2018

General Education Teachers' Perceptions About Inclusion of Students with Emotional-Behavioral Disabilities

Alison Patton
Walden University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/dissertations

Part of the Special Education Administration Commons, and the Special Education and Teaching Commons

Walden University

College of Education

This is to certify that the doctoral study by

Alison Patton

has been found to be complete and satisfactory in all respects,
and that any and all revisions required by
the review committee have been made.

Review Committee
Dr. Peter Ross, Committee Chairperson, Education Faculty
Dr. Tammy Hoffman, Committee Member, Education Faculty
Dr. Bonita Wilcox, University Reviewer, Education Faculty

Chief Academic Officer
Eric Riedel, Ph.D.

Walden University
2018

Abstract

General Education Teachers' Perceptions About Inclusion of Students with Emotional-

Behavioral Disabilities

by

Alison J. Patton

M Ed, Georgia Southern University, 2011

BS, Kent State University, 2008

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

January 2018

Abstract

Some general education teachers do not have the training, tools, and supports to work with the diverse needs of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The purpose of this case study was to develop a deeper understanding of how general education teachers perceive students with emotional-behavioral disabilities to better understand the issues related to effectively work with these students in the classroom. The conceptual framework for this study was Ajzen's theory of planned behavior. Fifteen general education teachers' definitions of an emotional-behavioral disability, perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, training and supports by the school districts, and descriptions of classroom interactions were explored. Data analysis of the interviews included QSR NVivo software followed by a secondary analysis of identifying codes and theme. From the results, participants defined emotional-behavioral disabilities as spectrum conditions, displaying externalized and internalized behaviors, and as students who tend to be disruptive and behaviorally challenging in the general education classroom. Participants identified difficulties in building relationships with students. Participants also identified the need for more professional development and administrative support in the classroom. Interactions with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities were identified as challenging and unpredictable. This study may contribute to positive social change by identifying teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, helping teachers to reflect on their perceptions, and identifying needed supports for teachers working with students. Educators and administrators may use the results to make informed decisions about trainings needed for general education teachers working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

General Education Teachers' Perceptions About Inclusion of Students with Emotional-

Behavioral Disabilities

by

Alison J. Patton

M Ed., Georgia Southern University, 2011

BS, Kent State University, 2008

Dissertation Submitted in Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree of

Doctor of Education

Walden University

January 2018

Dedication

This study is dedicated to the many students I have worked with who have helped me

become the person, teacher, and change I wish to see in the world.

Acknowledgements

I would like to acknowledge Dr. Peter Ross, Dr. Tammy Hoffman, and Dr. Bonita Wilcox for their endless guidance through the doctoral process. Their expertise and encouragement helped motivate me to continue through this scholarly journey. I would also like to thank my faculty for always being supportive.

Thank you to my husband, parents, grandparents, sister, and best friends. Without your consistent support, understanding, and encouragement, I would not have achieved my lifetime goal. Thank you from the bottom of my heart.

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study

Students with disabilities have gained access to the general education classroom through education in the least restrictive environment. Often, services in the least restrictive environment has led general education teachers to work with students who require additional supports in their classroom (Johnson-Harris & Mundschenk, 2014). In literature on serving students, scholars have identified emotional-behavioral disabilities in the general education classroom, but have not focused on the general education teachers' perceptions of the students or how the teacher can best meet the needs of the students in the classroom (Kaff, Teagarden, & Zabel, 2012). In this study, I investigated general education teachers' perceptions of working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in the cotaught, inclusion setting.

A key to the success of students with disabilities in the general education classroom is the teacher's understanding of the student's disability and how to best meet the student's needs. Student success increases in the classroom when they have positive interactions with their general education (Breeman et al., 2015). The results of the study may provide support to school administrators when they place students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in the general education classroom.

In Chapter 1, I present the background information on inclusion of students with disabilities, define the problem, and describe the significance of this study. I provide limitations and assumptions of the study. In Chapter 1, key definitions used throughout the study are also provided, as well as the research questions guiding the study.

Background

As special education students transition from a self-contained special education classroom setting to a general education setting, inclusion in core content areas is becoming more prevalent, impacting the roles of general education classroom teachers (Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014). As mandated by the 2004 revision of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), students with disabilities are to participate to the maximum extent appropriate with students who are not disabled (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). The inclusion of students with disabilities among their typically developing peers is key to their academic success.

Breeman et al. (2015) examined the relationship between teachers' perceptions about inclusion of students with disabilities and the students' social, emotional, and behavioral classroom adjustments and discovered that support for the students' social-emotional adjustment in the general education setting increased when the teachers had a positive attitude towards working with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Cassidy (2011) discovered that some general education teachers held different attitudes towards students with emotional-behavioral disabilities when compared to the same teachers' attitudes towards their typically developing students. Teacher support helps students experience positive interactions with their general education teachers.

There is a gap in special education practice in meeting the needs of students with disabilities in the general education setting. Kelly and Barnes-Holmes (2013) and Cassidy (2011) claimed that general education teachers have negative perceptions of inclusion of

students with autism and emotional-behavioral disabilities. Solis, Vaughn, Swanson, and McCulley (2012) stated that general and special education teachers must be willing to work collaboratively for the cotaught inclusion models to be successful. This study was designed to investigate the general education teachers' perceptions of working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities to aid administration in making sound decisions on needed supports for general education teachers working with students.

Problem Statement

Most special education teachers have prior knowledge of working with students with disabilities. However, the training, tools, and supports provided to general education teachers may not assist them with working with the diverse needs of students with disabilities. The lack of training and support can lead to general education teacher concern, anxiety, and negative perceptions of inclusion and students with disabilities (Peebles & Mendaglio, 2014). Although scholars have addressed serving students with emotional behavior disabilities in the general education classroom, researchers have not addressed general education teacher perceptions and how to best meet the needs of the students in the class. The gap in information leaves administrators on their own when planning for supports to help teachers with strategies in the inclusive classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how general education teachers in the inclusion setting perceive students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and needed supports for teachers, as well as how teachers define an emotional-behavioral disability and their interactions with students identified with

emotional behavioral disabilities. To address the study's research questions, I used the qualitative method. Analyses of the interview transcripts were conducted to cultivate an understanding of general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

Research Questions

The essential questions of this study were intended to identify general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and the supports needed to help teachers work with students in the inclusive setting. The research questions were designed to determine general teachers' perceptions that may help special education leaders and building administrators determine needed classroom supports to best meet the needs of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

1. How do general education teachers define an emotional behavioral disability?

2. What are general education teachers' perceptions of students who have been identified with emotional and behavioral disabilities in their cotaught inclusion setting?

3. What training and supports have school districts provided to general education teachers working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their cotaught inclusion setting?

4. How do general education teachers describe their classroom interactions with students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in their cotaught inclusion setting?

Conceptual Framework

The theoretical framework for this study was Ajzen's (1991) theory of planned behavior. Ajzen's theory of planned behavior is one of the most common models for the prediction and analysis of human social behaviors both in educational and psychological research. The approach is designed to predict and explain human behaviors in various situations. Ajzen's theory can offer insight on the relationship between the teacher's attitudes towards students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and the student's classroom behaviors (as cited in MacFarlane & Woolfson, 2013). Predictions and insights into teacher-student interactions in the general education setting may be made based on the results of the study using Ajzen's theory. School administrators may use the results of this study to make informed decisions when they place students with special needs with in classes with general education teachers who may provide a classroom environment in which the student may have greater success.

Nature of the Study

A qualitative, case study design was used in this study. Given the focus of the study on teacher perceptions regarding students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, the use of individual interviews was appropriate for investigation. The individual interviews were voice-recorded to ensure accurate transcription, and each interview consisted of the same questions to prevent researcher influence or bias.

Definitions

Disruptive behaviors: Behaviors that are considered atypical to a classroom setting like constant movement, yelling, and being rude to peers and teachers (Matthews, Erkfritz-Gay, Knight, Lancaster, & Kupzyk, 2013).

Emotional-behavioral disabilities: IDEA (2004) defined emotional disturbance (ED) as

> a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long
>
> period of time: an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual,
>
> sensory or health factors, an inability to build or maintain satisfactory
>
> interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers, inappropriate types of
>
> behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances, a general pervasive mood of
>
> unhappiness or depression, or a tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears
>
> associated with personal or school problems. (Reg. 300.8.c.4.i).

Inclusive learning environment: A setting where students with and without disabilities receive instruction, sometimes though a collaboration between general and special education teachers, in the general education classroom (Lastrapes, 2014).

Perceptions: Iris Center (2016) defined teacher perceptions as thoughts or mental images teachers have about their students.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made:

1. Participants are familiar, in relation to their roles as professionals, with the
    coteaching, inclusion model and instructional delivery for students.

2. IDEA legislation did not change in any significant manner during this study impacting the procedures for collection and analysis of the data.

3. Participants were willing to be involved in the study and agreed to participate in individual interviews.

Scope and Delimitations

The personal and professional characteristics of the teachers in the schools where they were employed bound the scope of this case study. The participants asked to be a part of this study were fully certified to teach in a public school district in the general education setting. Each teacher who participated worked in the cotaught, inclusion setting for a minimum of 1 year. The participants may or may not have a special education endorsement or have taught special education prior to their general education position. Therefore, the perceptions of these participants may contain bias due to their prior background or experiences in working with special education. By studying the general education teachers' perceptions of working in the inclusion setting, a more in-depth range of information may be gathered, which may assist administration with determining needed supports for teachers working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

A purposeful sample selection of general education teachers from a suburban, public school district working in Grades 4 through 8 was used in the study. I invited all teachers within the school district who were general education teachers in the cotaught, inclusion setting in Grades 4 through 8 to participate in the study. Acceptance of

participants continued until the participants meet the desired number, and the study reached saturation.

Limitations

There were some limitations to this study. By its nature, qualitative methods have limited generalizability of results. However, this is to be expected and is not the intent of qualitative methods. One limitation was the sample size used in the study. Due to the depth of this qualitative research, the sample size was small by design to investigate the teachers' perceptions. A second limitation was the selection of the sample. The sample was limited to middle grades general education teachers who participated in the inclusion setting for a minimum of 1 year. To grasp the perceptions of general education teachers regarding students with emotional-behavior disabilities, the study included teachers from Grades K through 12.

Significance

In the study, I addressed concerns in special education research by focusing on the general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. I focused on investigating current practices for teaching students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and the types of training, tools, and supports provided to general education teachers. Using the results of this study, I hoped to provide insights that change teachers' perceptions towards students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The results of this study may aid educators and administrators in making informed decisions to improve how general education teachers work with students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Special education leaders could use the findings from this study to

determine needed support in the general education setting to improve the students' experience in the classroom.

Coulby and Harper (2012) defined emotional-behavioral disabilities as a student with behaviors that interfere with normal instruction in typical classroom settings. When working with students, most teachers tend to be more reactive than proactive when addressing behavior issues (Kauffman, 2010; Ross & Sliger, 2015). This study helped to develop a deeper understanding of the underlying causes that help shape the teachers' perceptions towards students with emotional-behavioral disorders. The study of teachers' perceptions may also help to recognize the effect of teacher reactions towards students with emotional-behavioral disabilities on their academic success. Conley, Marchant, and Caldarella (2014) found that negative teacher attitudes toward inclusion of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities may negatively impact the education being provided to these students and limit their probability for educational success.

The results from the study could help to increase the awareness about how general education teachers perceive students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The school administration can use the results of this study to identify classroom supports and trainings needed for general education teachers to improve the inclusion setting. Children diagnosed with emotional-behavioral disabilities often display classroom behaviors that are more atypical than their developing peers, such as appearing to be rude, insensitive, or inappropriate when it is a manifestation of their disability (Matthews et al., 2013). The information from the data collection may lead to changes being made at the school and district levels to allow for a shift in general education teachers' perceptions of students

with disabilities. Investigation of teachers' perceptions and determining the needed supports for teachers allows for success in education.

Summary

Through the implementation of revisions to the IDEA of 2004, students of all disabilities are required to receive education in their least restricted environment. This often leads to general education teachers working with students with disabilities, often without the proper training, tools, and support to meet the students' needs. The lack of training and support can lead to concern, anxiety, and negative perceptions of inclusion and students with disabilities by general education teachers. Within this first chapter of the dissertation, the nature of the study was explored, along with key terms relevant to the study. Also discussed was the significance of this study for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. I defined the research problem, a reason for the needed research, and significance of the study.

Chapter 2 provides a comprehensive examination of current literature focused on emotional-behavioral disabilities, inclusion, and teachers' perceptions on inclusion. Discussion in Chapter 2 includes further details of the theory of planned behavior and its relation to general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. I present literature focused on general education teachers' perceptions on inclusion and emotional-behavioral disabilities, and the establishment of the gap in special education research.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

This chapter contains a review of current literature related to general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in the general education setting. The strides to have all students with disabilities included in their least restrictive environment has led to a change in services provided in the general education classroom. In the literature review, I focus on characteristics of emotional-behavioral disabilities, classroom environment, and general education teachers' education and knowledge on emotional-behavioral disabilities. I provide an in-depth look at key factors that support the need for research of general education teachers' perceptions.

Literature Search Strategy

An extensive literature search was conducted to support the need for the study and to provide support for the research problem. I used Google Scholar, ERIC, and Education Review Complete to find and access the full-text literature. I focused on reviewing literature that contained key topics such as *emotional-behavioral disabilities, special education, general education and inclusion, teacher perceptions, general education,* and *special education.* The literature search was refined to focus on articles dated from 2012 to 2016 as well as to peer-reviewed journals. During the search for literature, I found that researchers focused on behavioral strategies and tools that may lead to positive behaviors in the classroom rather than on how general education teachers perceive students with disruptive behaviors in the general education classroom. Scholars also focused on the special education teachers, but a gap was present when examining the general education teachers' perceptions. This gap further illustrated the need for this study.

Conceptual Framework

Theory of Planned Behavior

For special education, inclusion was created to ensure social justice and equality for students with special needs. Through the IDEA of 2004, students with disabilities are provided equal learning opportunities in their least restrictive environment (U.S. Department of Education, 2004). Opportunities for general education teachers to interact with students with disabilities come more with special education services provided in the least restrictive environment. The students with disabilities are placed in an inclusive classroom with or without additional support from a special education teacher, allowing more interactions between the general education teacher and the student with a disability (Solis et al., 2012). The inclusive model provides all students with disabilities a chance to learn among their peers, no matter their category of disability. The inclusion model has led to more opportunities for general education teachers to work with students who have emotional-behavioral disabilities in the general education classroom setting.

The theory of planned behavior, developed by Ajzen (1991), focuses on human behavior and the intentions regarding the behavior. Figure 1 identifies the connection between a person's attitude towards the behavior, his or her intention, and the outcome behavior. Yan and Sin (2014) conducted a study focused on the general education teachers' behaviors towards students with disabilities in their classroom. The theory of planned behavior was used as a framework to understand the teachers' intentions and practices in the inclusive setting. The results of the study concluded teachers' perceptions

on professional training and social pressures contributed to their perceptions towards the

inclusive classroom.
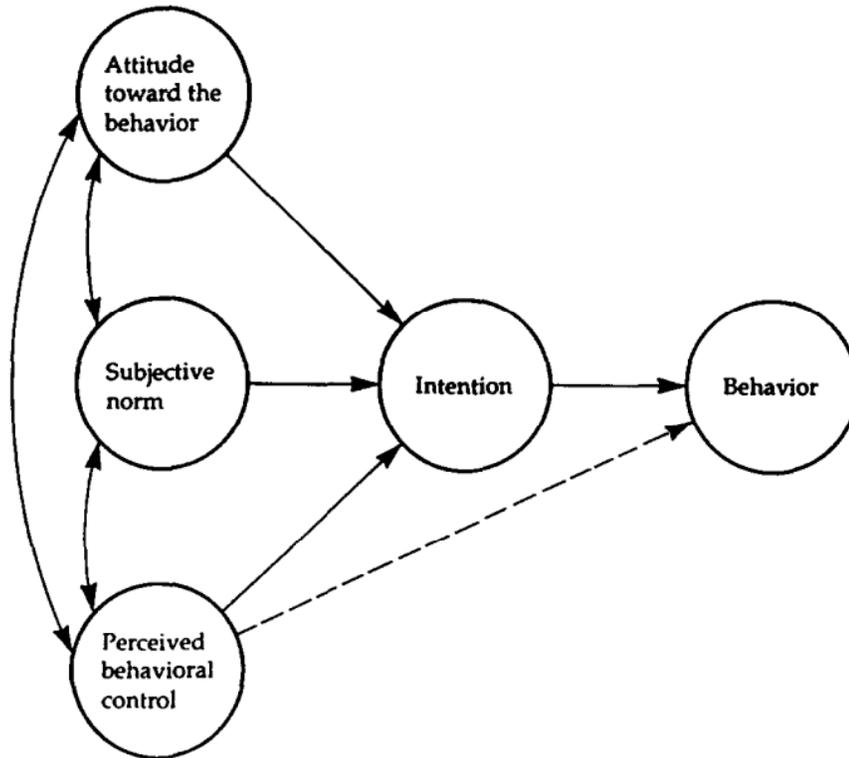
Figure 1. Theory of planned behavior (Ajzen, 1991).

