions were observed in the classrooms of three teachers, and one interruption was observed in the classrooms of the other three teachers. Teacher 2 responded quickly to a school secretary who entered the room, asking her to immediately address an issue with a student so that student could return to instruction. Teacher 3 and students in that class looked up briefly when an adult came to the door, but then returned to task, with no loss of instructional momentum. Teacher 5 was interrupted when a parent came to the classroom to drop off her child. Teacher 5 stopped her interactions with students and met with the parent for approximately 3 minutes before returning to instruction. During the interruption, the paraprofessional monitored the students.

Researcher's presence. I analyzed the data for this criterion in relation to (a) location in the classroom, (b) involvement in activities, and (c) awareness of others. In relation to location in the classroom, I sat in the back of the classroom for five observations, and on the side of the room for one observation. During the observation in Teacher 5's classroom, I was asked to move to a different table, also at the back of the room, when students relocated to the area where I was seated.

Concerning involvement in activities, I remained uninvolved in activities in three of the six observations. During the other three observations, Teacher 1 introduced me to the class when I arrived, and I had some engagement with students as I answered their questions about whether or not I was a new teacher. Teacher 2 used me as an example in her lesson when discussing different weather patterns on the west coast as compared to

the east coast. Students in Teacher 5's classroom wanted to show me their learning materials and work products.

In relation to awareness of others, all of the teachers spoke directly to me and made their students aware of my presence in their classrooms. One student in Teacher 6's class looked at me and smiled for the majority of the observation, disengaged with instruction. Only Teacher 1 appeared to make a direct effort to draw student awareness away from me during the observation. Teacher 1 made limited eye contact with me during the observation and did not interact with me directly at all after initially welcoming me to the room and introducing me to students.

Table 5 provides a summary of the categories that I constructed from an analysis of the observation data.

Table 5

Categories From Analysis of Observation Data

Criterion	*Categories*
Setting	Designing space for group/individual work Displaying posters with motivational phrases Displaying posters with encouraging statements Displaying school-wide rules about expected student behavior Using technology for instruction
Participants	Including 3-9 students Including 1-2 adults Including a balance of male and female students in 5 of 6 classrooms Including all male students in one classroom Including 5 of 6 female teachers
Activities	Using questions to guide students to solve problems Using empathetic responses to strengthen relationships with students Encouraging students to collaboratively solve problems
Engagement and Conversation	Engaging students in discussion about independently resolving conflict Interacting with others about academic topics Interacting with others about personal interests Engaging in collaborative play about achieving goals
Subtle Factors	Using raised eyebrows to indicate disapproval Redirecting students to tasks Maintaining instructional momentum
Researcher's Presence	Observing from back of room Disengaging in activities Minimizing presence during observations

Content Analysis of Documents

Teachers at MRSDB used a variety of documents to implement a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students. Documents were used to train staff about the use of Love and Logic©, to remind school staff about implementation strategies, and to document incidents of student misconduct. After conducting content analysis of these documents, I found that these documents represented

three categories, including (a) documents about training, (b) documents about strategies, and (c) documents to monitor student misconduct incidents.

Documents about training. Twelve teachers and support staff at MRSDB received training in Love and Logic© during the 2009-2010 school year. No other formal training had been provided since that time. Documents from that training, as well as other documents related to a purposeful approach to student conduct, were used at the school to provide direction for teachers in implementing this approach. These documents were titled *Core Values, Sympathy vs. Empathy, Highlights of Love and Logic©, Phrases for Miscommunication/Phrases for Active Listening*, and *Reminder Cards*.

Core Values. The purpose of this document is to provide a visual reminder to school staff about the basic principles related to student conduct agreed upon during a Love and Logic© training session that was conducted in 2009. The document lists five core values meant to drive all staff interactions with students. These values are presented in a numbered list and include the following: (1) We believe that every attempt should be made to maintain the dignity of both the adult and the student; (2) We believe that students should be given the opportunity to make decisions and live with the results, whether the consequences are good or bad, without making problems for anyone else; (3) We believe that students should have the opportunity to tell their side of the story when consequences appear to be unfair, encouraging students to do most of the thinking; (4) We believe that misbehavior should be viewed as an opportunity for individual problem solving and preparation for the real world as opposed to a personal attack on the school or staff; and (5) We believe that there should be a logical connection between misbehavior

and resulting consequences. This document is used as a reminder of the core values that all members of the school staff support and to demonstrate commitment to the Love and Logic© approach.

Sympathy vs. Empathy. The purpose of this document is to provide an overview of the difference between sympathy (feeling *for* others) and empathy (feeling *with* others). The document is a tri-fold pamphlet that includes an explanation of the difference between sympathy and empathy and describes the types of situations best suited for each of these approaches. The pamphlet is published by The Master Teacher Pd Program™ and is widely used as a resource. The content includes information about how teachers can act as counselors when student problems occur in class. Because empathy is the foundation of Love and Logic©, this document is used to remind staff members about how to best demonstrate empathy towards students.

Highlights of Love and Logic©. The purpose of this document is to provide teachers and support staff with general, guiding principles used in the Love and Logic© approach to student conduct. The document contains a bulleted list of 25 principles, including the following: power struggles don't work; don't take misbehavior personally; fair is not always equal; the toughest students often need the strongest advocates; empathy is about "tuning in" to what the child is feeling and trying to feel with them; use softer words, a soft tone, and gentle eyes; a very angry child is not able to think rationally in that moment; use teachable moments and natural consequences that are not punitive, shameful; deaf children don't have a wide tool kit of "repair strategies" for their language so teach them to use these strategies; and teach them that we have differing viewpoints.

The Highlights of Love and Logic© document is used to provide an introduction to this approach for new staff hired after the initial school-wide Love and Logic© training that the school behavior specialist provided during the 2009-2010 school year.

Phrases for Miscommunication/Phrases for Active Listening. The purpose of this document is to provide concrete examples of language that can lead to either miscommunication or active listening. The document includes the following bulleted list of 11 phrases that often lead to miscommunication: ordering; threatening; preaching; lecturing; giving answers; judging; excusing; diagnosing; prying; labeling; and manipulating. For example, the phrase, "If you don't, then…" is listed as a threatening phrase. The document also includes the following bulleted list of 12 phrases that support active listening: encouraging; clarifying; summarizing; acknowledging; asking open questions; responding; soliciting; role-reversing; normalizing; empathizing; reframing; and validating. For example, the phrase, "I can appreciate the way you feel" is listed as an empathizing phrase. This document is used to remind school staff about the language they should use that is specific to a purposeful approach to student conduct and to provide concrete examples of different phrases that should be avoided as well as phrases that should be used in such an approach.

Reminder Cards. The purpose of this document is to give school staff quick access to six guiding principles for use during incidents of misconduct. The cards are 3" x 2" and are meant to be placed in staff ID badge holders for easy reference at any time during the school day. The card reads "Strategies" in bold letters at the top, and include a bulleted list of these strategies, including the following: neutral face and body; share

control/give choices; offer calming activities (sensory or relaxation); change activities or the order of activities; flexibility in how to reach objectives; don't take it personally. These cards are distributed to staff members at the start of each school year and are used as a reminder of calming strategies that have been shown to deescalate students who are frustrated, angry, or upset.

Documents about strategies. Teachers and support staff at MRSDB used a variety of documents that included strategies to approach behavior proactively and positively. These documents were titled *Positive Behavior Support Plan, Positive Support Plan, Student Self-Reflection*, and *"I Need a Break, Please" Cards.*

***Positive Behavior Support Plan: Student A*.** The purpose of this document is to provide all staff members with guidance on how to proactively and positively manage the student's behavior. The document includes the student's name (redacted) and the date of the plan. The plan components include targeted behaviors, preliminary or antecedent behavior, positive behavioral supports, strategies, replacement behaviors, reinforcers, and a crisis intervention or safety plan. In addition, the document includes space for notes, information regarding when the plan will be reviewed, how documentation will be collected, and a section for signatures of all staff members trained in how to implement the positive support plan. This document is used to ensure that all staff members working with a particular student are aware of the student's behavior needs, preferences, and responses to various strategies. It is used to provide a positive, proactive approach to a student's conduct.

Positive Support Plan: Student B. The purpose of this document is to provide written documentation about a behavior intervention meeting of school staff working with a particular student. The document includes the student name (redacted) and date. The first line of the document states that after discussing a student's needs, several interventions are agreed upon. These interventions are then presented in a bulleted list. They include strategies such as requiring the student to check in with a member of the support staff each morning, allowing the student to doodle during classroom instruction, and providing the student with a suggested time frame for how long certain tasks are expected to take. This document is used to ensure that all staff members working with this student are aware of and are using the same positive interventions in order to proactively manage the student's behavior.

Positive Support Plan: Student C. The purpose of this document is to provide school staff with guidelines for implementing a proactive approach to conduct. The document includes a bulleted list of 12 strategies. These strategies include offering choices as often as possible, sharing control as often as possible, using adult supervised instructional play to model appropriate communication, pointing out current and past successes, and providing praise often. The document is used to provide staff members working with deaf and hard of hearing students guidance about strategies that have been effective with students in the past and therefore should be implemented in the future.

Student Self-Reflection. The purpose of this document is to provide students with ownership of their learning goals and opportunities to reflect on their progress. The document contains seven behavior statements. Some of these behavior statements are as

follows: “I showed respect for myself and others,” “I used calming skills if I became upset,” and “I worked well with other students.” Next to each statement are three emojis. The first is a smiley face, indicating “Yes, I did this well today.” The second emoji is a neutral face, indicating, “I did this sometimes today” and the third emoji is a sad face, indicating, “I struggled with this today.” At the bottom of the document is an overall ranking on a scale of 1 to 10 asking students to consider how well they controlled emotions today, with a score of 1 meaning “I really struggled,” a score of 5 meaning, “I did OK,” and a score of 10 meaning, “I did this really well.” There is also a place for student comments. This document is used for student reflection on their classroom conduct. The teacher and the behavior specialist review it and conference with the student. This document is used with those students who have behavioral needs that are beyond the capabilities of the classroom behavior system.

“I Need A Break, Please” Cards. The purpose of this document is to provide students with a nonverbal way to cue the teacher that they are feeling frustrated and need to separate from the activity. The cards are 3” x 4” and contain the text, “I need a 5 minute break, please” at the top and “Thank you” at the bottom. In the middle of the card is an icon that looks like a person who is frustrated and pulling out his or her hair. The cards are provided to all students and are used when students begin to feel frustrated during class time. Students are allowed to give the card to the teacher and remove themselves from the activity for a period of up to 5 minutes.

Documents to monitor student misconduct incidents. MRSDB used documents to monitor reports of incidents of student misconduct. These documents were titled

Student Incident Report and *Summary of Discipline Referrals*. Another document was titled *Sample Apology Letter*, which was used as an example for teachers of a natural and logical consequence for misconduct.

Student Incident Report. The purpose of this document is to gather information related to incidents of student misconduct occurring at the school. The report contains two sections. Section I includes areas to document students and staff members who were involved, the date and time of the incident, and incident details, including the specific location, student behaviors, staff interventions and student responses, and disciplinary actions of staff members. This section also includes a place for staff signatures and a recommendation about whether or not further action is needed. Section I is designed to be completed by the staff member observing the misconduct. Section II is designed to be completed by the dean of students or principal. This section includes an area for the dean of students or principal to document follow-up action and whether or not the student's parents were notified. This form is used to document individual occurrences of misconduct and any follow up actions that are taken. Once completed, the report is housed the student's cumulative file.

Summary of Discipline Referrals. The purpose of this document is to provide a comprehensive view of the types of incidents that occur throughout the school, where and when they occur, and the types of consequences provided for each offense. The form is a spreadsheet with columns to indicate date, time, type of offense, location, and the initials of staff member involved in each offense. No individual student identifying information

is included on this form. The summary of discipline referrals is used to identify trends and patterns related to student misconduct so that intervention plans can be created.

***Sample Apology Letter*.** The purpose of this document is to serve as a natural and logical consequence for a specific incident of misconduct. This document is provided as a sample of a logical consequence, and teachers use this document to teach students how their actions impact other people. Additionally, teachers use this document to help students develop empathy for others.

Table 6 provides a summary of the categories that I constructed from a content analysis of the documents.

Table 6

Categories from Content Analysis of Documents

Document	*Categories*
Core Values	Reminding staff about Love and Logic© principles
Sympathy vs. Empathy	Defining sympathy and empathy Providing guidance about how to give empathy
Highlights of Love and Logic©	Describing Love and Logic© principles Introducing new staff to Love and Logic© principles
Phrases for Miscommunication/Phrases for Active Listening	Providing examples of empathetic language
Reminder Cards	Reminding staff of de-escalation strategies
Positive Behavior Support Plan: Student A	Guiding staff in proactively managing behavior Guiding staff about student misconduct triggers
Positive Support Plan: Student B	Guiding staff in proactively managing behavior
Positive Support Plan: Student C	Guiding staff in proactively managing behavior
Student Self-Reflection	Encouraging student ownership of learning goals Encouraging student ownership of social goals Encouraging student self-reflection on progress
"I Need a Break, Please" cards	Providing nonverbal cues for teachers Allowing for student self-removal from activity
Student Incident Report	Documenting incidents of misconduct Reporting student and staff actions during incidents
Summary of Discipline Referrals	Identifying trends and patterns of misconduct
Sample Apology Letter	Implementing logical consequences for misconduct

Level 2 Data Analysis

For this level of analysis, I examined the categories that I constructed for all data sources to determine emerging themes and discrepant data. The themes were also determined in relation to the primary and secondary research questions. Discrepant data

were determined in relation to any data that challenged the key themes that emerged to answer the primary research question.