Using Ajzen's theory, I provided insights into teacher-student interactions in the

general education, allowing for administration to determine needed supports for teachers

to aid in the success of inclusion. Participants reflected on their perceptions towards

students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and how their behaviors relate to their

intentions. I used the theory of planned behavior to analyze the study findings to

determine if participant perceptions aligned with the theory.

Literature Review Related to Key Concepts and Variables

Emotional-Behavioral Disabilities

There is debate on the classification of students under the category of emotional-behavioral disabilities (Kauffman, 2015). The definition and label of emotional-behavioral disabilities can take on many different meanings, causing confusion and misunderstanding of student characteristics and educational requirements for emotional-behavioral disabilities (Kauffman, 2015). Debate has occurred over the labeling of emotional-behavioral disabilities and the stigmas that occur when a teacher learns of a student's category (Kauffman, 2015). Heflinger, Wallston, Mukolo, and Brannan (2014) discovered that the stigma that occurs with emotional-behavioral disabilities plays a role in the quality of services received. The stigma may lead to a negative connotation of the student, and perhaps even cause anxiety within the general education teacher (Heflinger et al., 2014).

Lewis, Relton, Zammit, and Smith (2013) discussed possible factors of childhood behavioral and psychiatric disorders and methods to prevent such disorders. Lewis et al. mentioned that behavioral disorders may occur due to genetic predispositions in utero as the brain is developing and through environmental factors. Johnson, Seidenfeld, Izard, and Kobak (2012) focused on preschool children from economically disadvantaged families and discovered that students who were from economically disadvantaged families had a lower starting level of prosocial behaviors in comparison to their peers. When a student is acting out in the classroom, it is important for both the general education and special education teachers to understand what may be playing a role in the

student's behavior. By having an understanding of the student's background, teachers can determine the most appropriate plan of action to help the student be successful.

Mental Health Support in the Classroom

With current estimates near 12% of school-aged children needing mental health services and approximately 3% to 6% of this population are students identified with an emotional behavioral disorder, it is imperative that special education supports are in place for such students (Smith, Katsiyannis, Losinski, & Ryan, 2015). It is challenging for schools to identify and provide classroom supports when the eligibility criteria for emotional-behavioral disabilities under the IDEA may exclude students from receiving services (Smith et al., 2015). IDEA (2004) does not specify the need for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities to receive mental health support in schools. IDEA states that students receive a free and appropriate education. It is left to the school districts to interpret what is appropriate for students. The classification of students under the emotional-behavioral eligibility in special education by school districts was investigated by how well they represented the federal categories (Mattison, 2015). Often students do not receive the needed mental health supports because most personnel do not have proper training in mental health areas.

The IDEA (2004) exclusionary factors overlook students who are in need of special education services in schools. Mattison (2015) indicated that districts used four subgroups to classify students-emotional disturbance, other health impairment, learning disability, and multiple disabilities. Providing a clear definition and category of mental health disorders through IDEA allows for schools to better serve students (Smith et al.,

2015). Although students who meet eligibility receive special education services, the category the student fits under may help special education programs target students' emotional needs more effectively than current classifications of other health impairment (Mattison, 2015).

Students served under the primary special education category of emotional behavioral disorder enrolled in U.S. schools was slightly under 1% of the school population, identifying only a small part of students who need services (Forness, Kim, & Walker, 2012). With this small portion of students identified, more general education teachers have students in their classrooms who need special education supports. This presents a challenge for schools and general education teachers across disciplinary, instructional, and interpersonal areas, having a significant effect on the school climate and environment (Gresham, 2015). General education teachers do not always receive training on working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. It is key to understand the characteristics of the disorders to create a positive learning environment for all students in the classroom.

Characteristics of Students With Emotional-Behavioral Disabilities

A child's emotional and behavioral functioning plays a role in his or her success (Eklund, Tanner, Stoll, & Anway, 2015). The child's emotional and behavioral functioning can lead to lower academic achievement, classroom behavioral concerns, and increased risk for school dropout (Eklund et al., 2015). Conley et al. (2014) discovered that students identified as having an emotional-behavioral disorder are less likely to be successful than their typical peers. Conley et al. (2014) also identified six components

commonly used to classify emotional and behavioral disorders: unsuccessful peer relationships, antisocial behavior, internalizing behavior, aggression, academic problems, and attention problems. Using the six components, elementary school teachers' perceptions of problem behaviors were found to be similar to the current special education research. Through identifying these six areas, Conley et al. (2014) worked to determine areas of weakness in the student and teacher relationship based on the general education teachers' perceptions of students who posed challenging behaviors in the classroom setting.

Role of the Classroom Environment

The classroom environment may play a role in the educational success of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The environment must be supportive not only of learning, but also of student individual needs based on student disabilities. Obiakor, Harris, Mutua, Rotatori, and Algozzine (2012) and Yildiz (2015) examined the behavior of students with disabilities in relation to their location in the room. Both Obiakor et al. (2012) and Yildiz (2015) discussed ways in which both the general and special education teacher can be supportive of the inclusion of all disabilities, allowing for socialization among their typically developing peers. Yildiz noted changes in the academic communication between the teacher and students with disabilities according to the placement of the student in the classroom. Yildiz noted approval of student behavior at 0.13% during the observations. This allowed for the general education teacher to play a more supportive role with the students' needs in the classroom. Obiakor et al. (2012) found that stakeholders who place students in classrooms must consider the impact of

educational placement decisions, such as self-contained or an alternative school and the relation to students' overall educational success. The need for inclusion often is an area of debate, occurring with professionals arguing in support of excluding students with disabilities from their peers.

Obiakor et al. (2012) stated that grade-level curriculum despite their disability is key to student success and inclusion. When students with emotional-behavioral disabilities are present in the general education classroom, often the structure of the classroom setting and assignments needs to be altered to be supportive of the students in the room. The use of assignment choice to access the grade-level curriculum is one area Skerbetz and Kostewicz (2013) examined for a student at risk or diagnosed with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Supporting Obiakor et al. (2012) in allowing students access to the general education curriculum, Skerbetz and Kostewicz found an improvement in task engagement. Skerbetz and Kostewicz indicated that by providing a student a choice in the assignment, inappropriate classroom behaviors decreased.

Pas and Bradshaw (2014) explored the relationship between teacher perceptions of their environment and student behaviors and determined that the teachers who had a more positive perception of the school environment also had lower ratings of student behavior problems, including concentration, disruptive behaviors, and internalizing problems. The teachers reported a more positive classroom environment, and students showed an increase in positive classroom interactions with both teachers and peers. Due to the manifestation of their disabilities, students with emotional-behavioral disabilities often have a negative classroom and school experience between peers and teachers. Evan,

Weiss, and Cullinan (2012) suggested that general education teachers should provide positive emotional and behavioral strategies within the classroom to support the social-emotional needs of students within the classroom. Sprouls, Mathur, and Upreti (2015) found that students who were at risk or diagnosed with an emotional-behavioral disorder received a significantly lower amount of positive feedback from teachers in comparison to their typically developing peers. Feedback is critical in helping students grow academically, but using positive feedback with students who have challenging classroom behaviors helps to build an understanding and supports a welcoming classroom (Sprouls et al., 2015).

Classroom Supports for Emotional-Behavioral Disabilities

Identifying students with emotional-behavioral disabilities is a challenge in the field of special education. Although a general definition of emotional-behavioral disabilities exists, many students with such disabilities are viewed as being disruptive in class and do not receive the classroom supports needed to be successful (Wiley, Kauffman, & Plageman, 2014). In the general education setting, all students are expected to comply with the classroom and school expectations reinforced during the first few weeks of school. Many times, such rules and expectations are not reinforced throughout the school year, leaving few opportunities for reminders and practice of the expectations (Evans & Weiss, 2014). In the inclusion setting, a collaboration between special education teachers and general education teachers is one way to reinforce such expectations for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities (Evans & Weiss, 2014).

Many general education teachers are unaware of the social-emotional supports needed for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, and many administrators are unaware of the supports needed for teachers. Jones and Bouffard (2012) created a guide for implementing social and emotional learning programs in school for students focused on fostering the needed skills to manage negative emotions, staying calm and focused, following directions, and relationship building with peers and adults. Jones and Bouffard recommended that teachers implement a daily social-emotional learning skill with students to improve the classroom management and behaviors. Gresham (2015) discovered that approximately 65% of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities demonstrated improvement through increases on task and academic behaviors when implementation of classroom level social skills interventions occurred.

One method to implement the supports needed for all students is through universal design for learning (UDL). Johnson-Harris and Mundschenk (2014) presented the implementation of UDL in the general education classroom. Johnson-Harris and Mundschenk mentioned that a UDL helps teachers in the inclusion setting provide built-in academic and behavioral supports, allowing for a more effective classroom environment for students with behavioral challenges. Evan, Weiss, and Cullinan (2012) discovered that teachers in the general education classroom setting addressed academic problems more frequently than behaviors while teachers in the resource and self-contained classroom settings addressed strategies to help promote positive behaviors and reduced unwanted classroom behaviors more so than a single focus on academic problems. Johnson-Harris and Mundschenk mentioned how often disruptive behaviors

may result when the academics are difficult for a student and how disruptive behaviors lead to academic difficulties for students.

Effective classroom management strategies are also important in the general education classroom setting not only for students with disabilities but all students, helping to develop a supportive teaching environment. Ross and Sliger (2015) discussed how often classroom management strategies are reactive rather than proactive. Although teachers have good intentions, their classroom management strategies often target the inappropriate behaviors rather than praise students for desired behaviors (Ross & Sliger, 2015). Students with emotional-behavioral disabilities often receive classroom punishments due to their inappropriate classroom behaviors. Due to this interaction, the teacher-student interaction may cause negative experiences for the students. Gresham (2015) found the use of social skills interventions has been shown to improve classroom behaviors of students at risk or with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

Teacher-Student Interactions

Teachers often form their perceptions due to their past experiences working with students. If a teacher has encountered a student with disruptive behaviors in the past, they may have developed a negative perception based on this experience. Schlein, Taft, Tucker (2013) note that teachers' decisions in the classroom shape the students for the future. The more positive interactions a student has with teachers, the more trust he or she has built to improve in the general education setting (Schlein et al., 2013). Capern and Hammond (2014) examined the behaviors of teachers that support and contribute to building positive teacher-student relationships between students with emotional-

behavioral disabilities and general education teachers. The study found that when asked

what they valued in teachers, students' responses indicated teachers that displayed

patience and understanding were ranked high on the list. Students identified such

understanding and patience were needed for the teacher to support the student

academically (Capern & Hammond, 2014). MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) used

Ajzen's theory of planned behavior to examine the relationship between teachers'

attitudes towards students and the student behavior of students identified with a social-

emotional behavioral disorder. The results of their study concluded that teachers who

have been in the profession longer were more apprehensive to work with identified

students. The findings also suggested that the more training on social-emotional

behaviors a teacher had, the more willing they were to work with identified students

Breeman et al. (2014) based their study on two social models of students with

emotional-behavioral disabilities. Their goal was to examine if there was a relationship

between teacher characteristics, classroom relationships, and the adjustment to the

classroom for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The researchers found

students at the individual level had a better emotional adjustment to the classroom when

they viewed their teacher-student relationship in a positive manner. In support of teacher-

student relationships, Hecker, Young, and Caldarella (2014) used focus groups for middle

and high school teachers who work with students who are characterized at risk or

diagnosed with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The focus groups worked to identify

the teachers' perceptions of students and their peer and teacher relationships, challenging

home and school relationships, and compliance with teacher directions. The results of the

study indicated students at risk or identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities had difficulty forming both peer and teacher relationships. It is important to note that when general education teachers rated themselves at a higher competency level of working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, the classroom social relations were rated higher (Breeman et al., 2014). Buttner, Pijl, Bijstra, and Van den Bosch (2016) discovered on general education teacher surveys designed to predict quality in teaching students with emotional-behavioral disabilities a variance in teacher quality. In their results, 35% of the variance in teacher quality was related to personality traits in the teachers when working with students (Buttner et al., 2016). Teachers indicated the relationship was often compromised due to the students' lack of assignment completion, defiance on following directions, and noncompliant classroom behaviors (Hecker, Young, & Caldarella, 2014).

Similar to Breeman et al. (2014), a study conducted by Gest et al. (2014) focused on student ratings of teacher-student interaction quality. Within this study, teachers also rated student social behaviors as viewed in the classroom between teachers and peers. The results of the study concluded that general education teachers were more focused on aggressive behaviors of students rather than the social status of students (Gest et al., 2014). Teachers stated the aggressive behavior was more important for their classroom dynamics and teaching than the social interactions with students and between peers.

Student-Peer Interactions

Just as the relationships and interactions between teachers and students with emotional-behavioral disabilities are important to their success, the interactions between

peers play a large role in the students' success in the general education setting. Boer, Pij, Post, and Minnaert (2013) examined the acceptance of students with disabilities in the general education setting among typically developing peers. The participants included students with and without disabilities in the general education setting and reviewed the acceptance of peers within the classroom. As Boer et al. (2013) analyzed the results, they concluded that a small percentage of peers viewed a student with a disability of opposite gender as a friend. The researchers did determine that same gender peers accepted females with disabilities less than that of males. A similar study by Useche, Sullivan, Merk, and Orobio de Castro (2014) focused on the peer status among boys with aggressive behaviors in the general education and self-contained classrooms. Students with emotional-behavioral disabilities are among the most challenging students to integrate among general education peers, attributed to the challenges with social skills, difficult behaviors, and rejection from peers (Useche et al., 2014). This finding supported the researchers' assumption of behaviors associated with emotional-behavioral disabilities and the difficulties in social interactions among peers (Boer et al., 2013; Useche et al., 2014). When interventions are in place for students and peers alike to work together and build acceptance, all students benefit.

Evidence of the Problem

In education, students with emotional-behavioral disabilities often see many services providers based on their needs. Santiago et al. (2014) conducted a study focused on the mental health services provided to students in accordance with their individualized education plans (IEPs). The results indicated provided services varied between the

providers regarding types of treatments, interventions, and duration. The results of a study by Hirsh (2013) found that psychologists and social workers had a lower bias towards students with emotional-behavioral disabilities than did teachers and pre-service teachers. This could have occurred due to the preparation programs in each of the fields. Santiago et al. (2014) indicated providers with less experience and in cooperative climates reported participating in a higher quality of services. Suggestions to improve the quality of provided services include focusing on the work climate, resources, and training of service providers.

Kauffman and Badger (2013) discussed how having the identification of emotional-behavioral disabilities may be stigmatizing for the student and how general education teachers in the inclusion setting view students with emotional-behavioral disabilities differently than their peers. The researchers concluded that the way in which students with emotional-behavioral disabilities receive services in special education may need to be redefined to help reduce the stigma (Kauffman & Badger, 2013). The study conducted by Hirsch (2013) focused on the perceptions of various professionals working with students identified with an emotional behavioral disorder. The biased view found by Hirsch (2013) of general education teachers may occur due to interactions with students during a moment of unpleasant behaviors. General education teachers often are not provided with training to work with students who have emotional-behavioral disabilities, causing anxiety and negative perceptions among teachers when they are working with students.

General Education Teacher Education on EBD

With the focus of the research study on general education teachers and their

perceptions and attitudes towards students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, one

must look at the preparation of general education teachers for inclusion. McCray and

McHatton (2011), supported by McHatton and Parker (2013) discussed implemented

changes in pre-service teacher preparation programs in an attempt to prepare general

education teachers to meet the needs of students with disabilities in the inclusion setting.

The researchers focused on implementing a course into the pre-service program to help

reduce any concerns for having students with challenging behaviors in the classroom

(McCray & McHatton, 2011; McHatton & Parker, 2013). This type of pre-service

program gives general education teachers a deeper understanding of students with

disabilities and their needs in the classroom setting. As a result of the study, McHatton

and Parker (2013) discovered that while the pre-service teachers' attitudes towards

inclusion were positive, concerns remained regarding the impact of problem behaviors

for students in the inclusion setting. Gable, Tonelson, Sheth, Wilson, and Park (2012)

conducted a study to gather data on special education and general education teachers

view on the importance, the amount of use, and preparation for serving students with

emotional-behavioral disorders through research-based interventions. The researchers'

results determined a significant amount of both special education and general education

teachers identified deficits in preparation to provide appropriate interventions for students

with emotional-behavioral disabilities (Gable et al., 2012).

Shillingford and Karlin (2014) conducted a study on preservice teachers' knowledge of emotional-behavioral disabilities. Data collection occurred through a questionnaire on the preservice teachers' knowledge and self-efficacy. The researchers discovered no correlation between the teachers' classroom management and instructional experience and their knowledge of a student with emotional-behavioral disabilities (Shillingford & Karlin, 2014). Anderson, Watt, Noble, and Shanley (2012) investigated a connection between general education teachers' understanding of ADHD and their perceptions of having students with the disability in their classroom. The researchers found when a teacher did not fully grasp the disability, more initial referrals and negative perceptions occurred in comparison to when they were educated on a disability (Anderson et al., 2012). Shillingford and Karlin (2014) suggested that the teacher program directors utilize the results of the study to increase the knowledge of working in the general education setting with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. It is possible that if teachers have a deeper understanding of a disability and its educational impact, they may be more supportive of the student in the classroom.

Kaff et al. (2012) interviewed James Kauffman, a leading researcher in the field of special education. Kauffman focuses his career in research for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities (Kaff et al., 2012). During the interview, Kauffman stated that if we want to have the best instruction and gain the best results with students, teachers need to be trained to provide students with the best instruction and bridge gaps in education (Kaff et al., 2012). In his interview by Kaff et al. (2012), Kauffman suggested teachers should be trained based on their field. He suggested to train special

education teachers as instructional scientists, so students placed in special education receive an effective direct instruction. Kauffman also suggested both general and special education teachers receive training on effective evidence-based practices so the instruction received in the classroom is effective and meaningful to the students' needs (Kaff et al., 2012). With inclusion being the movement for students with disabilities, Peebles and Mendaglio (2014) centered their study on the preparation of teachers for inclusive classrooms. Their research focused on preservice teachers' attitudes towards inclusion and its relationship to the training they received in their education programs. Peebles and Mendaglio (2014) discovered much evidence to support education of inclusion for general education teachers and also helped to impact a more positive field experience for the general education teachers

General Education Teachers Perceptions of EBD

When placing students in the inclusion setting, it is important to understand the perceptions of the general education teacher working with students with disabilities. The measures also focused on teacher burnout and were found to have a correlation between the levels of negative bias and teacher burnout. Nind, Boorman, and Clarke (2012) worked with female students who have been identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities and receive special education services either in an inclusion setting or separate class. By using digital visual and narrative methods, the participants worked to gain social skills and to present themselves in a more acceptable manner in the general education setting (Nind, Boorman, & Clarke, 2012). Broomhead (2013) focused on the stigma general education teachers and parents may have that is associated with students

who display challenging behaviors in the general education setting. The research focused on students identified with emotional and behavioral disorders as well as students with visible special education needs receiving services in the general education setting. The results from Broomhead (2013) showed several parents and general education staff members did not want to have the students in their classroom or on the school campus due to their challenging behaviors.

It is important to note that general education teachers' perceptions of students with disabilities may vary depending on the students' diagnosis. Kelly and Barnes-Holmes (2013) provided information on how teachers' implicit attitudes toward students with autism compared to typically developing students. The researchers found with a range of explicit measures that all participants produced a more negative bias towards students with autism when compared to their typically developing peers. Similar to this study, teachers who many not have an understanding of their disability often view students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in a negative manner. Alter, Walker, and Landers, (2013) analyzed the roles of teacher demographics in correlation to their perceptions of challenging behaviors in the classroom. The researchers determined nine categories of challenging behaviors and conducted 800 surveys in grades k through 12. Teachers identified off-task behaviors were the most prevalent and problematic in the classrooms while no social interaction was the least prevalent as a problem behavior (Alter, Walker, & Landers, 2013). The researchers noted seeing off-task behaviors as the most prevalent was not surprising due to the classroom setting and expectations by general education teachers. Evans, Weiss, and Cullinan (2012) conducted a survey of

teachers in general education, separate classes, and separate schools who teach students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The researchers' purpose was to compare the perceptions of students across the three settings. The results of the study concluded teachers in separate schools and resource classes utilized intervention strategies more often than in the general education setting, allowing for more positive interactions with teachers. The researchers also noted students in the separate school setting were reported to experience more physical symptoms, such as headaches and anxiety than the students in a separate class (Evan, Weiss, & Cullinan, 2012). The physical symptom identification might be due to the teachers at the separate school setting being more likely to report the behaviors of students rather than those teachers in the general education setting.

Riney and Bullock (2012) focused their study on examining school program outcomes of students with challenging behaviors and social skills based on how general education teachers perceived their behaviors before and after the intervention. Focused in elementary school grades kindergarten through grade 5, participating teachers' perceptions were examined before the interventions presented in the study. At this time, a heightened level of negative perceptions occurred towards the students' behaviors (Riney & Bullock, 2012). Alter, Walker, and Landers (2013) identified when students are not completing work and viewed as off task, the general education teachers may perceive the student as engaging in challenging behaviors. Teachers may have identified off task behaviors as one of the most problematic behaviors since students are not completing work as well as engaging in more problematic behaviors due to being off-task (Alter, Walker, & Landers, 2013). Riney and Bullock (2012) worked with their participants to

implement a social skills training, functional behavior assessments, and team

collaboration to meet the students' needs. The results at the end of the study concluded

the social skills training and team collaboration were beneficial in helping general

education teachers gain an understanding of the students' needs and also providing

needed supports in the general education classroom (Riney & Bullock, 2012). Once the

needed supports were in place, the general education teachers' perceptions shifted from

negative to strategizing to meet the students' individual needs in the classroom setting.

Support in the General Education Classroom

The need for teacher and classroom supports in the general education inclusion

setting is important for the success of students with disabilities. Specifically, students

with emotional-behavioral disabilities prove to be a challenge in school, but with positive

supports in place and used with fidelity, students' educational experiences have the

chance to improve significantly (Kern, 2015). Kauffman and Badger (2013) suggest that

special educators should use simple, clear words to describe the characteristics of the

students' disability when working with students. This method will help illustrate the

benefits of collaboration between teachers and team members of the students. Reinke et

al. (2014) suggest the use of coaching and behavioral support planning when working

with students with disruptive classroom behaviors. The research study focused on the

implementation of universal practices to support students with disruptive behaviors and

the teachers that provide instruction. Reinke et al. (2014) implemented a coaching system

for the teachers that allowed for behavioral support plans to be developed based on

individual student needs. By focusing on supporting and improving the perceptions of

students, the effective instruction would help to improve the students' strengths and benefits rather than focusing on their less desired behaviors (Kauffman & Badger, 2013).

While it is important for general education teachers to have support from special education teachers when working with students who have emotional-behavioral disabilities, it is also important to define the administrative support needed. Cancio, Albrecht, and Johns (2013) conducted a survey with current general education teachers that focused on the definition and importance of administrative support for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their classrooms. The researcher's results concluded a correlation between how the participants viewed administrative support and the opportunities for growth and inclusion (Cancio, Albrecht, & Johns, 2013). Naraian, Ferguson, and Thomas (2012) identified the importance of the general education teachers' attitudes towards inclusion of students with disabilities. Their study focused on providing professional development to teachers on beneficial supports in the classroom for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

Summary and Conclusions

Many factors play a role in providing education to students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Current research provides evidence regarding the need to further investigate general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. To advance the research on the topic of inclusion of students with an emotional-behavioral disability, a thorough investigation of the general education teachers' perceptions of inclusion of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities must be conducted and analyzed due to the shift to the inclusion of all students in the general

education classroom. In Chapter 3 a description is provided of the research methodology

as well as the rationale for the research study. In Chapter 3 a detailed discussion is

provided of the role of the researcher, participant selection, and a data collection and

analysis plan.

.

Chapter 3: Research Method

The purpose of this qualitative, case study was to develop an understanding of general education teachers' perceptions towards the inclusion of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Chapter 3 consists of information on the research design and methodology that was used to develop an understanding of general education teachers' perceptions towards the inclusion of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The methodology was a qualitative case study using semistructured individual interviews to identify general education teachers' perceptions. In addition to identifying the methodology, I describe the data collection and analysis plan used in the study. I outline trustworthiness and ethical considerations in relation to the study and participants.

Research Design and Rationale

The nature of this study was a qualitative case study. Due to the investigation of general education teachers' perceptions, a quantitative study would not be appropriate. In the research questions, I explored underlying reasons for general education teachers' perceptions rather than generating numerical data as in a quantitative study. Scholars use case studies to explain the story of individuals and to help provide insight into an issue (Baxter & Jack, 2008; Creswell, 2012). The focus of this study was on gaining a deeper understanding of the general education teachers' perceptions of inclusion of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. The following research questions guided the study.

1. How do general education teachers define an emotional-behavioral disability?

2. What are general education teachers' perceptions of students who have been identified with emotional and behavioral disabilities in their cotaught inclusion setting?

3. What training and supports have school districts provided to general education teachers working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their cotaught inclusion setting?

4. How do general education teachers describe their classroom interactions with students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in their cotaught inclusion setting?

To answer the research questions, the case study approach allowed me to focus on insights from general education teachers in Grades 4 through 8. The study was conducted in the participants' natural setting, allowing for participants to be more comfortable and more likely to discuss their feelings and opinions. The qualitative, case study approach allowed me to obtain rich and thick data from the participants.

Role of the Researcher

The qualitative researcher focuses on becoming a part of the research process during the individual interviews as well as the analyses of the collected data. I participated by conducting the interviews. I asked the participants the interview questions, took notes on their responses, and used an audio recorder to record the interview. I then transcribed the interviews and analyzed the collected data to identify codes and themes that were presented through the participant responses. I made every attempt to remain objective during the data collection process to help ensure accurate

data transcription and analysis. I remained open-minded and reflective regarding the participants' responses. I refrained from reactions to the responses of participants through verbal comment and/or body gestures for the purpose of eliminating my personal bias.

My employer was in the participating school district for the study. I received written permission to conduct research on general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities from the school board. As a special education teacher in the district, I did not hold a supervisory role nor power over the participants. My personal bias relates to all students with disabilities being allowed an inclusive opportunity to the greatest extent their disability allows. My personal experiences working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities play a role in my bias. One way to ensure my bias did not have a role in the research was to provide a standard introduction prior to each interview, stating that it was my job to listen, effectively transcribe the information, and refrain from injecting any bias or personal attitudes.

Methodology

Participant Selection

To answer the research questions, I focused on insights from 15 general education teachers in Grades 4 through 8 involved in the inclusion setting. The district had 40 general education teachers in the inclusion setting across Grades 4 through 8. To obtain the participants who met the criteria needed to participant, I contacted the building administrators and requested a list of teachers who were general education and in the inclusion setting for the school year. Purposeful sampling selection was used to select the

participants of the study. Purposeful sampling selection was appropriate to focus on the characteristics of general education teachers in the inclusion setting. I invited participants who were general education teachers in the inclusion setting to participate in the study.

Instrumentation

I collected qualitative data for the study through the use of semistructured, face-to-face, individual interviews with participating teachers. I held two interviews with each participant, one interview targeted at gathering initial information regarding the research questions and a second interview to add additional information a participant wanted to add. All potential participants were invited, but were not required to participate in each part of the data collection process. Each potential participant received an electronic invitation that was collected individually. When writing the questions for each portion of the study, both the initial invitation and the individual interview questions served a different purpose. The initial invitation contained open-ended questions to help gather basic information on the potential participants and to gain consent for participation (Appendix A). The initial invitation letter also included an explanation of the purpose of the study and the participant's role in the study. I used the individual, semistructured interview questions to focus on the research questions and to help gain insight into the general education teachers' perceptions and attitudes. I created the interview questions. The questions reflected the issues that were present in the literature about general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

I was responsible for gathering the information from the initial invitation, consent to participate, and personal interviews. Creswell (2012) stated that to validate findings,

the researcher may use member checking and present findings that may contradict the themes. Once the interviews were completed, coded, and analyzed, I provided a rich, thick description of the findings. I used member checking with the participants to determine the accuracy of the transcription. To support validity, I used saturation of the participants due to consistency across the data.

Procedures for Recruitment, Participation, and Data Collection

At the beginning of the study, I contacted building administrators of Grades 4 through 8 in the selected school district and asked for a list of general education teachers who were in the cotaught inclusion setting for the school year. Once I received the lists of teachers, I contacted possible participants. To contact participants, an invitation to participate and give consent letter was sent electronically to all teachers who qualified based on the criteria. The invitation had a place to mark if potential participants wished to participate or if they do not wish to participate, allowing for the collection of all invitations. I informed participants via e-mail that their invitations would be gathered individually and confidentially during the school day. When collecting the invitations, I asked if the teacher had any questions about the purpose of the study, as well as the best means of contact to establish data collection. All teachers who met the criteria were invited, but not required, to participate.

Once I collected all of the invitations, I sorted the responses by the replies of the wish to participate or decline to participate. I chose the first 15 responses in no particular order, allowing for an equal opportunity for all willing teachers to participate. Once the 15 teachers were selected, I contacted each participant individually based on his or her

best means of communication. I informed the participate of his or her selection to be a part of the study and confirmed that he or she wanted to participate. From the selected participants, general education teachers experience ranged from 2 years to 29 years experience. The teachers' time in the county ranged from 1 year to 15 years, and in their teaching experience, only one teacher had ever taught in a special education position. Once confirmed, each participant received an electronic copy as well as a paper copy of the participants' rights, the purpose of the study, potential risks, and benefits of participation in the study.

To collect data, I scheduled semistructured, individual interviews with each participant. I held two interviews with each participant in the participant's classroom or a familiar place to the participant. In the initial interview, I focused on a set of interview questions targeted at the research questions for the study (Appendix C). This interview lasted approximately 1 hour. During this interview, I provided the participant a written informed consent form. I obtained permission to audio record the interview for further review during data analysis. I informed the participant of security measures in place, such as a password-protected file, in order to keep the interview secure. When the interview was complete, I transcribed the voice file. The second interview with the participants consisted of a review of the initial data as a member check and to ask the participants if they had any additional information they would like to add or share that may benefit the study. The interview followed a guide of checking for accuracy and allowing for additional information to be provided, but did not have a structured set of interview

questions. The interview was voice recorded and transcribed for accuracy. Each transcript was then coded and summarized for emerging themes.

At the conclusion of the data collection, each participant received a debriefing form that included the title of the study, my contact information, and a description of the purpose of the study. I also offered to provide them with the study results at the conclusion of the research after publication. The participants received a handwritten thank you note for participation in the study.