Emergent Themes

The following themes emerged from a second level of data analysis.

- *Theme 1*: Teachers believed a purposeful approach to student conduct is effective for deaf and hard of hearing students because it encouraged positive relationships among students, allowed them to remove their own feelings about misconduct and remain neutral during incidents of misconduct, resulted in logical consequences, and maintained student dignity.
- *Theme 2*: Teachers believed a purposeful approach to student conduct used for deaf and hard of hearing students included building student trust and providing empathy.
- *Theme 3*: Teachers believed using a purposeful approach to student conduct for deaf and hard of hearing students had positive long-term benefits, such as developing empathetic adults, encouraging independent problem solving, and providing opportunities for collaborative conflict resolution.
- *Theme 4*: Teachers used questioning to implement a purposeful approach to student conduct for deaf and hard of hearing students because it allowed them to guide student discussion of problems, to help students generate ideas for solving problems, to help students understand other students' feelings, and to generate possible solutions to conflict.

- *Theme 5*: Teachers used empathetic verbal and nonverbal responses to implement a purposeful approach to student conduct for deaf and hard of hearing students because these responses developed and strengthened positive student-teacher relationships, showed concern for others, and acknowledged student feelings.
- *Theme 6*: Documents related to training, strategies, and monitoring student conduct revealed support for school staff about the implementation of a purposeful approach to student conduct for deaf and hard of hearing students.
- *Theme 7*: Documents related to student use also revealed support for deaf and hard of hearing students by providing opportunities for self-reflection on progress and self-removal from activities during periods of frustration.
- *Theme 8*: Teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engaged students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct by showing students how to generate possible solutions to their conflicts.

Discrepant Data

Discrepant data are defined as data that challenge or contradict the theoretical proposition for the study (Merriam, 2009). For this study, the theoretical proposition was that teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students used a collaborative conflict resolution process as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct in order to help students generate possible solutions to these conflicts. The first example of data that challenged this theoretical proposition included Teacher 4's decision not to use a collaborative conflict resolution process to resolve student misconduct. During my observation of the

Love and Logic© approach in Teacher 4's classroom, a student threw a ball that got stuck on top of a cabinet. Teacher 4 did not engage students in discussion about this problem and did not encourage collaboration in resolving the conflict. The reasons why Teacher 4 did not use a purposeful approach to resolve this student misconduct were not provided. The other example involved Teacher 6 who encouraged students to engage in planning how to avoid future conflict by describing the actions they might take to prevent future conflict. This teacher expanded the two-step collaborative conflict resolution process that other teachers used by adding a potential third step. However, these data were not sufficient to challenge the theoretical proposition of this study because no other supporting data emerged.

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness is important in qualitative research because it ensures the study was conducted with a high level of rigor (Merriam, 2009). The credibility of the findings depends on this level of rigor (Patton, 2015). The trustworthiness of a study also ensures validity or dependability as well as its transferability and objectivity or confirmability (Charmaz, 2006; Merriam, 2009; Yin, 2014). Therefore, the constructs of credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability, which are critical to the trustworthiness of qualitative research, are discussed in the following sections.

Credibility

Credibility is an important quality in research in order to determine whether or not the research findings are congruent with reality (Merriam, 2009). Merriam suggested several strategies for researchers to use to ensure credibility. These strategies included

triangulation, member checks, and adequate engagement. For this study, I used triangulation by comparing multiple data sources, including data collected from interviews with six teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students, observations of a purposeful approach to student misconduct that these teachers used with deaf and hard of hearing students, and documents related to this purposeful approach. I also used member checks by requesting teacher participants review the preliminary findings for their credibility. Three teacher participants responded to my request, reviewed the preliminary findings, and agreed that data was representative of their interview comments, use of purposeful approach to student conduct, and use of documents. Teacher 2 wrote, "I think the results show what we do." Teacher 4 wrote, "I think the results appear accurate. As far as the area listed as discrepant, I feel I work on that topic on a deeper level in my individual times with the students." Teacher 5 wrote, "You seemed to capture the essence of what we do with Love and Logic©." I also used the strategy of adequate engagement by engaging with the teachers at the research site for a period of several months during data collection and analysis.

Transferability

Transferability is an important quality in research in order to determine whether or not the research findings can be applied in other situations (Merriam, 2009). Merriam recommended that researchers provide sufficient description of the study and use either maximum variation or typicality in the sample to improve the transferability of the study. For this study, I provided rich, thick description of the phenomenon of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students that was under

investigation for this study and to describe the setting and the procedures that I used to collect and analyze the data. I also selected a typical sample. The site was typical of a residential school serving deaf and hard of hearing students in the United States.

Dependability

Dependability is an important quality in research in order to determine whether or not the findings can be reproduced (Merriam, 2009). Merriam suggested several strategies for researchers to ensure transferability. These strategies included triangulation, clarification of the investigator's position, and an audit trail. I used triangulation by comparing and contrasting three data sources. I used clarification of the investigator's position by maintaining a researcher's journal in which I reflected critically on the research process and on my assumptions and dispositions about the data. I added reflections to this research journal during data collection, after each interview and observation, and at the end of the site visit. I also maintained an audit trail, in which I detailed the steps taken during the research process, including how data were collected and analyzed.

Confirmability

Confirmability is an important quality in research in order to determine whether or not bias shapes the findings of the study (Merriam, 2009). Merriam recommended a strategy called reflexivity, in which researchers reflect on their biases and assumptions about the research. For this study, I maintained a researcher's journal in which I critically reflected on my potential biases and assumptions about teacher use of a purposeful approach to student misconduct for deaf and hard of hearing students. I added these

reflections to the journal during data collection, after each interview and observation, and at the end of the site visit.

Results

The results for this study are analyzed in relation to the primary and secondary research questions. The secondary research questions are presented first, followed by the primary research question, because the primary research question is a synthesis of the findings from the secondary research questions.

Secondary Research Question 1 asked, "How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students perceive a purposeful approach to student conduct?" Teachers in this study stated that the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct used for deaf and hard of hearing students resulted in improved student conduct and positive student relationships when teachers applied natural and logical consequences for student misconduct. Teacher 5 discussed an incident of student misconduct that occurred 2 years ago, noting that the consequence used was logical and was one that the student still remembered and discussed. Teacher 5 believed that the incident, including the logical consequence, became meaningful because the student's behavior improved. The student also improved relationships with other students because the logical consequence engaged her in considering the feelings of others. Teacher 1 also described evidence of improved student behavior and positive relationships, noting that students sit in a circle and say positive things about one another, adding that students are able to recognize the natural consequence of losing friends as a result of not being kind to one another. Teacher 2 believed that a natural consequence improves student conduct and also "makes the bonds

stronger." This teacher recalled improved student conduct as a result of using a purposeful approach to student conduct and believed that the time it takes to learn the approach is worthwhile because of the benefits to student conduct and the positive relationships that result from using natural and logical consequences.