Data Analysis Plan

Once interview data collection was complete, I transcribed the audio recordings taken during each interview. With each interview being audio recorded, I transcribed each interview within 1 day of its occurrence. After the initial transcription, I reviewed each interview over multiple days and playbacks of the recording to check for errors and accuracy. The transcriptions noted any pauses or interruptions. I used member checking with the participants to ensure the accuracy of the transcript. Once all participant interviews were conducted, I analyzed the data, coded the text, and identified key themes to answer the research questions.

To analyze the data collected for themes, I used the QSR NVivo software. I managed the coding of the data through the QSR NVivo program and backed up my findings with evidence found in the transcripts (USR International Pty Ltd., n.d,). By using the QSR NVivo program, I was able to group themes and findings in relation to the research questions as well as use the collected interview data to answer the research questions. In the case of a discrepant cases, I categorized them as a separate theme as

discrepant data. Once the themes were determined, I found patterns and connections among the themes to support or inform the research questions.

Trustworthiness

Qualitative research is criticized for being subjective, anecdotal, and subject to the researcher's bias towards the content (Cope, 2014). To ensure credibility and trustworthiness in the study, I focused on the creditability, dependability, confirmability, and transferability of the results (Cope, 2014). Credibility includes the interpretation of the data by the researcher, representation of the data, and the accurate representation of those data by the researcher (Cope, 2014). To support the credibility of the study, I presented my engagement in the data collection and analysis, methods of interviewing participants and my role as the interviewer, and presented the audit trail of my data analysis. Dependability focuses on consistency of data over similar settings (Cope, 2014). Data collection in the study was deemed dependable because the interview questions were consistent with each participant, regardless of grade level.

Confirmability includes the presentation of the data in relation to the participants' responses rather than the researcher's bias (Cope, 2014). The use of QSR NVivo removes the researcher's bias from the data analysis. QSR NVivo groups the data collected into themes in relation to the research questions and provides direct quotes from the collected data. Transferability in qualitative research is often a challenge to apply the findings to other settings or groups (Cope, 2014). I focused on the description of the research context and assumptions that were central to the research. The reader may discover the findings could be generalized to his or her own experiences.

Ethical Procedures

Protection and appropriate treatment of all participants occurred when conducting

the study. Each participant was informed about the purpose of the study, understood the

benefits that may result in his or her participation, and was provided a chance to make

independent responses without negative consequences or reactions. I used informed

consent procedures to protect the participants. I informed the participants of the voice

recording of their interviews and obtained consent to record the interactions. The

participants' identities were kept confidential to protect their participation. No incentives

for participation were offered or provided to those who volunteered for the study.

Data collection methods included semistructured individual interviews with

participants. Each interview was voice recorded using a digital voice recorder. When the

interviews were completed, the interviews were transcribed and reviewed for common

themes. To protect the participants and to keep the data confidential, each participant was

assigned a number that allowed me to identify each participant by his or her number

rather than his or her name. Each saved transcript and voice recording in electronic

format required password protection. As the researcher, I was the only person who had

access to the data during the study.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to provide other researchers with sufficient

information to replicate the study. In Chapter 3, I outlined the methodological steps I took

when conducting the study, discussed the participants necessary to complete the research,

and my role throughout the data collection process. The data collection and analysis

procedures were presented along with a plan for determining themes and patterns.

I addressed the ethical issues inherent in conducting research involving human subjects. The role of the researcher as an observer was addressed by outlining the steps that were taken to inform participants the nature of the research. I also established my part in the process. In Chapter 4, I will discuss the results of the study and the process to complete the study. In addition to the results, the chapter will include discussions and recommendations as they relate to the study's design and framework.

Chapter 4: Results and Conclusions

This chapter contains an analysis of data with respect to the research questions presented in Chapter 1 to gain a deeper understanding of general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Emerging themes from the interviews were coded and analyzed. Patterns were then determined to answer each research question. All first interviews were audio-recorded to ensure accurate transcription of responses. Member checking was used for accuracy.

Setting

Research was conducted in a setting that was natural to each participant. The settings varied from the participant's classroom, the participant's personal residence, or a study room in a local library. The participants of the study were public school teachers who were employed in a suburban school district for the 2016-17 school year, the county where the study was conducted. The participants included 14 females and one male. Participants' teaching experiences ranged from second year through 30 years. Participants' experience in the inclusion setting ranged from being a first-year inclusion teacher to having a special education background.

Data Collection

A brief introduction to the study was mentioned to building principals and special education department chairs of school buildings containing Grades 4 though 8. The introduction also served as a means to collect contact information for general education teachers in each building who met the participant criteria. Once the list of general education teachers was received from administration, a more detailed invitation to

participate was sent electronically to 54 general education teachers. I informed the possible participants that their invitation would be collected or they could send a signed copy back electronically. In addition to the initial invitation, a survey link was sent to all 54 general education teachers to identify the best means of contact, if they were willing to participate in the research. All teachers who met the criteria were invited, but not required, to participate.

From the initial contact, 17 teachers completed the survey and were willing to participate. There were three teachers who did not complete the survey, but responded via e-mail declining participation. From the initial 17 teachers willing to participate, 15 teachers were selected at random to ensure an equal opportunity to participate. The 15 selected teachers were contacted based on their identified best means of communication to inform them of their selection to participate in the study and to set up a date, time, and location to conduct the first interview with me. At this time, I provided an electronic copy as well as a paper copy of the participants' rights, purpose of the study, potential risks, and benefits of participation in the study. I also was available to answer any additional questions the participants may have prior to the interview process about the study.

For the data collection, I interviewed 15 of the 17 participants individually with in a location selected by the participant. I voice recorded and took hand-written notes during the first individual interviews. The interview was then transcribed, and a copy was sent to the participant electronically. Each semistructured interview followed a set of interview questions written to target the research questions (Appendix C). As stated in Chapter 3, the interviews were scheduled to last approximately 1 hour. When conducting the

interviews, there was a range from 30 minutes to an hour and 20 minutes for the amount

of time the first interviews took place. The time was dependent on the detail and

experience the participant had with the topic of the study. At the completion of the first

interview, the audio-recorded file was transcribed within 1 day. I reviewed and made

edits to the transcription over the following week prior to conducting the second

interview with the participant. Once the transcription was completed, an electronic copy

was sent to the participant to review for accuracy. A second interview was conducted

with each participant approximately 2 weeks after the first interview. Based on the

participants' preference and schedule, the second interview took place via face-to-face or

by phone. Some participants requested a second interview via phone due to summer

scheduling conflicts. During the second interview, I reviewed the initial data with the

participant as a means to member check, and I also asked the participants if there was any

additional information they would like to add that may benefit the study. The second

interview was used as a guide to check for accuracy and additional information, but a

formal set of interview questions were not used.

Data Analysis

To begin data analysis, I first summarized the responses to the research questions.

The raw interview data were then analyzed manually to look for common threads and

patterns throughout the interviews. Coding of responses was then completed using the

QSR NVivo coding software. During my initial review of the participants' responses, I

identified common threads found within the 15 responses for each research question

addressed. I then placed these threads into themes and categories. Within the QSR NVivo

coding software, I input each transcribed interview, identified key areas in the transcription that were relevant to the research questions, and entered them as nodes in the software. Coding of the interviews were broken into three overarching themes: (a) description of emotional-behavioral disabilities, (b) experience and interactions with emotional-behavioral disabilities, and (c) trainings and/or supports targeting emotional-behavioral disabilities provided to general education teachers.

The coded category of description of emotional-behavioral disabilities pertained to how the participants responded when asked to describe an emotional-behavioral disability. This category was not divided into smaller subcategories, but I did identify comment threads throughout the participants' responses. Participant responses had common threads such as inappropriate responses, extreme emotions, and external behaviors as the first thoughts that come to mind when they heard the phrase emotional-behavioral disability.

In the second coded category, I targeted the participants' individual experiences and interactions with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their classrooms. This category was divided into three subcategories: (a) Level 1 or beginning, (b) Level 2 or developing, and (c) Level 3 or experienced. Participants who stated that they had not had any students identified in their classrooms as having emotional-behavioral disabilities were coded in the Level 1 subcategory. Level 2 participants were those who described some experience with students identified with an emotional-behavioral disability, but were not specific on how to implement strategies for student success. Level 3 participants were coded as such when experiences were described, when most described experiences with either an

external or internal display of behaviors, and when strategies were discussed on how they worked with the student to be successful in the general education setting.

In the final category of coding, I focused on the trainings and/or supports focused on working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities general education teachers have received from the current school district. This category was divided into two subcategories: (a) provided trainings and/or supports and (b) needed trainings and/or supports. Any trainings and/or supports participants stated were coded as being provided while mention of what was needed to better serve students with emotional-behavior disabilities in their class were placed in the needed category. In Interview Question 5, I focused on administrative and/or school leader support. Participants' responses to administrative support was coded within this final category.

Results

Research Question 1

This research question was addressed through responses to Interview Questions 1 and 2. Based on the responses found in Table 1, the participants appeared to define emotional-behavioral disabilities as students having inappropriate responses to given directives, having extreme emotions, acting impulsively or irrationally, and having difficulty calming down. Participants focused their responses on a presentation of externalized behaviors in the classroom. One participant stated that emotional-behavioral disabilities are often "associated with a bad or poor behavior, or should I at times uncontrollable behaviors." Some participants defined emotional-behavioral disabilities as being either external or internal and some behaviors may display themselves inward. A

participant stated that students with emotional-behavioral disabilities have "behaviors that are more overt and attention seeking. And then there are other students who you may not even know because it's internalized." Through analysis of the interview data, a common trend found for this question was defining emotional-behavioral disabilities as disruptive and external displays of behaviors.

Table 1

Participant Interview Response Summary to Interview Question 1 and Question 2

Participant	Question 1: What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the phrase "emotional-behavioral disabilities"?	Question 2: What do you think are some key behaviors associated with emotional-behavioral disabilities?
1	Behavioral struggle with students associated with a bad or poor behavior uncontrollable behaviors	Irrationality Impulse or impulsivity Acting out May be both verbally and physically.
2	We have a negative connotation towards it [emotional-behavioral disabilities]. Act out or are aggressive Extremely shy Have different triggers	Lack of ability to cope in different situations with their peers Lack appropriate behaviors with their peers Lack appropriate responses Tend to act out May shut down.
3	The same label but may have very different behaviors Very different triggers	Outbursts related to frustration Yelling or physical behaviors May be physical with objects Physical with other people
4	Struggles to cope with daily activities	Impulsive behaviors Acting out Inappropriate responses and frustration. May say something to draw away from how they are Really feeling or what's really going on to distract others and to avoid
5	Need more individualized teaching. behavior may be Stimming from and emotional problem or the Emotions stemming from a behavioral problem.	Unfair Anger Sadness Alienate themselves Do things that can be harmful to them
6	Several issues with social behavior, getting along with others Difficult behaviors with adults Interactions with peers (i.e. they may interact better with a female versus a male or they may interact better with adults than they do other children)	Withdrawn Not speak, talk, or interact with children or adults May scream, yell, holler, and throw tantrums.
7	Bi-polar Can't visually see it when it comes to special needs Hard to identify until there is a trigger.	Meltdowns Yelling Or opposite spectrum Shutting down Don't speak Tense up Not responsive
8	Deficits in social emotional growth Possibly socially inadequate Struggles with peers and adults frustrations with communication	Defiance Physically acting out Difficulty following procedures Stuck on fairness or the concept of things being fair in their life.

(table continues)

Participant	Question 1: What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the phrase "emotional-behavioral disabilities"?	Question 2: What do you think are some key behaviors associated with emotional-behavioral disabilities?
9	Need extra support in the classroom Possibly have issues from home life to issues that are out of their control that deal with mental health Wide spectrum that students could be on or be included in.	Internalize a lot of their problems, that you really don't see. Disengaged in school work or daydream more More outward show of their behavior because they don't know how to deal with what is going on inside them. Difficulty conveying their emotions or communicate feelings. Tend to "lash out" or become more unexpected
10	Spectrum Behaviors are more overt and attention seeking Internalized Exhibit behaviors in very different ways depending on How they process, what's going on, and the extent of their disability.	Being withdrawn Cries very frequently Outbursts in the classroom Gets angry very easily Who does things to get attention
11	Difficulties accepting challenges Difficulty responding in appropriate ways. Have an issue with differentiating between a big problem or a little problem Hard time calming down Need particular coping strategies and coping mechanisms Additional teachers that can help support student behaviors .	Physical aggression either towards themselves or others, both peers and adults Clenching their fists but causing physical harm to the palms of their hands Yelling Screaming Running leaving the room kicking Crying
12	Can't control their emotions. Difficulty dealing with disappointment Extreme emotions.	Extreme anger, happiness, sadness. extremes of the emotional spectrum.
13	Emotional Could be triggered by outside circumstances or internally Deals with behaviors on how interact with other or themselves Ways react and interact with others.	Can lash out at classmates, themselves, or teachers. Rip up papers, Try to harm themselves or others. A lot of outward behaviors Could be more internal too where they climb under their desk or hide to get away from everything and block everything out for a little bit.
14	Not negative Tells me that this is someone's child and hopefully reach them to overcome or work around it so they can still learn Emotions are not always negative. there are strategies as a teacher Try to transform yourself [as a teacher] so you aren't focused on the emotion, but focused on the child's learning.	I don't look at what started it Have seen behaviors when they can't have their way Behaviors related to not wanting to do academic work If their day starts off bad then it sets their emotions off.
15	Doesn't respond to me as the teacher in the way I am accustomed to students responding to me in a general education setting Doesn't handle their behaviors in the same way or direction in the same way	Responses that are not words, Respond in noises, inappropriate body language Dialogue between myself and the student. Extreme anger

52

Further analysis of the most frequently used words from transcribed interviews (Table 2) provides insight into the participants' responses when asked how they describe emotional-behavioral disabilities. Participants also identified some awareness of emotional-behavioral disabilities as being a spectrum including possible external and internal displays of behaviors. Words that appeared such as work, cope, and respond identify areas which participants described when they have experienced emotional-behavioral disabilities interfering with student learning. Words appearing as emotions, physical, acting, struggle, and anger provided a description that participants associate with emotional-behavioral disabilities. There was a consensus among participants through Interview Questions 1 and 2 and the most frequently used words that general education teachers defined emotional-behavioral disabilities as being disruptive, having difficulty calming down when upset, being irrational and impulsive, and being both external and internal behaviors.

Table 2

Text Analysis Summary of Most Frequently Used Words

Word	Count
emotions	15
physical	11
problem	10
acting	9
social	9
work	9
cope	9
others	8
attention	6
draw	6
respond	6
struggles	6
internalize	6
anger	5
spectrum	5
extreme	5
inappropriate	4
redirection	4
situations	4
yelling	4
feeling	4
fists	4
frustration	4
outward	4

Research Question 2

This question was addressed through responses of interview question 3 found in table 3. Through data analysis, several participants perceive students identified with an emotional-behavioral disability as a student who is disruptive in the classroom and will cause challenges in the general education setting. Based on the responses, most participants expressed student interactions as an area where the emotional-behavioral disability has shown challenges in the inclusion classroom. One participant described their perception as "a student being withdrawn. A student who cries very frequently, who has outbursts in the classroom. A student who gets angry very easily, who does things to get attention however that may manifest itself." Another participant focused on student reactions in the class such as "Students who have difficulties accepting challenges and responding to them in appropriate ways. Students who either have an issue with differentiated between a big problem or a little problem and also their responses to problems." Several participants perceived students with emotional-behavioral disabilities as displaying more outward, or visible, signs of behaviors atypical of their general education peers.