Teachers in this study also stated that implementing a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students required using empathetic responses and remaining neutral during incidents of misconduct. Teacher 4 shared, "When I remain calm, the student does, too, and it feels better for everyone." Teacher 6 commented, "I validate kids' feelings, and I respond to them with empathy when they make a mistake, instead of getting mad." Teacher 2 noted, "We are here to help and support them. We're going to be empathetic and supportive, but we are not going to judge or punish."

Teachers also stated that the use of this approach was beneficial to deaf and hard of hearing students in terms of building student trust. Teacher 1 stated, "You want to be that way [kind] to the students because that is how you establish trust with them, and you're modeling having trusting relationships." Teacher 3 described providing a safe place for a student to go when frustrated or overwhelmed, noting, "It was about developing trust."

Teachers also stated that the positive, long-term benefits of using a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students included developing empathetic adults with improved problem solving abilities and providing increased opportunities to practice resolving conflicts collaboratively. Teacher 5 noted, "It's about

making sure the kids know how to solve problems and be better people. We're growing better adults like that." Teacher 6 described an incident where two students worked collaboratively to resolve a conflict, noting they shared their feelings about the conflict with each other. Teacher 6 stated, "After that, they talked about how to solve the problem. I was there, but I didn't get involved too much." Teacher 4 stated, "Kids work together to solve problems."

Teachers also stated that using a purposeful approach to student conduct maintained student dignity. Teacher 2 stated, "I think the dignity piece is huge." Teacher 3 discussed addressing a student engaged in misconduct and noted that after conferencing with the student, "Everybody retained their dignity." Teacher 4 noted that the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct is beneficial with deaf and hard of hearing students and commented, "It allows the children to keep their dignity."

Thus, teachers in this study reported similar positive perceptions about their use of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students. They believed use of the approach led to improved student behavior and positive student relationships. Teachers in this study also believed that this approach required using natural and logical consequences, using empathetic responses, and remaining neutral during incidents of student misconduct. Teachers believed this approach was beneficial in building student trust, developing empathetic adults, and increasing students' skills in collaborative conflict resolution. Teachers also believed that the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students allowed students to maintain their dignity, even during incidents of misconduct.

Secondary Research Question 2 asked, “How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students use a purposeful approach to student conduct?” Teachers in this study used a purposeful approach to student conduct in similar ways. Teachers used questioning to guide students in solving problems. Teacher 6 asked a pair of students, “How are you going to solve this problem? What are you going to do now?” She then monitored as the students engaged in a discussion about how to solve the problem. Teacher 2 asked if students needed guidance in resolving conflict. Teacher 2 asked, “Do you need some ideas from me?” Some teachers used questioning to remind students of rules for appropriate interactions. Teacher 1 asked students to list ideas to appropriately get someone’s attention, and Teacher 6 asked, “What kinds of things could you do to stop feeling so sad?”

Teachers also used empathetic verbal responses to students as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. Teacher 1, Teacher 5, and Teacher 6 responded empathetically to student complaints by saying, “I’m sorry,” while Teacher 2 and Teacher 4 responded with even more emphasis by saying, “I’m so sorry.” Teacher 3 conveyed empathy by saying, “Oh no!” when a student appeared upset about making a mistake.

Teachers also used nonverbal communication to convey empathy. Teacher 5 provided a calming touch to an agitated student. Teacher 6 used proximity to convey empathetic support by moving closer to a student who was upset. Teacher 4 maintained eye contact with a student who was sharing a concern, and used facial expressions that conveyed empathy and understanding. Teacher 3 allowed a student to sit out of an

activity, but continued to provide empathy through eye contact and empathetic facial expressions.

Teachers in this study also used verbal encouragement to help students collaboratively resolve conflict. Teacher 2 asked a pair of arguing students, "Can you two please solve that yourselves?" Teacher 5 asked the class to list some ideas for a classmate who was experiencing a problem, stating, "Can we think of some ideas that might help our friend?" Teacher 3 suggested that a student consider the feelings of a classmate when thinking of solutions to a problem by gesturing to the classmate in a subtle manner and smiling. Teacher 4 used encouragement by telling a group of three students, "I'll be right here, but I know you can solve the problem yourselves."

Thus, teachers in this study used a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students in several similar ways. They used questioning, empathic responses, and verbal encouragement to guide students in collaborative conflict resolution.

Secondary Research Question 3 asked, "What do documents reveal about a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners?" Teachers in this study used documents for three different purposes. They used documents for training purposes, which included reminders about the school's core values, suggestions for language to use during active listening, and highlights of the Love and Logic© approach to student conduct. Teachers also used training documents to differentiate between sympathy and empathy and as reminders of strategies that are effective in deescalating students who are angry.

Teachers also used documents for the purpose of implementing strategies for use with individual students and for student self-reflection. These documents included individualized behavior plans that highlighted student behavior goals and staff interventions to support goal attainment. These plans were tailored to individual students' needs, ability levels, and effective interventions. Documents about strategies also included resources for students use, such as cards that students could submit to their teachers requesting a break from the classroom activity for a period of up to 5 minutes. Teachers also used these documents to empower students to monitor their own social-emotional progress, particularly in relation to their behavioral goals. A self-reflection form allowed students to monitor progress on a variety of social-emotional goals and report their progress to a teacher or member of the support staff.

Teachers likewise used documents for the purpose of monitoring incidents of student misconduct and to identify patterns and trends. Teachers completed incident reports about occurrences of misconduct and submitted the reports to administration for review and action. Teachers used a summary of discipline referrals to monitor incidents of misconduct for patterns and trends that may need to be addressed through interventions.

Thus, documents revealed that a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students included a focus on training, implementation of strategies, and behavior tracking. Documents provided descriptions of the key components of Love and Logic© and implementation strategies for teachers, strategies for student self-reflection, and guidance on effective strategies for individual students. Documents also

revealed a system for monitoring incidents of misconduct and identifying trends and patterns of misconduct.

The primary research question asked, "How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct?" As part of a purposeful approach to student conduct, teachers in this study engaged their students in a two-step collaborative conflict resolution process. In the first step, teachers asked students to engage with one another in perspective taking about the other student's feelings related to the problem. Teacher 2 stated, "I have the kids do most of the work [to] validate others' feelings." Teacher 3 noted that she asks students, "How did that make you feel?" Teacher 4 stated, "I can get them to listen to one another and respect the differing opinions." Thus, in the first step of this process, teachers in this study guided collaborative conflict resolution between students by first engaging them in developing awareness and understanding of other students' perspectives.