Table 3

Participant Interview Response Summary to Interview Question 3

Participant	Question 3: Without looking through assessment data, how would you know if a student has an emotional-behavioral disability? What would this look like in your classroom?
1	Experience a series or pattern of acting out that's uncontrollably or uncontrollable Without verbalizing, just seeing those behaviors Learn the mitigating factors or you learn the patterns Learn things that maybe are the antecedents to those behaviors
2	In the beginning, didn't know who necessarily was and think that's a positive thing learn the kid before you put a label on them Surprised some are labelled as because just their personalities they don't necessarily manifest its just certain situations that bring out behavior issues. I don't think you can really look at a child and naturally assume. Can't physically see it because few kids you wouldn't necessarily know One may get defensive against authority and he might start kicking a chair Might start mumbling and arguing with the teacher Others may put their head down and start crying as a coping strategy.
3	Unpredictable Unexplainable If you haven't built a relationship with them it may be something that seems totally off The student that maybe never really fully socializes with you in the first place May just secluded themselves Anything that can't be explained or doesn't really follow the normal pattern of their behavior and that is not just a one time thing. If that kind of behavior repeats itself then that might be a signal or something that should draw your attention to it.
4	Direct observation and one-to-one contact comparing that child to the norm that is surrounding him to his or her age group impulsive behaviors Acting out Expressions coming from the student Possibly tics or behavioral differences Their language as well. What they say and how they interact with their peers.
5	Very angry look on face Very negative opinion about school. And rightly so Looked back on data and it had been a horrible year the year before See avoidance and anger. On the other side of the spectrum you would see hesitation, fear.
6	Don't interact with their peers, loners Don't like to ask questions or for attention to be brought to them Or they are always acting out verbally or physically Distracting other people and other things to take attention off of them since they don't know how to do something and They are drawing attention away from it
7	Social awkwardness Behavior in groups and responsive to redirection Responsiveness to the redirection, just how they would react to being given a direction
8	Immediately reacts inappropriately to redirection Struggles working in peer groups with acceptance in social situations and in small group learning Large groups sometimes are a struggle Coping skills or problem solving skills are inadequate and they feel ganged up on Also the total opposite which are the very quiet kids who can slip under the radar Just trying not to be seen

(table continues)

Participant	Question 3: Without looking through assessment data, how would you know if a student has an emotional-behavioral disability? What would this look like in your classroom?
9	Seem to take more of an interest in their supplies or in their desk May put their head down on the table Anything can utilize as an escape rather than focus on what is going on Notice if that child was doing really well and then a sudden decline in how they are performing. If they were once very social with their friends and suddenly they become more distance at lunch, on the playground, or activity when they don't seem to want to socialize as much Suddenly asks to speak to the guidance counselor If they are drawing more pictures of their family or something more violent
10	Social cues of how their communicating or working with other students or lack there of. A student who is maybe refusing to do something A student who has a lot of behaviors like needing to fidget, or needing to have some type of sensory going on and needing to shout out things. A student who is maybe argumentative, also confrontational and not wanting to do what the teacher asks them to do. Defiant.
11	Refusal and defiance Students who don't view the adult as having any kind of authority Student who from day one refused to do any type of work. "After speaking with parents, we were able to put that student on a behavior plan who had not previously been on a behavior plan." Student was never physical but the refusal and denial A lot of lying. That student was stealing both at home and at school.
12	"Honestly, I wouldn't be able to say. I've never had a student labeled as EBD within my classroom in the two years I've taught." Had student who did well in math. Looking at him on paper it was looking that he was a smart student who was talented in math, but it was just his behavior in class that hindered success
13	Easier to identify the outward behaviors, especially inability to work with others or cope when someone is upset Not knowing coping strategies that typical students have to find a way to work through a problem "I've seen where students will rip up paper out of frustration or take other students' belongings and try to destroy them when they reach that point of being unable to work through the problem on their own."
14	A lot of the responses are off topic. Pictures that they draw. Off topic or out of character. Read pictures that as they are trying to tell a story need to look into that further or they are trying to tell about them and something that may be going on.
15	Student's response to me Maybe the student doesn't follow those directions within a certain amount of time Give redirect and they may argue, say they didn't want to do that, or maybe display anger or ignore the directions.

Analysis of the ten most common words participants associate with students who have been identified with emotional-behavior disabilities provides a picture of participants' responses (table 4). This table focuses on the trend found through the participants' responses. The higher on the list the word is presented, the more frequent the word appeared when asked about their perceptions of students who have emotional-behavioral disabilities. When reviewing the most common words results of teacher

perceptions, physical, problem, and acting [out] appear to occur more often than other perceptions. The results of the word frequency on teacher perceptions confirms that many participants' perceptions appear to focus on the outward and more difficult behaviors found in some students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

Table 4

Top Ten Most Common Teachers' Perceptions of Students with EBD

Word
physical
acting [out]
problem
spectrum
extreme
others
attention
yelling
frustration
inappropriate

Research Question 3

This question was addressed through responses of interview questions 4 and 5 (Table 5). Through data analysis, most participants expressed a lack of provided trainings specifically for emotional-behavioral disabilities at the county level. Participants also stated a need for on-going training for general education teachers targeting the needs of emotional-behavioral students and mental health in the classroom. In the first interview, one participant stated, "I would like have some more training as well as any other professional development opportunities to learn more about other options obviously since

you know seclusion or restraint is the last resort. So other ways to deescalate behaviors."

Another interview participant stated, "I think providing some training for teachers, and

that may be on a yearly basis, for teachers who have specific students in that area may be

helpful as well so if a teacher has never had a student with that disability they would have

some research-based strategies on how to best support that student." Some trainings that

were mentioned that were provided to some participants consisted of a CPI training,

which was explained as a non-violent crisis intervention program targeting deescalation

strategies and physical restraint as a last resort when a student is a danger to self or

others.

Table 5

Participant Interview Response Summary to Interview Question 4 and Question 5

Participant	Question 4: Thinking to your time in your current school district, what supports or trainings have you attended or been offered to work with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 5: How do you think your administration and school leaders could support you when you have a student in your classroom with an identified emotional-behavioral disability?
1	I don't know if I can recall any trainings. Resources- interaction with my special education co-teacher Always getting feedback or always getting advice or help on how to deal with difficult situations and difficult students. I would even say that may be the best training You are talking with people who who deal with these situations on a daily basis.	One of the best things they can do is to just be there and to have someone there and to offer that student to be removed from the situation temporarily, just until they are able to refocus, or gain their sense rationality back. With a student with EBD, if they act out, I don't think it's punishment should be permanent. Failure isn't fatal. Should be opportunities to restart, refresh, reset a new both with the student and with the teacher. So, as an administrator or school support, just allowing that reset to happen is one of the best things or one of the best helps I think we can get from administration.
2	Training, none but I do have my special education teacher who would come if in there was an issue we would talk about how to handle a situation. Worked with the behavior specialist to collect data and to implement BIPs with several of the students.	My administration was great. I had a student who would get very frustrated or just defiant with teachers so if there was an issue he could have a break in the front office which helped so that way he was away from his peers When he was able to come back he was able to rejoin the classroom. Also positive incentives. If they needed an errand run, and he was having a good day he could help out.
3	"The only thing that I can really think of is training on individual BIPs of students in my classroom. Other than that there hasn't been any widely offered kind of as a precursor to having a student with EBD" More once a student is in your classroom or once the BIP is developed then you meet with your behavior specialist and maybe your special education person to go over their BIP. All the students I worked with already had BIPs that were developed I didn't have any part in the development but other than that nothing really.	They are very understanding when we have issues with our kids who are labeled as EBD Very supportive as far as helping with parent contacts or helping with restraint if needed or just interacting with students especially when they are having a meltdown or an outburst. I would like personally because I am a general education teacher in a co-taught setting I would like more training specifically for these children with emotional behavioral disabilities I would be interested in getting the seclusion and restraint training myself. "A lot of times even if we do call up to the office for an administrator or for someone else who is trained, a student's behavior can quickly escalate before they are available to get to you." Any other professional development opportunities to learn more about other options. Other ways to deescalate behaviors
4	Behavior management classes after I was hired. Also CPI training. Just working with my co-teacher, she has taught me more than anything. Has strategies that I am not even aware of, to help diminish behaviors whereas I may do something that may trigger behaviors. Co-teacher gives me cues and strategies and how not to cue off task behaviors or help to tap into a child's personal issues.	Needs to be a calming room where they can just deescalate their own personal mindset to regain control of themselves. Don't think it needs to be looked at or frowned upon, you have to accommodate that child to make their life a little more stable.

Participant	Question 4: Thinking to your time in your current school district, what supports or trainings have you attended or been offered to work with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 5: How do you think your administration and school leaders could support you when you have a student in your classroom with an identified emotional-behavioral disability?
5	In-service training that is given. There has never been an individualized training to teachers that have children with disabilities. I was very unprepared for my first experience with an emotionally disturbed student because I had dealt with children who had problems but never to this severity Had a lot of of physical anger and aggression. A lot of my training was myself. Reading on the internet, seeing what I could do and I have taught for 25 years, so I would look at what worked in the past for children who had problems. But its not a one glove fits all and that's the problem. I think there should probably be training for in-service for difficult children.	It needs to start at the top and filter down. Inside classroom, we clearly define what's going to happen and the consequences and we follow them. I think this past year that things tried to get stricter as the year went one, and it doesn't always work that way. "I think what happened with some kids for fighting didn't happen for other kids for fighting and I think that inconsistency was talked about" I think that's a problem and that it needs to be consistent. But, I think the administration was very good about listening to you and trying to help and often outside the box.
6	As far as trainings, none. "I do know there was a behavior training but for me to attend it was afterschool and I was unable to attend due to my family." I had support from our behavior resource person from the county. Worked with her a lot on setting up plans and how to work with the students.	Circumstances this past year, they needed to be a little more supportive. Not sure if they understood the behaviors that were taking place. They weren't sure how to handle them so we had to go to outside sources beside administration Why we worked so close with our behavior specialist. I think administration need to become more aware of what the disorders or behaviors are with these students.
7	No professional development, or nothing in regards to instruction But I've been given has been people support. Team support, behavior specialist, inclusion co-teacher, family members, and administration. There were no books or resources and no formal trainings. I did receive CPI training. I guess that was probably the most training as far as professional development.	"I have experienced in the past, there would be one student who was a large behavior issue and needed support and I felt like they supported us with a team." I feel like not just that one student, but a multitude of students deserve that additional attention. Just that one student was given so much support, but it was needed for the other students who were maybe not as severe but needed behavior support. Just having more of a team plan. I think the other students its was more of a plan in regards to their IEP and it's just the co-teacher and the teacher. "It wasn't administration or other teachers getting involved. It was just a two team approach and I felt they needed the additional support beyond the two-person team."
8	I went to our behavior specialists training on behavior which focused on identifying triggers, discussing different cases. Specific students I had specific trainings with our behavior specialist, my co-teacher, and I. I think the behavior specialist coming. The behavior specialist would come in and observe, help us analyze the data. The CPI team supported us. My co-teacher was also super supportive.	Needs to be a plan of support. There is with CPI, but it needs to be better defined. I would like to see sitting down with administration and knowing what that child is going through. Or to help understand that child during the time you are around that student and having everyone trained to do the same thing. If we are giving a redirection or working on a skill, we are all doing it the same way.

(table continues)

Participant	Question 4: Thinking to your time in your current school district, what supports or trainings have you attended or been offered to work with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 5: How do you think your administration and school leaders could support you when you have a student in your classroom with an identified emotional-behavioral disability?
9	Support of my co-teacher If there is every anything I am uncertain about or if I don't know how to perceive there has been information shared. Anything to help me as a general education teacher in my classroom. From the district, I really haven't received much. CPI training, not so much for the restraint but more for the deescalation tactics	They have been pretty good with students who are identified with EBD. If there is ever anything that goes on in the classroom that requires them to step in, if their schedule allows it or that time allows it, they come in and observe what is going on They look at the interaction the student has with his or her teachers as well as his or her peers. Done a good job if they need to just take a walk with that student to allow them to go outside to see someone different or just a different scenery they've done that. If I was wishing for something else, if a child is experiencing those behaviors more frequently, that they would step in a lot more than just at their own pace. I do feel though that if we have made it known to the administration that we need them to keep an eye out for a student that they have made that effort to do so. "And efforts to wish administration would've known they've been classified as EBD so they could come in and do any type of counseling or just to talk with that student to kind of put a face to a body to a name."
10	I know this past school year had a training that was led by teachers about students with a variety of disabilities. "There was some role playing, scenarios, a lot of times for discussion that was very helpful to think through how to best serve students with those disorders." I can't recall another training that has been offered specifically in that area, but a lot of support staff at the district level that has been available to us. Our behavior specialist has come in to observe students and provide feedback and suggestions. Feel there are several people available that have been able to give some support on a case by case basis.	"I think that administrators being accessible to teachers who have students with emotional-behavior disorders is very important." administrators for the most part have been accessible and when needed them they would come. "I think providing some training for teachers, and that may be on a yearly basis, for teachers who have specific students in that area may be helpful" They would have some research-based strategies on how to best support that student. Supporting a student as a team has also been helpful. "The teachers, administrators, parents, and other support staff as well can all be a part of helping that student so it's not just the teachers calling the administrators but more of a team approach to working with that student."

(table continues)

Participant	Question 4: Thinking to your time in your current school district, what supports or trainings have you attended or been offered to work with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 5: How do you think your administration and school leaders could support you when you have a student in your classroom with an identified emotional-behavioral disability?
11	Behavior academy training. CPI training has been offered. Those are the only two that I have been made aware of. I think having additional training would be helpful. First I go to my co-teacher. They have always been a great support when it comes to behaviors because they have that training background. I also have the special education training Helpful to collaborate with them on some specific strategies. I go to co-teachers first just because they know the students the best. I know the behavior specialist is available and accessible both to me, special education teachers, or any other teachers in our county.	Administration is supportive of teachers. They like to get the whole story from the teacher first prior to talking or dealing with the student But I do feel like our administration have open ears and open minds when it comes to especially students who have identified emotional behavioral disorders. My school we have a referral system with minor and major referrals. "I feel like administration in my experience has done a good job of thoroughly understanding the situation, what the student is going through, and making sure they are getting the whole picture." I do feel supported and backed up when meeting with parents and administration. Teaching for only six years has allowed me to adapt and learn different strategies even just working with different co-teachers I've had in the past. For students, the administration will give us the option of removing the student from the classroom so that I can continue teaching, which I think is important. I think that administration has a good grasp of the concept that teaching has to continue on and I can't stop for just that one student every time they have an emotional outburst or don't want to do something.
12	I have not been offered any training whatsoever. I think the only supports we really do have are special education teachers. So typically what they do if we have students that do require that support teacher, then those students are going to get placed within that same class period. I do feel like we could use more training and not bog down the special education teachers by always asking them to help out.	Being able to sit in on a class period whether the student is labeled as EBD or not, to see the student in action. Could help brainstorm a plan we could put in action for that specific student. Administration does a good job if we call them they are going to come down, but I think them being able to see it first hand would make a huge difference.
13	At the district level, they offered a behavior academy this year which walked through some of the ways to handle students and not become so frustrated At our school level, our principal is bringing guest speakers My principal suggested several articles and books to read to try different strategies. Oftentimes, principal will refer me to another person who may be going through similar issues in his or her classroom. There is a lot of support that is available within our district and school.	"I know especially this past school year, I had a lot of students that I had never experienced before, so I needed a lot of strategies and tools in my toolbox." Just talking was one of the biggest helps and support of figuring out how we can work through a situation together We sat down together as a team to discuss what strategies we can do. Several strategies were put in place that administration and other school leaders helped to suggest and we implemented into the classroom. I think they've been really big supports of trying different things.
14	The co-teaching model training I attended this year, Support was definitely through the special education department. I could always go to a special education teacher or even to the head of special education if needed and they did respond. "I was afforded the opportunity to look at some books to help with what I was dealing with a student to give me some strategies and some insight on working with them."	Once a student is identified with our administration, there is usually a conversation about what is happened, or what is going on. There were always strategies talked about and then they did also follow through. If they didn't know, then they said we would go find a person who would be able to help us. So it didn't stop at administration if we weren't able to reach a child through the suggested strategies.

(table continues)

Participant	Question 4: Thinking to your time in your current school district, what supports or trainings have you attended or been offered to work with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 5: How do you think your administration and school leaders could support you when you have a student in your classroom with an identified emotional-behavioral disability?
15	The only training I had was a conference focused on behavior. I have learned a lot from my co-teacher from really watching and observe her and how she responds to students in our classroom. Also, in some faculty meetings, we have had some special education teachers talk about triggers and different ways to respond to students.	Last year at the beginning of the year, from day one was not identified as EBD, but was obvious that there was something going on. When I could not handle him or my co-teacher could not handle him, we would call administration and they would come immediately. I think it would be a good thing to have an area for a kid to deescalate I felt that my administration was very supportive in that aspect. In the past when I was not inclusion, I had to call the administration to come in help with a student and they responded.