In the second step of this collaborative conflict resolution process, teachers reported that they gave students time to generate possible solutions to the conflict, providing support as needed. Teacher 4 commented, "I monitor and coach, and I provide some ideas when I have to, but I try to get them to solve problems themselves most of the time." Teacher 2 offered support to students trying to resolve a conflict by stating, "If you can't [solve this], I can give you some ideas after class." Teacher 5 noted, "Most of the time, it's an easy solution, but it might take them a while to figure it out." Teacher 6 remembered a situation where she engaged students in collaborative conflict resolution,

stating, “One kid decided to apologize, and that was nice.” Thus, teachers in this study engaged students in generating solutions to conflict as the second step in the two-step collaborative conflict resolution process.

Teacher 6 described a third step to the collaborative conflict resolution process that other teachers did not discuss. Teacher 6 noted, “They talked about what went wrong, how to prevent it from happening again, and then what to do if it did happen again.” Teacher 6 engaged her students in the two-step collaborative conflict resolution process that other teachers used, but then encouraged students to continue their discussion, which led to their engagement in future planning.

Thus, five of the six teachers in this study used a similar two-step collaborative conflict resolution process to engage deaf and hard of hearing students in a purposeful approach to student conduct. The first step involved engaging students in taking their peer’s perspective and considering their peer’s feelings about the conflict. The second step involved engaging students in generating possible solutions to the conflict. However, one teacher encouraged students to engage in a third step that involved planning for future conflict resolution, which was considered discrepant data that could challenge the theoretical proposition, However, supporting data were not found for this additional step.

Table 7 includes a summary of the key findings for the secondary and primary research questions.

Table 7

Results

Questions	*Categories*
SRQ 1: Teacher perceptions	Noting improved student behavior Noting positive student relationships Using natural and logical consequences Requiring empathetic responses Remaining neutral during student misconduct Building student trust Developing empathetic adults Increasing students' collaborative conflict resolution skills Maintaining student dignity
SRQ 2: Teacher use	Using questioning to guide students in solving problems Using verbal empathetic responses to help students resolve conflict Using nonverbal empathetic responses to help students resolve conflict Encouraging students to collaboratively resolve conflict
SRQ 3: Documents	Training teachers in key concepts of Love and Logic© Providing implementation strategies for student self-reflection Providing strategies for teacher use with individual students Monitoring incidents of misconduct Identifying trends and patterns of misconduct
PRQ: Engagement in collaborative conflict resolution process	Engaging students in Step 1: perspective-taking Engaging students in Step 2: generating possible solutions to problems

Summary

This chapter included the results of this study. The initial sections of this chapter included a description of the research site, which was a residential school serving deaf and blind students in preschool through Grade 12. The school was located in the western region of the United States and included 24 deaf and hard of hearing students in the elementary program. I also described the teacher participants, who included six teachers with teaching experience ranging from three years to 30 years. All teacher participants

held certification in special education, and five teachers also held certification in elementary education. I provided participant demographics by describing teachers' years of experience, certifications, and classes taught, as well as any other programs or extracurricular activities they led. I also described how I collected data for the individual teacher interviews, observations of the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students, and documents related to a purposeful approach used with this population. I described the data analysis process that I used, including coding, category construction, and an analysis of emergent themes and discrepant data. I examined issues of trustworthiness for qualitative research in relation to the constructs of credibility, dependability, transferability, and confirmability. In addition, I analyzed the results of this study in relation to the primary and secondary research questions.

In Chapter 5, I analyze and interpret the results of this study, discuss the limitations of this study, provide recommendations for future research and for practicing educators of deaf and hard of hearing students, and describe the potential impact of this study for positive social change.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to describe how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engaged students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. Data were collected at a residential school located in the western United States that served these students. I selected a single case study research design for this study because it allowed for an in-depth analysis of a purposeful approach to student conduct that teachers used with deaf and hard of hearing students. This study was needed because current research suggests that deaf and hard of hearing students may benefit from an alternative to traditional behavior management and modification approaches currently used in many school programs serving these students (Dalton, 2011; Glickman, 2011; Guardino & Antia, 2012; Rieffe, 2012; Ziv, 2013).

I analyzed the key findings for this study in relation to the primary and secondary research questions. The first secondary research question asked how teachers perceived a purposeful approach to student conduct. The key findings were that the participating teachers believed the approach required using empathetic responses, remaining neutral during incidents of misconduct, and employing logical consequences, which led to improved student conduct and improved student relationships. The participating teachers also believed that a purposeful approach to student conduct built student trust, developed empathetic adults, increased students' collaborative conflict resolution skills, and maintained student dignity.

The second secondary research question asked how teachers use a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners. The key findings were that the participating teachers used questioning to guide students in collaboratively solving problems and used both verbal and nonverbal empathetic responses to help students resolve conflict. Teachers also used encouragement to help students resolve conflict as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing learners.

The third secondary research question asked what documents reveal about the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners. The key findings were that the participating teachers used these documents were used for three purposes: (a) to train teachers in the key concepts of Love and Logic©, (b) to provide implementation strategies for student self-reflection and for teacher use with individual students, and (c) to monitor incidents of student misconduct and identify trends and patterns of student misconduct.

The primary research question asked how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. The key finding was that teachers used a two-step process with students engaged in collaborative conflict resolution. The first step requires students to engage in perspective-taking to understand how another student feels about the conflict. The second step requires students to generate possible solutions to the conflict.

Interpretation of Findings

The findings for this study were interpreted in relation to the conceptual framework, which was based on Deutsch's (1973) conflict resolution theory. The key concept of this theory is that while conflict cannot be prevented, it can be used as a constructive and positive force, engaging conflicted individuals in cooperative and collaborative problem solving processes, which strengthens relationships. In addition, these findings were interpreted in relation to the literature review, which included an analysis of studies related to managing student behavior, approaches to student conduct, teacher perceptions about approaches to managing student conduct, school community and student-teacher relationships, and approaches to managing student conduct. This interpretation of findings is presented first in relation to the secondary research questions and then to the primary research question because the interpretation of findings for the primary research question is a synthesis of findings from the secondary research questions.

Teacher Perceptions of Purposeful Approach to Student Conduct

The first secondary research question asked how teachers perceived a purposeful approach to student conduct. Key findings were that teachers believed the approach required using empathetic responses, remaining neutral during incidents of misconduct, and employing logical consequences, which led to improved student conduct and improved student relationships. Teachers also believed the purposeful approach to student conduct built student trust, developed empathetic adults, increased students' collaborative conflict resolution skills, and maintained student dignity.