Many participants did state they were given more supports as the school level than what they would consider trainings. The most frequent support that was mentioned was having a special education co-teacher and access to the special education department at their school. One participant identified their co-teacher as a support because, "I have learned a lot from my co-teacher, who is wonderful. I truly have learned so much from really watching and observe her and how she responds to students in our classroom." Another participant stated their special education co-teacher was a great support because "Just working with my co-teacher, she has taught me more than anything. She has strategies that I am not even aware of, to help diminish behaviors whereas I may do something that may trigger behaviors. So she gives me cues and strategies and how not to cue off task behaviors or help to tap into a child's personal issues."

A second support found throughout the interviews was the county provided behavior specialists. The school district has behavior specialists that are assigned to various school to help support not only the special education department but the general education teachers on finding strategies to work with students' behaviors. One participant described how they have interacted with the behavior specialist through "sitting meetings

with our behavior specialist, she has come in to observe students and provide feedback and suggestions." Another participant described their interaction with the behavior specialist working with behavior intervention plans by stating "once the BIP is developed then you basically meet with your behavior specialist and maybe your special education person to go over their BIP and maybe help develop it." It was also noted that the behavior specialists have provided a behavior academy for teachers in the county this past school year. The behavior academy was offered after school hours and some participants made mention they were unable to attend due to the after-school commitment.

Interview Question 5 focused on how the participants felt supported by administration and what were some ways they believed administration and school leaders could better support them when they have a student with an emotional-behavioral disability. The results included more than one administrator due to participants working at different school buildings in the county. Overall, most participants felt supported by their building administration. One participant mentioned a teacher-led professional development focused on a variety of disabilities that allowed for discussion and strategies to work with students with disabilities. One participant stated, "Administration is supportive of teachers. They like to get the whole story from the teacher first prior to talking or dealing with the student. I do feel like our administration have open ears and open minds when it comes to especially students who have identified emotional behavioral disorders." Another participant recalled a situation where administration

needed to be involved and stated, "Often we sat down together as a team to discuss what strategies we can do."

Participants also identified some supports they would like to see from administration. One participant suggested "I think them being able to see it first hand would make a huge difference." This participant continued to state that sometimes their administration may not fully understand the situation and the student's disability. With observations of the student interaction, they may be able to help brainstorm a plan to work together as a team. Another participant stated that there needs to be consistency in how student behaviors are handled at the administration level. This participant stated that "this may alleviate some of the issues because they would then know what the consequence would be."

Research Question 4

This question was addressed through responses of interview questions 6 and 7 found in table 6. Through data analysis, I found that teachers found their experiences and their interactions with students identified as having an emotional-behavioral disability challenging and sometimes unpredictable. Responses to questions 6 and 7 revealed a correlation between participants' experience and descriptions of emotional-behavioral disabilities. The participants who had thorough experiences of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities had identified it as being a spectrum disorder.

Table 6

Participant Interview Response Summary to Interview Question 6 and Question 7

Participant	Question 6: What experience have you had with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 7: Some students' emotional-behavioral disabilities exhibit internalizing behaviors-identified as turning their emotions and behaviors inward. These students may appear sad, withdrawn, anxious, or shy. What do these behaviors look like in your classroom? Have you found these behaviors to interfere with your teaching?
1	Struggled at first sometimes to know how to handle that student's learning or understand their way of thinking. Over time and with more experience learn where and when to be careful. They need to have opportunities to have those moments where they have chances to step away and have that break. Student sometimes needs time and sometimes it's not even the student that needs time but that the teacher that needs to come back. "It might be me that needs to come back to a state of mind where I'm thinking clearly."	With time, I have learned that you have to learn that there are some times or some behaviors you just have to go with. Have to give students opportunities to be a child, or really to be an adolescent. At times there are behaviors that interfere with the student learning. It doesn't always mean everyone is the same. We aren't all going to fit in the same box Sometimes the best thing for that student is to go on and keep moving and when the opportunity presents itself maybe reassure the student.
2	Had in the classroom co-taught and team taught several students in different classes My role would be to make sure I follow their BIP within the classroom and make sure everyone else was aware of how to properly address situations.	Harder to pick up when someone is having an off day when its internalized Best way is to really develop a relationship with that student so that way you can pick up "I gave the student that time rather than working on academics she would either write it out or maybe draw a picture or go speak to the counselor because I don't think the academic component wasn't going to learn what I was teaching at that moment she wasn't taking anything in rather address the situation"
3	I had four students last year in our classroom that had emotional-behavioral disabilities. One student after he got comfortable with us he seemed very positive he worked hard but he would have melt downs when he would get frustrated with his work. He would shut down and start with just putting his head down or looking around not doing his work. Behaviors would then escalate to ripping papers up or throwing his materials off his desk. The further the behaviors got, the more aggressive his behaviors became, pushing over desks or pushing over chairs and he would also verbally cry out. It was difficult to come down from meltdowns. Another student on a good day he did everything he was supposed to do. Triggers were very random and mostly based on things that happened at home not really things that happened at school. He would have work refusal, standing up from seat, and pushing around his chair. He then would run out of the classroom down the hallways, out of the building	Several this past year made statements about not wanting to live or self-harm. One student who would pick at his skin and at the worst time he was biting his skin and ripping it off of his fingers to the point where his fingertips were raw. Some would Take a pencil, pen, or scissors to the legs and would go to the point where they would cut the skin. He was the only one who actually physically hurt himself while he was at school rather than just verbal self-harm statements. When you are talking one-on-one with these kids after they do have their outbursts, meltdowns. "Anytime we had an issue with one of these students, like I said I was in a co-taught classroom so one of us would remove the student from the situation or from the setting." I would have to take time out to remove them from the situation because not only was it affecting them but it was affecting everyone else in the classroom. If the situation was not handled at that moment, no one was going to get anything done.

(table continues)

Participant	Question 6: What experience have you had with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 7: Some students' emotional-behavioral disabilities exhibit internalizing behaviors-identified as turning their emotions and behaviors inward. These students may appear sad, withdrawn, anxious, or shy. What do these behaviors look like in your classroom? Have you found these behaviors to interfere with your teaching?
4	One last year who had emotional outbursts when faced with tasks that frustrated him. He was challenged with math and he would shut down. Then he would have distracting behaviors such as beating on the desk, anything to avoid the task at hand. Learned some strategies that helped him overcome this and he was able to learn math.	Internalize it usually just need time to escape from it. So giving them time to recover and let it go. Giving some walk time to think it out by themselves. Don't need to be surrounded by eyeballs on them so allow them some down time to recover. something that is a little more calming for them that will help bring them a little more, or a little less frustration
5	"I have had children who have had to be physically restrained because they have spiraled out of control." I've had children who were abused and you have to deal with some behaviors and things they do that are totally beyond the years of what they should have to deal with.	I think the best way to reach them is to first get to know them. Get to know their likes and dislikes. "I had a little girl who internalized terribly and she self-mutilate. Her big thing was that she wanted time with me. That is what motivated her. We would set a goal. And we would set small increments. By the end of her school year, after a full school year, were down to very few injuries to herself. That was heartbreaking to me because what a normal child would take in stride was devastational to her. That was very difficult for her and for me. I think it was so focused internally."
6	I've had a student that was withdrawn and would not speak to you, communicate, wouldn't do any work. This student actually turned to be the opposite after there were some medication changes. He then became very verbal and physical quite often. Then I've had the student who would be verbal and physical. "I've had both the introverts and the extroverts."	A student I had would hide in his jacket and would shut down when things were going on. He would not talk to us. I introduced him to a journal. "I told him it was fine that he didn't want to talk about it, but if he would write it down and put it on my desk then I would read what he wrote and answer him back in the journal." He didn't have to have a full on conversation but I could still know what he was thinking. I tried to make it so that it's not all verbal communication.
7	I've had a child that was not identified at the beginning of the year but was later identified. Did not get support but had a lot of behavior issues. I've had children who have had bi-polar disorder, oppositional defiant, and hyperactivity. I did have a child identified as gifted but he also had depression, anxiety, ADHD, ODD. He did not receive IEP services for the emotional. He did have a 504. So he did just need to have breaks to allow for him to reset.	I think shyness. His medicine played a huge role. If he was not on his medication, he was very down on everything. He was very aware of his peers and what they thought of him. What I've experienced is that acting out has stemmed from an inward behavior as defense. They thought that everybody was against them. So I've have the shyness and withdrawn but also the tough guy because I feel like everyone is against me.
8	Physical outbursts Property destruction Violence towards others withdrawing Running away Hiding Anything that the student thinks could hurt you such as spitting, saying nasty things to you to try to make you feel as bad as they feel.	"I can't say they interfere with my teaching. I think they interfere with their own success." It's almost defiance through silence It takes extra work from the teacher to get them to overcome the feelings they're having. I've used a lot of positive reinforcement and creating an environment where they feel safe.

(table continues)

Participant	Question 6: What experience have you had with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 7: Some students' emotional-behavioral disabilities exhibit internalizing behaviors-identified as turning their emotions and behaviors inward. These students may appear sad, withdrawn, anxious, or shy. What do these behaviors look like in your classroom? Have you found these behaviors to interfere with your teaching?
9	"I've had students that internalize a lot of their behaviors. You don't see any outward emotions; you don't see any outward displays of anything. You have to look more closely at how they act around me, how are they acting during instruction, and how are they acting towards their peers during unstructured times like lunch, activity, and recess." I've also had students who don't know quite how to internalize that behavior so the behaviors become more outward. They may target in terms of words or physical behaviors, not towards other students, but towards the person they may feel who is inflicting that behavior on them if that makes sense.	Having a conversation letting them know I've noticed a change in them. Seeing if there is anything more that is going on if they want to share with myself, my special education co-teacher, or maybe even the guidance counselor. Telling them how much we want them to succeed. Sometimes they try, and you can tell the conversation has helped, but the behavior is still overruling them I ask then the guidance counselor to help out so that the student has a break or a safe place to get their thoughts out and then they can come back to the classroom and be more successful. Sometimes those behaviors aren't as noticeable with those students classified as EBD versus others. You may have to look deeper into grades, or at the picture they drew to realize they are internalizing a lot more of the behaviors than what we can see.
10	"I had one student, who had I not been alerted that she had that disability I might not have known.: She internalized a lot of things. Most times, she was very compliant, respectful, and got along well with others. But as the year went on, I could start to see when things were not going well for her, or when she was upset about something. Getting to know her helped me to see that something was going on. I had another student more outward behaviors. Defiance, refusal to work, and making distracting noises to the other students. Bouts of anger, bouncing from being very happy to extremely upset. This student needed a lot of extra attention and support from people outside of the classroom.	I think students who internalize their feelings sometimes can slip through the cracks because they are not showing extreme behaviors that are getting them attention. You really have to pay attention and look for signs to know something is going on. I think my student helped me to see that building the relationship with her was very important. "But as far as helping her be successful, I think it did interfere with her academics." Making sure to support her in a small group or even a one-on-one setting to be more successful with academics was really something I found to be helpful and I would continue in the future.
11	I've had a student who was diagnosed with oppositional defiant disorder and a student who was identified as emotional-behavioral disorder. "I've had other students who have been put on behavioral plans but their primary eligibility has never been EBD."	There were times when a student felt withdrawn and that came more thought issues with peers. Because this student did show behaviors such as physical aggression, defiance, and disrespect towards teachers and students. "I had conversations with the student to explain that others are not going to want to be your friend if they see you being disrespectful to them, their friends, or their property. I did notice that student was seeming withdrawn when it came to choosing a partner for an activity." I did see that student become a little depressed and withdrawn. "You could see his thought process expand to where at the beginning he was more compulsive and after he was starting to take his time when he spoke to people and how he spoke to me. He was making sure to listen to other students' ideas rather than overtake the situation."

(table continues)

Participant	Question 6: What experience have you had with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?	Question 7: Some students' emotional-behavioral disabilities exhibit internalizing behaviors-identified as turning their emotions and behaviors inward. These students may appear sad, withdrawn, anxious, or shy. What do these behaviors look like in your classroom? Have you found these behaviors to interfere with your teaching?
12	I had a student who was not identified as EBD. He was just one of those students who would sit in the back of the classroom. "He would very sneakily make snide remarks to other students and when they would tell him to stop doing that, he would just start yelling." This student got very angry over smaller issues. If he didn't want to do something you asked him to, it was total meltdown. So it was either really angry or laughing by himself.	I did have a student who was very withdrawn and a very sad look to his eyes. From with internalizing everything so much, it turned into him biting himself where he would break the skin. We would have to call administration down a few times to remove the student.
13	"My experience was pretty limited up until this past school year with students classified as EBD." This year learning, adapting, and realizing it's not personal helped. I had to learn to be patient and knew that I needed to find coping strategies for them. My special education co-teacher did a social skills group that was very helpful for many of the students. Knowing that a student has trouble working with groups helped me to be more cautious and aware of the child's needs.	"I think that one is a little more difficult to handle because they aren't displaying those outward problems, so they are almost flying under the radar." Not necessarily considered a behavior problem, but you definitely want to support them. Creating a welcoming environment where they can show their strengths may benefit these students. I think you have to be very aware since they don't have those outward behaviors. work as a team and stay on top of things.
14	Building the relationship and being able to get to know the student and reach the child "This past year I had one particular student that was like a see-saw mode, always always up and down." I had to figure out what I was doing to trigger his behavior. There were some days where I reach him, and then there were other days where he wanted me to stay away from him. I was trying to figure out on my side what I was doing to make it unstable.	I really watch those students at recess. They tend to be loners or they aren't smiling. I open the door in the classroom through a supportive note and then when they would respond I would write back. "I know there is something going on, but if I go to the person and ask what is wrong, they aren't going to tell me. They aren't going to open up because they are keeping it inside." I first work on building that rapport and keep it simple with them. Then eventually it comes full circle and they can tell me what's going on inside.
15	The only experience I've had is with students who were not identified as EBD when they came to me. Even though they weren't technically identified as EBD, one student would have behaviors where he blew up and threw desks, it was obvious that there was something else going on. He did get moved from my room to a co-taught classroom. I had another student who had a 504 but for ADHD. He was really the first dealing with EBD. Last year was also my first year in an inclusion class.	"I've not had any experience with a student that is identified that way, but I have had students who shut down. My co-teacher and I both had a student at the beginning of the year." I would give the student a choice. If that didn't work, I would talk with them just like I have with students who aren't identified to see if they could tell me what is bothering them at that particular time. If they can't, then I may give them a chance to take a break. I would stress to them it's not a punishment. Or I would send them on an errand.

Based on the responses, I categorized the participants' experiences into three levels: level one, level two, and level three. The categories allowed for the results to reflect the experiences participants had and also the degree in which they have interacted with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their classroom. From the 15 participants, I identified 4 participants as level one, 6 as level two, and 5 as level three.

Participants were identified as level one by stating their experience as not having any students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their class or having little experience. One participant stated, "My experience was pretty limited up until this past school year with students classified as EBD, but with this past year I did have a few in my class that had varying degrees of emotional or behavioral issues." Another participant described their interaction as "The only experience I've had is that they were not identified as EBD when they came to me." This participant made mention of only being in the inclusion setting for one year, but they have had students who were moved from the classroom and were later identified as emotional-behavioral disorder.

Participants were identified as level two by stating their interactions as having some students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their classroom and may include external and/or internal display of behaviors. When asked about their classroom interactions, a common trend throughout showed that they approached others for help in the situation, included a special education co-teacher as support. The participants at level two also identified a strategy they implemented to help the student be successful in the classroom. Some participants mentioned the use of a journal or note to communicate with a student. One participant stated, "That way he didn't have to have a full-on conversation

but I could still know what he was thinking." When asked if they found students whose emotional-behavioral disability was more internalized interfered with their teaching, several participants responded not that it interfered with their teaching but more with the student's own success. A participant stated "It's almost defiance through silence and it takes extra work from the teacher to get them to overcome the feelings they're having." It was identified that extra strategies and supports needed to be in place in order to reach emotional-behavioral students in the inclusion classroom.