Research literature supports these findings. Obenauf (2008) explored teacher perceptions about the implementation of Love and Logic© in an elementary school and found that teachers believed the approach resulted in improved relationships and improved student conduct. In related research, Bullock (2011) examined early childhood teachers' attitudes about student behavior after implementing Love and Logic© and discovered that teachers believed the program resulted in improved teacher skills related to remaining neutral during periods of student misconduct, employing logical consequences, and empowering students to work collaboratively to solve problems. Glickman (2011) examined a relationship-based approach to conduct with deaf and hard of hearing adolescents and found that engaging students in collaborative conflict resolution helped develop positive relationships, improve behavior, and elicit more empathetic responses from staff and students.

Teacher Use of Purposeful Approach to Student Conduct

The second secondary research question asked how teachers use a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners. The key findings were that teachers used questioning to guide students in collaboratively solving problems and use both verbal and nonverbal empathetic responses to help students resolve conflict. Teachers also used encouragement to help students resolve conflict as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing learners

Research literature supports these findings, as they are aligned with previous findings. Olive (2010) studied approaches to student conduct used with high school students and discovered that approaches to behavior that focus on behavioral change

rather than behavioral management require staff members to provide empathy to students during incidents of misconduct, use questioning and guidance during conflict resolution, and engage in positive conversation with students to develop strong student-teacher relationships. In a study examining discipline approaches with adolescents, Roache and Lewis (2011) also found that discussions, including the use of questioning, were an effective component of a purposeful approach to student conduct. Wang et al. (2014) examined relationships between teacher support, conflict resolution, and the emotional experiences of adolescents related to schools in Shanghai, determining that teacher support, shown through the use of empathy, questioning, and encouragement had a positive impact on students' conflict resolution skills and school experiences. In a study about the impact of teacher behavior on student conduct, Spivak and Farran (2012) found that when first grade teachers used empathy and encouraged students to engage in perspective-taking, students were able to work collaboratively to resolve conflict. The implications of the findings support previous research related to students' improved problem solving skills when provided empathy, support, and encouragement.

Documents Supporting a Purposeful Approach to Student Conduct

The third secondary research question asked what documents reveal about the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners. The key findings were that documents were used for three purposes:

- to train teachers in understanding the key concepts of Love and Logic©,
- to provide implementation strategies for student self-reflection and for teacher use with individual students, and

- to monitor incidents of student misconduct and identify trends and patterns of student misconduct.

Research literature also supports these findings, as they are aligned with previous findings. Both Obenauf (2008) and Bullock (2011) examined schools that implemented Love and Logic© and noted that documents were used to describe the approach, provide implementation reminders, and present strategies that were effective with elementary students. Hawken et al. (2011) examined a behavior education program used at two elementary schools and discovered that educators used documents to provide strategies for use with individual students, to monitor incidents of student misconduct, and to identify patterns of student misconduct. In other related research, Schaubman et al. (2011) examined teachers' implementation of collaborative problem solving strategies with middle school students and discovered that educators used documents to collect information about incidents of misconduct, to monitor individual student incidents of misconduct, and to identify trends and patterns of misconduct. Singh et al. (2013) studied the effects of teacher mindfulness training on the behavior of preschool students and found that educators also used documents to monitor and track incidents of student misconduct and identify patterns of misconduct.

Collaborative Conflict Resolution Process

The primary research question asked how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct. The key finding was that teachers used a two-step process with students engaged in collaborative conflict resolution. The first step required students

to engage in perspective-taking to understand how another student feels about the conflict. The second step required students to generate possible solutions to the conflict.

The conceptual framework supports these findings because Deutsch (1973) suggested that collaborative conflict resolution requires individuals to engage in perspective-taking and active listening before generating possible solutions to conflict. Deutsch suggested that collaborative conflict resolution requires an open mind and cooperation during perspective-taking and active listening. Deutsch also believed that when conflict is serious, or the individuals involved in the conflict are highly emotional, a third party should be involved to monitor and guide the collaborative conflict resolution process. In this study, teachers acted as the third party, helping students collaborate to solve conflicts. Deutsch found that individuals who engage in collaborative conflict resolution using perspective-taking, active listening, and cooperation develop stronger, more positive relationships with their peers and are able to approach conflict with a problem-solving mindset. Deutsch also believed that individuals who are provided numerous opportunities to engage in collaborative conflict resolution will strengthen their skill set and be better able to apply the skills of perspective-taking, active listening, and cooperation in situations where a third party is not present.

Current research literature also supports these findings. Brion-Meisels and Brion-Meisels (2012) examined peaceable schools and discovered that children are able to act as peacemakers when they are provided opportunities to understand classmates' thoughts, feelings, and perceptions as part of conflict resolution. In a related study, Lubelska (2012) studied peaceful schools and found that students in these schools were able to engage in

perspective-taking and shared ownership of problems during collaborative conflict resolution. Most et al. (2011) examined the social competence of deaf and hard of hearing students in the primary grades and found that those students with the highest levels of social competence had developed skills in perspective-taking and collaborative conflict resolution. Rieffe (2012) also examined awareness and regulation of emotions for elementary-aged deaf and hard of hearing students and found that these students were able to regulate their emotions when provided opportunities to engage in discussions about problems and solutions with their peers. Sebald (2013) surveyed 76 teachers about skills that are important for students to learn in school and found that 96% of respondents believed problem-solving and collaborative conflict resolution were necessary skills for students to have. Teacher participants believed these skills required perspective-taking and solution generation. Current research suggests engaging students in perspective taking and identifying possible solutions to conflict are necessary components of education programs.

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of a study are based on the research design. The first limitation of this single case study was the limited transferability of these findings to other similar residential programs serving deaf and hard of hearing students. Deaf and hard of hearing students are also served in other types of programs, including inclusion programs in neighborhood schools, self-contained classes in neighborhood schools, and programs that do not use American Sign Language. It is unclear if the findings of this study transfer to programs that are structured differently than the residential program in this study.

The second limitation was the single case study design. According to Yin (2014), multiple case studies should be used when time and resources allow because they result in more robust findings. Yin also contended that literal replication is possible with a single case, but that theoretical replication is only possible if four to six cases are presented. In order to conduct a multiple case study with theoretical replication possibilities, I needed to select four to six residential schools for deaf and hard of hearing students, which would have been challenging because these schools are located in different regions of the country. I was limited to collecting data at a single site due to the time and travel required to collect data at even one site. Therefore, I selected a single case study design with the understanding that only literal replication was possible.

The third limitation was the potential for possible researcher bias. In qualitative research, the researcher's personal beliefs, opinions, and values can influence the analysis and interpretation of the findings or results. I was familiar with the reported benefits of Love and Logic© before collecting data. Because I was the only person responsible for collecting, analyzing, and interpreting the data, I used the strategies of reflexivity, triangulation of data, and member checking to reduce the impact of researcher bias on the study findings.