Finally, participants were identified as level three as by describing their interactions with emotional-behavioral students and several strategies they have put in place to help that student be successful in their classroom. When asked about their interactions in their classroom, a common trend presented itself with both external and/or internal behaviors as well as the mindset needed as a general education teacher to not take the student's behaviors personally. A participant responded, "I just think the biggest thing that I've learned is that I've got to be flexible and you don't necessarily always take those behaviors personal. Especially as a general education teacher, you sometimes have to allow things to run their course." When asked specifically about students whose emotional-behavioral disabilities manifest themselves internally, a trend that appeared was the importance of building a relationship with the student in order to help the child be successful. One participant stated, "I think the best way [to meet the needs of the student] is to really develop a relationship with that student so that way you can pick upon cues and one of the things I would just kind of check in with her everyday." A participant that has a special education background also added that often general

education teacher "get overwhelmed by the label and that's not necessarily true. It's a case by case, student by student situation so just take the time to know the student, figure out what is going to work best for them."

Evidence of Trustworthiness

Credibility focuses on the interpretation of the data by the researcher and the representation of them and the accurate representation of those data by the researcher (Cope, 2014). To support the credibility of the study, I have presented my engagement in the data collection and analysis, methods of interviewing participants and my role as the interviewer, and presented the audit trail of my data analysis. Dependability focuses on consistency of data over similar settings (Cope, 2014). Data collection in the research study may be deemed dependable through the consistency of interview questions with each participant regardless of grade level and experience. Within my study, I asked each participant the same questions in the same order. This allowed for consistency across the data.

Confirmability focuses on the presentation of data in relation to the participants' responses rather than the researcher's bias (Cope, 2014). By using QSR NVivo to group the collected data into themes, my bias was removed from the data analysis. QSR NVivo grouped the data in relation to the research questions and referenced the individual interviews. Transferability in qualitative research is often a challenge to apply the findings to other settings or groups (Cope, 2014). The transferability with this study focused on the application of the findings to the general education teachers not involved with the research study. The findings may be transferable to the reader's experiences.

Summary

The purpose of this chapter was to present the results and provided data analysis based on the research questions. Participant responses during individual interviews revealed a range of descriptions of emotional-behavioral disabilities. More participants did define emotional-behavioral disabilities as a display of external behaviors impeded a students' learning. Participants did express perceptions of student interactions as an area where the emotional-behavioral disability has shown challenges in the inclusion classroom. While there was a range in the participants' experience working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, most participants identified a need for more professional development and/or training in this area as general education teachers. Even with some current supports in place, participants still found it an area that is quickly growing and needs to be addressed.

An in-depth discussion of participants' responses as relating to the original research questions are addressed in the following chapter. Conclusions are provided to summarize general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behaviors disabilities.

Chapter 5: Discussion, Conclusions, and Recommendations

The purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how general education teachers in the inclusion setting perceive students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, needed supports for teachers, and how the teacher can best meet the needs of the students in the class. An overview of the study, problem statement, research questions, and interpretation of the data is present in this chapter. Connections to the conceptual framework used in the research study are also presented. A discussion of research limitations, benefits, and social change are also presented.

Interpretation of the Findings

From the individual, face-to-face interviews, I identified three primary themes and subcategories of each theme. The interpretation of the findings is based on analysis made from the collected evidence. The findings are compared to the literature review found in Chapter 2 to investigate the findings of this study to current research.

Research Question 1

In the 15 individual interviews, most participants described students as having inappropriate responses to given directives, having extreme emotions, acting impulsively or irrationally, and having difficulty calming down. Through data analysis, the common theme found for this question was defining emotional behavioral disabilities as disruptive and external displays of behaviors. Through analyzing the most frequently used words, participants focused more on the externalized behaviors associated with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Teachers perceptions may be associated with their personal experience or their limited knowledge about emotional-behavioral disabilities. Although

some participants defined emotional-behavioral disabilities as a spectrum of external and internal behaviors, most focused on the externalized behaviors. As Kauffman (2015) stated, debate has occurred over the labeling of emotional-behavioral disabilities and the stigmas that occur when a teacher learns of a students' category. Heflinger et al. (2014) indicated that the stigma of such labels as emotional-behavioral disabilities may lead to a negative connotation of the student and even cause anxiety within the general education teacher. I found that when a participant was aware of a student identified with an emotional-behavioral disability in his or her classroom, he or she was more anxious to have the student in his or her class. In my study, how the participants defined emotional-behavioral disabilities may play a role in how they perceived students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

Research Question 2

Through data analysis, I found that general education teachers perceived students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities as a student who is disruptive in the classroom and who will cause challenges in the general education setting. Participants stated that students with emotional-behavioral disabilities displayed more outward signs of behaviors. The participants expressed student interactions within the inclusion classroom as a challenging area with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. These challenges can be difficult to build a positive interaction with the students. Schlein et al. (2013) found more trust from students toward the teacher when they had a positive interaction with teachers in the general education setting, I found that the perceptions from general education teachers focus on outward behaviors; this can cause a stigma

about students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Kauffman and Badger (2013) discussed how having the identification of emotional-behavioral disabilities may be stigmatizing for the student and how general education teachers in the inclusion setting view students with emotional-behavioral disabilities differently than their peers. When teachers focus on the outward behaviors of emotional-behavioral disabilities, this creates a stigma for students prior to even being in the classroom. Although the participants did not state any stigmas directly, their focus was drawn to the students who displayed more outward behaviors in the general education setting.

Research Question 3

Through the interviews, most participants expressed a lack of training as a general education teacher specifically targeting working with students who have an identified emotional-behavioral disability. Many participants stated that there was a lack of provided trainings and minimal supports provided to general education teachers. The majority of participants shared a need for on-going training for general education teachers focused on meeting the needs of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and mental health in the classroom When interviewd by Kaff et al. (2012), Kauffman suggested that both general and special education teachers should receive training on evidence-based practices so that the instruction received in the classroom is effective and meaningful to all students' needs. Participants stated that they felt there were more supports in place than trainings, such as having a special education coteacher and access to the district behavior specialists. In the inclusion setting, Evans and Weiss (2014) stated that a collaboration between special education teachers and general education teachers is

one way to reinforce expectations for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and to work as a team in meeting the students' classroom needs. More general education teachers are experiencing students in their classrooms with special education supports, which presents a challenge for schools and general education teachers across disciplinary, instructional, and interpersonal areas (Gresham, 2015).

When asked about support from building administration about students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, most participants felt supported. The responses to this question did span over more than one administration due to different schools in the county. The participants stated that they would like to see administration observe students in the classroom and work as a team to develop a consistent plan to aid in student success. Cancio, Albrecht, and Johns (2013) concluded that there was a correlation between how the participants viewed administrative support and the opportunities for growth and inclusion. Naraian, Ferguson, and Thomas (2012) suggested professional development to teachers and the benefit of classroom supports for students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

Research Question 4

I found that general education teachers' interactions were challenging and sometimes unpredictable. The participants' responses were divided into three categories based on experiences. From the 15 participants, four were identified as Level 1, six were identified as Level 2, and five were identified as Level 3. The participants in Level 1 did not identify much experience or interactions working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. When asked about their classroom interactions, the participants

stated that they approached others for help in the situation, including a special education coteacher as support. Level 2 participants also identified possible strategies to help with student success in the classroom. Evan et al. (2012) suggested that general education teachers should provide positive emotional and behavioral strategies within the classroom to support the social-emotional needs of students within the classroom. By working with students through communication strategies, the participants at Level 2 were striving to provide a positive environment in their classroom for all students.

Participants categorized in Level 3 not only described several experiences and/or interactions with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, they also stated that general education teachers should not take the student's behaviors personally. Participants in this category also described the importance of building a relationship with the student in order to help the child be successful. Schlein et al. (2013) noted that teachers' decisions in the classroom shape the students for the future. The more positive interactions a student has with teachers, the more trust he or she has built to improve in the general education setting (Schlein et al., 2013). Capern and Hammond (2014) found that when asked what they valued in teachers, students indicated teachers that displayed patience and understanding were ranked high on the list. Working on building a relationship and gaining an understanding of the student helps to provide a classroom that supports the social and emotional needs of the child.

The perceptions of teachers are often formed due to their past experiences (Schlein et al., 2013). When asked about their experiences working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, participants who identified a challenging experience or

little experience tended to focus more on the negative perceptions. Participants who had more experience working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities focused more on the ways to reach the challenging student.

Limitations of the Study

Various limitations may exist in this study. By nature, qualitative methods limit the generalizability of results of the study. This can be expected in a qualitative research study. As stated, the purpose of this study was to develop an understanding of how general education teachers in the inclusion setting perceive students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, needed supports for teachers, and how the teacher can best meet the needs of the students in the class. While sometimes considered a threat to validity in a research study, the sample size is not considered a limitation in this study. The sample size of 15 participants was selected due to the depth of data collected. The data collected provided an in-depth view of general education teachers' perceptions.

A limitation that occurred consisted of the sample selection used in the research study. The study was limited to participants who were general education teachers who taught in Grades 4 through 8 and had a minimum of 1 year of inclusion experience. This selection, being limited to middle grades, limits the generalization of the results to all grade levels. In order to fully grasp general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, the study must include teachers spanning from Grades k through 12. This would allow for the expansion across elementary, middle, and high school grade bands.

Recommendations

Teacher Practice

Through the results of this study, I found that participants are aware students with disabilities require more classroom support and attention, but some did not state how they could meet the needs of these students in their class among the general education students. It is recommended that teachers could begin with identifying the needs of the students in their classroom through student interest inventories and student interviews to ask what the student thinks benefits them in the classroom. Sprouls, Mathur, and Upreti (2015) investigated the use of positive feedback in the classroom environment as a means to help reduce negative classroom experiences for students with challenging behaviors. In their study, Sprouls et al. (2015) found that students at risk or diagnosed with an emotional-behavioral disability received significantly lower positive feedback than their typically developing peers.

Participants in this study identified work refusal or escape from work as a common behavior found in their experiences with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Allowing for assignment choice to access the grade level curriculum is a strategy Skerbetz and Kostewicz (2013) studied for students at risk or diagnosed with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Skerbetz and Kostewicz (2013) indicated by providing a student a choice in the assignment, inappropriate classroom behaviors decreased. Assignment choice is one recommendation for teachers as a strategy to target students who are demonstrating work refusal or escape, allowing for a more positive experience for both the teacher and student.

MacFarlane and Woolfson (2013) used Ajzen's theory of planned behavior to examine the relationship between teachers' attitudes towards students and the behavior of students identified with a social-emotional behavioral disorder and found that the longer teachers have been in the profession, the more apprehensive they were to working with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities. This could play a role in the lack of understanding of the disabilities and lack of trainings and support given to target such disabilities. To support teachers in the classroom, administrators may want to implement on going professional development targeting specific subjects on how to support students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in the general education setting. It was suggested by participants to have an on-going or a yearly training to help with issues that come about in the general education classroom.

Further Research and Inquiry

While this study focused on the perceptions of general education teachers on students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, it did not focus on the specific types of classroom strategies that teachers were using with students in the classroom. A possible area to further research may be the types of trainings provided based on classroom structure and classroom environment.

To help develop a supportive classroom, effective classroom management strategies are important for all students in the class. This study did not target classroom management strategies, but this may be an area for further inquiry. Ross and Slinger (2015) discussed the more frequent reactive than proactive classroom management strategies. Although there may be good intentions from teachers, their classroom

management styles may play a role in the behaviors students are exhibiting in the classroom. Further research on classroom management strategies and teachers' perceptions may explore an additional area that helps to form the perceptions of general education teachers on students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

Another area for further research based on the limitations of this study would be to expand the participant pool. This study was conducted based on the criteria of participants being general education teachers in grades 4 through 8 with a minimum of one year of inclusion experience. Further research may be recommended to focus on grades k through 12 to grasp a deeper understanding of what may be forming teachers' perceptions. This study focused on the middle school years, but teachers in elementary or high school may have different perceptions or have received different trainings to support students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their classrooms.

Implications

Positive social change occurs when lives are touched in a way that provides a benefit to society. Through the results of this study, I have provided a much-needed insight into contributions to general education teachers' perceptions when working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Matthews et al. (2013) stated that children with a diagnosis of emotional-behavioral disabilities may demonstrate atypical classroom behaviors when being compared to their peers. Through the results of this study, I hope that positive social change can result through the implementation of additional professional development and support to general education teachers to focus on how to best support students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their classroom.

Conley et al. (2014) made connections between a teacher's attitude towards students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and how it may negatively impact the provided education students receive. Through the study, I worked to gain a rich and deep understanding of the general education teachers' experiences with emotional-behavioral disabilities to help understand what formed my participants' perceptions. It is my hope that the results of this study along with recommendations will allow additional training and support to general education teachers in the area of working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities and will produce a shift in perceptions. This shift will then allow for a positive change in education and allow for student success in the general education setting.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to gain a deeper understanding of general education teachers' perceptions about inclusion of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities. Participants' responses allowed for an understanding of varying definitions general education teachers have of emotional-behavioral disabilities. Participant responses revealed supports such a special education co-teachers, behavior specialists, and administrative support in some cases. Although some supports were stated, the need for more trainings provided to general education teachers to help them best meet the needs of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their classrooms.

Due to revisions of IDEA of 2004, students with disabilities are required to receive education in their least restricted environment. With this revision, many general education teachers are now experiencing students with disabilities in their classroom

without the proper training, tools, or supports in place. Specifically, students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities may lead to anxiety and negative perceptions of inclusion by general education teachers. Because of this revision and changes to the general education setting, it was deemed worthy to investigate general education teachers' perceptions about inclusion of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities.

Through the results of this study, I found that general education teachers' defined emotional-behavioral disabilities as manifesting themselves as external behaviors. A consensus among participants through the pattern describing students as having inappropriate responses to given directives, having extreme emotions, acting impulsively or irrationally, and having difficulty calming down. This can impact the inclusion setting and the interactions teachers have with students. Through the data collected and analyzed, I found results that additional trainings in strategies such as classroom management and positive learning environments may benefit general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities so that all students may have an opportunity to be successful in their least restrictive environment.

Positive social change occurs when lives are touched in a way that provides a benefit to society. Through the results of this study, I hope that positive social change can result through the recommendations and the implementation of additional professional development and support to general education teachers to shift their focus on how to best support students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their classroom. This shift will then allow for a positive change in education and allow for student success in the general education setting.

References

Ajzen, I. (1991). The theory of planned behavior. *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Processes*, *50*(2), 179-211. doi:http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08870446.2011.613995

Alter, P., Walker, J. N., & Landers, E. (2013). Teachers' perceptions of students' challenging behavior and the impact of teacher demographics. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *36*(4), 51-69.

Anderson, D. L., Watt, S. E., Noble, W., & Shanley, D. C. (2012). Knowledge of attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and attitudes toward teaching children with ADHD: The role of teaching experience. *Psychology in the Schools*, *49*(6), 511-525. http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1002/pits.21617

Baxter, P., & Jack, S. (2008). Qualitative case study methodology: Study design and implementation for novice researchers. *The Qualitative Report*, *13*(4), 544-559. http://www.nova.edu/ssss/QR/QR13-4/index.html

Boer, A., Pijl, S. J., Post, W., & Minnaert, A. (2013). Peer acceptance and friendships of students with disabilities in general education: The role of child, peer, and classroom variables. *Social Development*, *22*(4), 831-844. doi: 10.1111/j.1467-9507.2012.00670.x

Breeman, L. D., Wubbels, T., van Lier, P. A. C., Verhulst, F. C., Van der Ende, J., Maras, A., Hopman, J. A. B., & Tick, N. T. (2014). Teacher characteristics, social classroom relationships, and children's social, emotional, and behavioral classroom adjustment in special education. *Journal of School Psychology*, *53*(1), 87-103. doi: 10.1016/j.jsp.2014.11.005

Broomhead, K. E. (2013). Preferential treatment or unwanted in mainstream schools? The perceptions of parents and teachers with regards to pupils with special educational needs and challenging behaviour. *Support for Learning*, *28*(1), 4-10. doi: 10.1111/1467-9604.12009

Buttner, S., Pijl, S. J., Bijstra, J., & Van den Bosch, E. (2016). Personality traits of expert teachers of students with EBD: Clarifying a teacher's X-factor. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *20*(6), 569-587. http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/13603116.2015.1100222

Cancio, E. J., Albrecht, S. F., & Johns, B. H. (2013). Defining administrative support and its relationship to the attrition of teachers of students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *36*(4), 71-94. https://muse-jhu-edu.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/journals/education_and_treatment_of_children/v036/36.4.cancio.html

Capern, T., & Hammond, L. (2014). Establishing positive relationships with secondary

gifted students and students with emotional/behavioural disorders: Giving these

diverse learners what they need. *Australian Journal of Teacher Education*, *39*(4),

46-67.

http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ1017626

Cassady, J. M. (2011). Teachers' attitudes toward the inclusion of students with autism

and emotional behavioral disorder. *Electronic Journal for Inclusive*

Education, *2*(7), 5. https://corescholar.libraries.wright.edu/ejie/vol2/iss7/5/

Conley, L., Marchant, M., & Caldarella, P. (2014). A comparison of teacher perceptions

and research-based categories of student behavior difficulties. *Education*, *13*(4),

439-451.

Cope, D. G. (2014). Methods and meanings: Credibility and trustworthiness of

qualitative research. *Oncology Nursing Forum, 49*(1), 89-91.

doi: 10.1188/14.ONF.89-91

Coulby, D., & Harper, T. (2012). *Preventing classroom disruption: Policy, practice and*

evaluation in urban schools. New York, NY: Routledge.

Creswell, J. W. (2012). *Educational research: Planning, conducting, and evaluating*

quantitative and qualitative research (Laureate custom ed.). Boston, MA: Pearson

Education, Inc.

Eklund, K., Tanner, N., Stoll, K., & Anway, L. (2015). Identifying emotional and

    behavioral risk among gifted and nongifted children: A multi-gate, multi-

    informant approach. *School Psychology Quarterly*, *30*(2), 197-211. Doi:

    10.1037/spq0000080

Evans, C., Weiss, S. L., & Cullinan, D. (2012). Teacher perceptions and behavioral

    strategies for students with emotional disturbance across educational

    environments. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and*

    Youth, *56*(2), 82-90. doi: 10.1080/1045988X.2011.574170

Evans, C., & Weiss, S. L. (2014). Teachers working together: How to communicate,

    collaborate, and facilitate positive behavior in inclusive classrooms. *Journal of the*

    International Association of Special Education, *15*(2), 142-146.

Forness, S. R., Kim, J., & Walker, H. M. (2012). Prevalence of students with EBD:

    Impact on general education. *Beyond Behavior*, *21*(2), 3-10.

Gable, R. A., Tonelson, S. W., Sheth, M., Wilson, C., & Park, K. L. (2012). Importance,

    usage, and preparedness to implement evidence-based practices for students with

    emotional disabilities: A comparison of knowledge and skills of special education

    and general education teachers. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *35*(4), 499-

    520.

Gest, S. D., Madill, R. A., Zadzora, K. M., Miller, A. M., & Rodkin, P. C. (2014).

    Teacher management of elementary classroom social dynamics associations with

    changes in student adjustment. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral*

    Disorders, *22*(2), 107-118.

Gresham, F. (2015). Evidence-based social skills interventions for students at risk for

    EBD. *Remedial and Special Education*, *36*(2), 100-104.

Hecker, B, Young, Caldarella. (2014). Teacher perspectives on behaviors of middle and

    junior high school students at risk for emotional and behavioral disorders.

    American Secondary Education, *42*(2), 20-32.

Heflinger, C. A., Wallston, K. A., Mukolo, A., & Brannan, A. M. (2014). Perceived

    stigma toward children with emotional and behavioral problems and their

    families: The Attitudes about child mental health questionnaire

    (ACMHQ). *Journal of Rural Mental Health*, *38*(1), 9-19. doi: 10.1037/2376-

    6972.1.S.75

Hirsch, J. A. (2013). Development of the biases toward children with psychological and

    behavioral disorders. *Psychological Reports*, *113*(3), 855-873.

    doi:10.2466/08.07.PR0.113x26z0

Iris Center (2016). *Influence of teacher perceptions.* Retrieved from

    https://iris.peabody.vanderbilt.edu/module/div/cresource/q1/p02/

Johnson, S. R., Seidenfeld, A. M., Izard, C. E., & Kobak, R. (2013). Can classroom

    emotional support enhance prosocial development among children with depressed

    caregivers? *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, *28*(2), 282-290.

Johnson-Harris, K. M., & Mundschenk, N. A. (2014). Working effectively with students

    with BD in a general education classroom: The case for universal design for

    learning. *The Clearing House: A Journal of Educational Strategies, Issues and*

    Ideas, *87*(4), 168-174. doi: 10.1080/00098655.2014.897927

Jones, S. M., & Bouffard, S. M. (2012). Social and emotional learning in schools: From

    programs to strategies. *Social Policy Report*, *26*(4), 3-22.

    http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=ED540203

Kaff, M. S., Teagarden, J. M., & Zabel, R. H. (2012). Understanding and teaching

    students with emotional-behavioral disabilities: A conversation with James

    Kauffman. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *47*(5), 316-320.

    doi: 10.1177/1053451211430116

Kauffman, J. (2010). Commentary: Current status of the field and future directions.

    Behavioral Disorders, 35(2), 180-184.

Kauffman, J.M. (2015). The "b" in ebd is not just for bullying. *Journal of Research in*

    Special Educational Needs, 15(3), 167-175.

Kauffman, J. M., & Badar, J. (2013). How we might make special education for students

    with emotional or behavioral disorders less stigmatizing. *Behavioral Disorders*,

    39(1), 16-27.

Kelly, A., & Barnes-Holmes, D. (2013). Implicit attitudes towards children with autism

    versus normally developing children as predictors of professional burnout and

    psychopathology. *Research in developmental disabilities*, *34*(1), 17-28.

Kern, L. (2015). Addressing the needs of students with social, emotional, and

    behavioral problems reflections and visions. *Remedial and Special*

    Education, *36*(1), 24-27.

Lastrapes, R. E. (2014). Using the good behavior game in an inclusive

    classroom. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, *49*(4), 225-229.

    doi: 10.1177/1053451213509491

Lewis, S. J., Relton, C., Zammit, S., & Smith, G. D. (2013). Approaches for

    strengthening causal inference regarding prenatal risk factors for childhood

    behavioural and psychiatric disorders. *Journal of Child Psychology and*

    Psychiatry, *54*(10), 1095-1108.

MacFarlane, K., & Woolfson, L. M. (2013). Teacher attitudes and behavior toward the

    inclusion of children with social, emotional and behavioral difficulties in

    mainstream schools: An application of the theory of planned behavior. *Teaching*

    and Teacher Education, *29*, 46-52. doi: 10.1016/j.tate.2012.08.006

Mathews, T. L., Erkfritz-Gay, K. N., Knight, J., Lancaster, B. M., & Kupzyk, K. A.

    (2013). The effects of social skills training on children with autism spectrum

    disorders and disruptive behavior disorders. *Children's Health Care*, *42*(4), 311-

    332. doi: 10.1080/02739615.2013.842458

Mattison, R. E. (2015). Comparison of students with emotional and/or behavioral

    disorders as classified by their school districts. *Behavioral Disorders*, *40*(3), 196-

    209.

McCray, E. D., & McHatton, P. A. (2011). Less afraid to have them in my classroom:

    Understanding pre-service general educators' perceptions about

    inclusion. *Teacher Education Quarterly*, *38*(4), 135-155.

    http://www.eric.ed.gov/contentdelivery/servlet/ERICServlet?accno=EJ960622

McHatton, P. A., & Parker, A. (2013). Purposeful preparation longitudinally exploring inclusion attitudes of general and special education pre-service teachers. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, *36*(3), 186-203.

Naraian, S., Ferguson, D. L., & Thomas, N. (2012). Transforming for inclusive practice: Professional development to support the inclusion of students labelled as emotionally disturbed. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *16*(7), 721-740. doi: 10.1080/13603116.2010.509817

Nind, M., Boorman, G., & Clarke, G. (2012). Creating spaces to belong: Listening to the voice of girls with behavioural, emotional and social difficulties through digital visual and narrative methods. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *16*(7), 643-656.

Obiakor, F. E., Harris, M., Mutua, K., Rotatori, A., & Algozzine, B. (2012). Making inclusion work in general education classrooms. *Education and Treatment of Children*, *35*(3), 477-490. doi: 10.1108/S0270-4013(2010)0000019013

Pas, E. T., & Bradshaw, C. P. (2014). What affects teacher ratings of student behaviors? The potential influence of teachers' perceptions of the school environment and experiences. *Prevention science*, *15*(6), 940-950. doi: 10.1007/s11121-013-0432-4

Peebles, J., & Mendaglio, S. (2014). Preparing teachers for inclusive classrooms: Introducing the individual direct experience approach. *LEARNing Landscapes, 7*(2), 245-257.

QSR International Pty Ltd. (n.d.). What is nvivo? Retrieved from

http://www.qsrinternational.com/what-is-nvivo

Reinke, W. M., Stormont, M., Herman, K. C., Wang, Z., Newcomer, L., & King, K.

(2014). Use of coaching and behavior support planning for students with

disruptive behavior within a universal classroom management program. *Journal*

of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders, *22*(2), 74-82.

Riney, S. S., & Bullock, L. M. (2012). Teachers' perspectives on student problematic

behavior and social skills. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *17*(2), 195-

211.

doi: http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/13632752.2012.675136

Ross, P. & Sliger, B. (2015). The current state of evidence-based practices with

classroom management. *National Social Science Journal, 43*(2)*, 76-80.*

http://scholarworks.waldenu.edu/cel_pubs/1

Santiago, C. D., Kataoka, S. H., Forness, S. R., & Miranda, J. (2014). Mental health

services in special education: An analysis of quality of care. *Children &*

Schools, *36*(3), 175-182. doi: 10.1093/cs/cdu014

Schlein, C., Taft, R., & Tucker-Blackwell, V. (2013). Teachers' experiences with

classroom management and children diagnosed with emotional behavioral

disorder. *Curriculum and Teaching Dialogue*, *15*(1), 133-146.

Shillingford, S., & Karlin, N. (2014). Preservice teachers' self efficacy and knowledge of emotional and behavioural disorders. *Emotional and Behavioural Difficulties*, *19*(2), 176-194.

   doi: http://dx.doi.org.ezp.waldenulibrary.org/10.1080/13632752.2013.840958

Skerbetz, M. D., & Kostewicz, D. E. (2013). Academic choice for included students with emotional and behavioral disorders. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, *57*(4), 212-222.

Smith, C. R., Katsiyannis, A., Losinski, M., & Ryan, J. B. (2015). Eligibility for students with emotional or behavioral disorders: The social maladjustment dilemma continues. *Journal of Disability Policy Studies*, *25*(4), 252-259.

Solis, M., Vaughn, S., Swanson, E., & McCulley, L. (2012). Collaborative models of instruction: The empirical foundations of inclusion and co-teaching. *Psychology in the Schools*, *49*(5), 498-510. doi: 10.1002/pits.21606

Sprouls, K., Mathur, S. R., & Upreti, G. (2015). Is Positive Feedback a Forgotten Classroom Practice? Findings and Implications for At-Risk Students. *Preventing School Failure: Alternative Education for Children and Youth*, *59*(3), 153-160. doi: 10.1080/1045988X.2013.876958

U.S. Department of Education. (2004). *Building the legacy: IDEA, 2004*. Retrieved from http://idea.ed.gov/explore/view/p/,root,statute,I,B,612,a,5,

Useche, A. C., Sullivan, A. L., Merk, W., & Orobio de Castro, B. (2014). Relationships
of aggression subtypes and peer status among aggressive boys in general
education and emotional/behavioral disorder (EBD)
classrooms. *Exceptionality*, *22*(2), 111-128.

Wiley, A. L., Kauffman, J. M., & Plageman, K. (2014). Conservatism and the
underidentification of students with emotional and behavioral disorders in special
education. *Exceptionality*, *22*(4), 237-251.

Yan, Z., & Sin, K. F. (2014). Inclusive education: teachers' intentions and behaviour
analysed from the viewpoint of the theory of planned behaviour. *International
Journal of Inclusive Education*, *18*(1), 72-85.
doi: 10.1080/13603116.2012.757811

Yildiz, N.G. (2015) Teacher and student behaviors in inclusive classrooms. *Educational
Sciences: Theory & Practice, 15*(1), 177-184. doi:10.12738/estp.2015.1.2155

Appendix A Initial Invitation (Open-Ended Question)

1. How long have you been a general education teacher?

2. How long have you been a teacher in the current school district?

3. In your teaching experience, have you taught in a special education teacher position?

4. The research study consists of one-on-one interviews with the researcher. Are you willing to commit to two interviews with the researcher?

5. With the knowledge that the research study focuses on general education teachers' perceptions of students with emotional-behavioral disabilities, is there any information at this time you would like to provide the researcher?

6. Please provide the best means of contact for you in order for the researcher to follow-up with the interviews.

Appendix B Letter of Cooperation
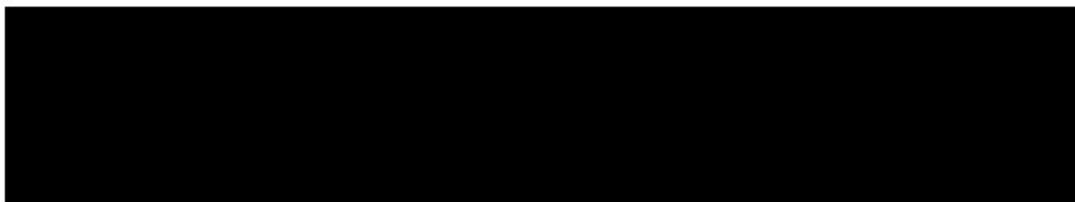
April 18, 2017

Allison Patton
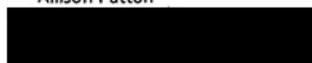
Dear Ms. Patton:

Based on the information you provided regarding your study of General Education Teachers Perceptions About Inclusion of Students with Emotional Behavioral Disabilities, I grant permission to continue your research. Please remember that all staff participation must be voluntary and all data collected will remain confidential. At the completion of your study, please provide a copy of your study to ████ ████ School System along with a copy of your IRB approval from your university.

Should you have any questions, please contact me at ████████ I wish you much success with your research.

Best Regards,

Bradley Anderson
Assistant Superintendent

Appendix C Individual Interview Questions

RQ1: How do general education teachers define an emotional-behavioral disability?

1. What is the first thing that comes to mind when you hear the phrase "emotional-behavioral disabilities"?

2. What do you think are some key behaviors associated with emotional-behavioral disabilities?

RQ2: What are general education teachers' perceptions of students who have been identified with emotional and behavioral disabilities in their co-taught inclusion setting?

3. Without looking through assessment data, how would you know if a student has an emotional-behavioral disability? What would this look like in your classroom?

RQ3: What training and supports have school districts provided to general education teachers working with students with emotional-behavioral disabilities in their co-taught inclusion setting?

4. Thinking to your time in your current school district, what supports or trainings have you attended or been offered to work with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?

5. How do you think your administration and school leaders could support you when you have a student in your classroom with an identified emotional-behavioral disability?

RQ4: How do general education teachers describe their classroom interactions with students with emotional and behavioral disabilities in their co-taught inclusion setting?

6. What experience have you had with students identified with emotional-behavioral disabilities?

7. Some students' emotional-behavioral disabilities exhibit internalizing behaviors-identified as turning their emotions and behaviors inward. These students may appear sad, withdrawn, anxious, or shy. What do these behaviors look like in your classroom? Have you found these behaviors to interfere with your teaching?

Closing:

8. Is there anything we missed?

9. Is there anything you came wanting to say but did not have a chance to say through my questions?