Recommendations

The recommendations for future research are based on the strengths and limitations of this study as well as the literature review. The first recommendation is that research should be conducted about the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students served in programs that are not residential. This

research is needed because some deaf and hard of hearing students are served in general education classrooms, in self-contained classrooms in their neighborhood schools, or in auditory-oral programs that do not use American Sign Language. A replication of this study in a different program serving deaf and hard of hearing students would add to the body of knowledge related to using collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students. This replication would expand the usefulness of this study to a larger pool of educators who work with deaf and hard of hearing students in a variety of programs.

The second recommendation is that further research should be conducted related to teacher attitudes and perspectives about the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students using a multiple case study design. A multiple case study design is needed in order to provide more robust findings and increase the possibility of theoretical replication of this study. This research would also expand the usefulness of this study to a larger pool of educators who work with deaf and hard of hearing students.

The third recommendation is that quantitative research should be conducted that is aimed at identifying whether or not a purposeful approach to student conduct and the use of collaborative conflict resolution has an impact on the number and severity of incidents of student misconduct in programs serving deaf and hard of hearing students. This quantitative research is needed in order to determine whether or not such an approach has a positive impact on student conduct and problem solving skills. Beyond a consideration of how teachers use the approach and their beliefs about its use,

quantitative research would provide data about the impact this approach has on student conduct. The results of that research would be useful to teachers currently working with deaf and hard of hearing students as well as school and district administrators who are considering approaches to student conduct for implementation in their programs.

Implications for Social Change

This study was designed to promote positive social change at the individual, family, organizational, and societal levels. At the individual level, this study was designed to contribute to positive social change by improving the conduct of individual students, including enhancing their collaborative conflict resolution skills. Students with improved collaborative conflict resolution skills may develop stronger, more positive relationships with peers. Additionally, improved student conduct allows for more time on task with academic learning, which could improve individual students' academic success. Students who demonstrate improved conduct by developing collaborative conflict resolution skills may be able to transfer these skills from the school community to their family, their community, and society.

At the family level, this study may contribute to positive social change by improving family relationships through the use of empathetic responses and natural and logical consequences. Family members who use empathetic responses and natural and logical consequences with deaf and hard of hearing children may develop stronger, more positive relationships with each other, which will enhance family dynamics. These family dynamics are especially important for deaf and hard of hearing children who often

present with unique social-emotional needs as a result of delayed language because of limited communication access in the home.

At the organizational level, this study may contribute to positive social change by increasing the collaborative conflict resolution skills of members of the school community and improving teacher-student relationships through the use of questioning, empathy, and encouragement. Teachers and school support staff who use questioning, empathetic responses, and encouragement during incidents of student misconduct may spend less time managing behavior, allowing for more instructional time. This increase in instructional time will benefit all students in the organization, because students may develop stronger academic skills as a result of increased instructional time. Additionally, students who engage in collaborative conflict resolution and feel empathy from their teachers and support staff during incidents of misconduct are likely to develop stronger relationships with peers. With stronger peer relationships, students may feel that school is an emotionally safe environment, which may lead to a deeper readiness to learn both academics and socially appropriate behaviors. Educators in school systems that encourage them to approach student misconduct and conflict with questioning, empathy, and encouragement may improve their practice through the creation of emotionally safe environments where students are ready to learn and able to improve their academic and social skills.

At the societal level, this study was designed to contribute to positive social change both immediately and in the future. The immediate benefit to society is students who can contribute to their communities by engaging in perspective-taking and

collaborative conflict resolution, which may enhance community relationships. This may be especially true for deaf and hard of hearing individuals who are often disengaged from their home communities because they attend a residential school. Future societal benefit includes developing school graduates who may positively impact society by engaging in empathy, perspective-taking, and collaborative conflict resolution. The mission of education is to develop students who are prepared to contribute to society in positive ways. Students with enhanced empathy, perspective-taking skills, and collaborative conflict resolution skills are likely to make positive, impactful contributions to society.

Conclusion

Teachers are tasked with managing student behavior during the school day. For some educators of deaf and hard of hearing students, this task is an especially daunting one because these students often present with unique social-emotional needs and do not always respond well to respond well to traditional models of behavior management. Such traditional models typically include positive and negative reinforcement and rely on extrinsic motivators and consequences. In a purposeful approach to student conduct, emphasis is placed on relationship building and strengthening by using empathy, providing natural and logical consequences for misconduct, and guiding students to own and solve their own problems.

In such an approach, incidents of misconduct are viewed as opportunities for students to learn more appropriate ways of behaving. Conflict is viewed as expected, and it is often celebrated because it provides opportunities for students to practice collaborative conflict resolution. Relationships are strengthened, trust develops, and

students become empowered to make prosocial decisions. Both teachers and students benefit from the use of such an approach, because, as Teacher 5 said, “It makes everyone just feel so good.” It is not often that teachers talk about feeling good while managing behavior. Perhaps the key to a purposeful approach to student conduct is that teachers using it are not actually managing behavior, which can be time-consuming and frustrating. Rather, they are engaging students in changing their own behavior, teaching and guiding them to develop and strengthen skills that will serve them well during their school years as well as in the future.

Using a purposeful approach to student conduct is more similar to teaching than it is to managing, and thus provides teachers more opportunities to do that for which they were hired to do (i.e., teach). Perhaps it is time to re-evaluate how schools, especially those serving deaf and hard of hearing students, approach student conduct. With a more purposeful approach, educators of deaf and hard of hearing students may find themselves teaching more, students may find themselves learning more, and all members of the school community may find themselves enjoying stronger, more positive relationships. These improvements would result in significant positive social change to individuals, families, organizations, and society.

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Appendix A: Letter of Cooperation

Heidi Jordan
[redacted]

December 2015

Dear Heidi Jordan,

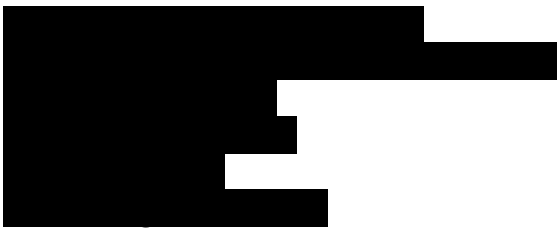
Based on my review of your research proposal, I give permission for you to conduct the study titled *Exploring a Purposeful Approach to Student Conduct with Deaf and Hard of Hearing Learners* at the [redacted]. As part of this study, I authorize you to recruit teachers of elementary deaf and hard of hearing students to participate in this study, interview the selected teachers, and observe the use of a purposeful approach to student conduct that these teachers use with deaf and hard of hearing students. In addition, I also authorize you to contact teacher participants to review the tentative findings of this study for their credibility. Individuals' participation will be voluntary and at their own discretion.

We understand that our organization's responsibilities include the following: allowing access to teacher classrooms during the instructional day in order to conduct observations of how teachers use this purposeful approach to student conduct, allowing access to a meeting space for teacher interviews, and proving access to group summaries of discipline referrals, sample behavior contracts, publications related to Love and Logic© that have been sent to families, and samples of classroom expectations. No individual students will be identified. We reserve the right to withdraw from the study at any time if our circumstances change.

I confirm that I am authorized to approve research in this setting and that this plan complies with the organization's policies.

I understand that the data collected will remain entirely confidential and may not be provided to anyone outside of the student's supervising faculty/staff without permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at Walden University.

Sincerely,



Appendix B: Teacher Letter of Consent

CONSENT FORM

You are invited to take part in a research study about the use of Love and Logic©, a purposeful approach to student conduct, with deaf and hard of hearing students. You are invited to participate in this study because you are a teacher of elementary deaf and hard of hearing students who has been trained in the use of Love and Logic©. I obtained your name and contact information from [redacted], superintendent of this school. This form is part of a process called "informed consent" to allow you to understand this study before deciding whether or not to participate.

This study is being conducted by a researcher named Heidi Jordan, who is a doctoral student at Walden University.

Background Information:
The purpose of this study is to explore how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage them in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct.

Procedures:
If you agree to be in this study, you will be asked to:

- [redacted]Participate in an individual interview with the researcher to share your perceptions on the use of collaborative conflict resolution as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing students. The interview should last no longer than 30 minutes and will be conducted in a private conference room on the campus of the [redacted]
- Allow the researcher access to your classroom during instructional time to observe a purposeful approach to student conduct used with deaf and hard of hearing students. These observations should last no longer than 30 minutes.
- Provide the researcher access to documents that show how you use a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing students.
- Review the tentative findings of this study for their credibility. This review should take no longer than 15 minutes. .

Here are some sample questions:

- Describe a typical application of the Love and Logic© approach that you use in your classroom.
- Give an example of how you have engaged your students in collaborative conflict resolution using a purposeful approach to student conduct such as Love and Logic©.
- Some people would say that approaches like Love and Logic© are too time consuming to implement with fidelity. What would you say?

Voluntary Nature of the Study:
This study is voluntary. Everyone will respect your decision about whether or not you choose to participate in this study. No one at this school will treat you differently if you decide not to participate in this study. If you decide to participate in this study now, you can still change your mind later. You may stop at any time.

Risks and Benefits of Being in the Study:
Participating in this type of study involves some minor risks. For example, you might find some of the interview prompts challenging to answer. Participating in this study would not pose a risk to your safety or wellbeing.

The potential benefit of participating in this study is that you may develop a deeper understanding of how teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct.

Payment:
There is no payment to you for your participation in this study.

Privacy:
Any information you provide will be kept confidential. The researcher will not use your personal information for any purposes outside of this research project. The researcher will not include your name or anything else that could identify you in the study reports. Data will be kept secure by storing electronic files on a password protected computer and storing hard copies in a locked file cabinet. A code will be used in place of your name and the school during data collection and analysis, and the link between names and codes will be stored separately from the data. Data will be kept for a period of at least 5 years, as required by the university.

Contacts and Questions:
You may ask any questions you have now. Or if you have questions later, you may contact the researcher via telephone at [redacted] or [redacted] If you want to talk privately about your rights as a participant, you can call Dr. Leilani Endicott, who is the Walden University representative who can discuss this study with you. Her phone

number is 612-312-1210. Walden University's approval number for this study is **02-04-16-0341794** and it expires on **February 3, 2017.**

The researcher will give you a copy of this form to keep.

Obtaining Your Consent

If you feel you understand the study well enough to make a decision about it, please indicate your consent by signing below.

Printed Name of Participant _____

Date of Consent _____

Participant's Signature _____

Researcher's Signature _____

Appendix C: Interview Protocol

1. How did you began implementing Love and Logic© in your classroom?
2. Tell me about the training you received regarding the implementation of Love and Logic©?
3. What problems did you need to address when you began implementing Love and Logic© with your students?
4. Describe a typical application of the Love and Logic© approach that you use in your classroom.
5. What is your opinion about purposeful approaches to student conduct for deaf and hard of hearing students, such as Love and Logic©?
6. Some people would say that approaches like Love and Logic© are too time consuming to implement with fidelity. What would you say?
7. Give an example of how you have engaged your students in collaborative conflict resolution using a purposeful approach to student conduct such as Love and Logic©.
8. What types of documents do you use to help you implement Love and Logic© in your classroom? Tell me about documents such as behavior contracts, classroom expectations, and parent correspondence.
9. Is there anything you would like to add, or something I forgot to ask that you would like to share?

Appendix D: Observation Data Collection Form

Field Notes	Researcher Reflections
Criterion 1: Setting	
Use of space	
Use of print and nonprint materials	
Use of technology	
Criterion 2: Participants	
Number of students	
Number of adults	
Gender of both	
Criterion 3: Activities	
Use of problem-solving strategies	
Use of empathetic responses	
Use of relationship-strengthening language	
Use of checks of understanding	
Criterion 4: Engagement and Conversation	
Between teacher and students	
Among students	
Other	
Criterion 5: Subtle Factors	
Nonverbal communication	
Unplanned activities	
Interruptions	
Criterion 6: Researcher's Presence	
Location in classroom	

Involvement in activities

Awareness of others

Appendix E: Alignment of Interview Questions to Research Questions

Primary Research Question: How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students engage their students in collaborative conflict resolution processes as part of a purposeful approach to student conduct?

Interview Questions:

4. Describe a typical application of the Love and Logic© approach that you use in your classroom.

7. Give an example of how you have engaged your students in collaborative conflict resolution using a purposeful approach to student conduct such as Love and Logic©.

Secondary Research Question 1: How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students perceive a purposeful approach to student conduct?

Interview Questions:

5. What is your opinion about purposeful approaches to student conduct for deaf and hard of hearing students, such as Love and Logic©?

6. Some people would say that approaches like Love and Logic© are too time consuming to implement with fidelity. What would you say?

Secondary Research Question 2: How do teachers of deaf and hard of hearing students use a purposeful approach to student conduct?

Interview Questions:

1. How did you began implementing Love and Logic© in your classroom?

2. Tell me about the training you received regarding the implementation of Love and Logic©?
3. What problems did you need to address when you began implementing Love and Logic© with your students?
4. Describe a typical application of the Love and Logic© approach that you use in your classroom.

Secondary Research Question 3: What do documents reveal about a purposeful approach to student conduct with deaf and hard of hearing learners?

Interview Question:

8. What types of documents do you use to help you implement Love and Logic© in your classroom? Tell me about documents such as behavior contracts, classroom expectations, and parent correspondence.