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THE IMPACT OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT ON BEHAVIOR REGULATION FOR
STUDENTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CLASSROOMS

A MASTER'S THESIS

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OF BETHEL UNIVERSITY

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BETHEL UNIVERSITY

THE IMPACT OF CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT ON BEHAVIOR REGULATION FOR
STUDENTS IN EARLY CHILDHOOD CLASSROOMS AND ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

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APPROVED

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Abstract

A significant obstacle for teachers in early childhood and elementary classrooms is regulating negative student behavior. The implementation of classroom management programs is a strategy used by school districts worldwide to lessen learning distractions caused by negative student behavior to improve classroom quality. This thesis is a review of studies specifically linking the impact that classroom management interventions have on behavior regulation. Review of both preventative and reactive classroom management practices were discussed as well as the training process and implementation fidelity. The consistent trend in the research related to increasing positive *student* behavior in the classroom, is that positive *teacher* behavior is the one of the biggest predictors of success.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Context and Rationale

Teaching the *whole* child, especially during the early stages of development, extends beyond academic achievement to include instruction that grows their ability to have self-control, socialize appropriately with their peers and teachers, and manage their emotions in a healthy way. Explicit instruction of these social skills and emotional regulation is done with intention in early childhood programs and early elementary grades while children are learning how to function in the school context; however, the need for this continues into adolescence. This includes teaching appropriate learning behaviors as well as managing emotional outbursts and disruptive behavior. With learning being the top priority, regulating negative student behavior in the classroom can be a frustrating obstacle for teachers. Freiberg et al. (2020) regard “student behavior for administrators and teachers [as] a time-consuming distraction from teaching and learning” (p.320). Schools have been addressing behavior through proactive classroom management initiatives worldwide. Caldarella et al. (2012) suggest that ineffective classroom management is a considerable factor that leads to stress that can be significant enough to cause teachers to leave the profession. This is suggested to be one of the greatest concerns for new teachers as they enter the field as well. The negative impacts of unmanaged classrooms extend beyond the dysregulated student and the teacher responding to the behavior affects *all* of the students in the room by hindering learning and affecting the climate of the classroom environment.

The implementation of specific classroom management strategies and program interventions at the classroom or school level are attempts to minimize this distraction and improve overall classroom quality. The research for all studies linking classroom management

and behavior regulation *favor* the use of program interventions, but conclude through a variety of measures that their effectiveness is contingent upon the fidelity of their implementation. This is heavily impacted by the teacher-perceived validity of the intervention as well as the commitment to thorough training and follow-up support. Lack of teacher self-efficacy regarding behavior management, both proactive and reactive, is a driving concern indicating an insufficient amount of training, support, and ongoing Professional Development (PD) in this area (Cook et al., 2018).

Teacher behavior driven by effective classroom management is widely suggested in studies on behavior management to be the key to improving *student behavior*. Aasheim et al. (2019) was one of several studies analyzing the positive effects of implementing the Incredible Years Teacher Management Program (IY TCM). This particular study examined a large-scale intervention in Norway and concluded that “The IY TCM training directly targets teachers rather than students; thus our findings may reflect the reasonable assumption that changes in student behavior result from changes in teacher behavior” (p. 910). The types of teacher behavior recorded and prioritized for various interventions include relationship-building behaviors, positive behavior modeling, consistent use of classroom management strategies, and maintaining self-control when responding to challenging student behavior. Successful teachers were measured by the result of classroom observations where students were witnessed to have high levels of student engagement and low levels of disruptive behavior. Academic achievement was often measured in these studies but was not a central focus.

Key Strategies and Terms

Freiberg et al. (2020) engaged in a meta-review of classroom management programs that followed a 2006 study which sought to identify changing trends. In the time between reviews, there was significance to the number of programs that had either changed, merged with other

programs, or had been discontinued due to lack of relevance. The evidence gave speculation to the fact that districts were moving away from “quick fix” strategies toward holistic approaches that included both preventative and reactive strategies (Freiberg et al., 2020).

Preventative strategies are referenced throughout the literature which include proactive measures that schools are directing teachers to implement that build community and improve classroom climate. Many strategies seek to prioritize positive teacher-student and peer relationships by creating classroom communities where the students’ sense of belonging fosters empathy and responsibility for collectively maintaining a positive learning environment. Routine and clear expectations are also frequently mentioned in regards to prevention, along with the relevance of knowing the disadvantages and needs of each student population and the potential teacher bias that may need attention. This was addressed regarding both implicit and explicit bias that may create unnecessary conflict between teachers and students regarding their race, clashes of culture, or perceived parent-involvement. Additionally, it has become necessary to mitigate teacher bias in regards to various intervention efforts by addressing the social validity, or teacher-wide acceptance, of the program being implemented to improve fidelity.

Reactive strategies are presented directives given by the various classroom management programs for acceptable teacher behavior that should be used in response to disruptive behavior by students. The goal of eliminating exclusionary discipline, which takes students *out* of the classroom by means of office referral or suspension away from learning, is considered a top priority. Other reactive strategies that are addressed are those that speak to the self-control of the teacher when approaching dysregulated students that includes empathy, positive intent, and appropriate disciplinary measures.

The other piece of holistic classroom management that is referenced frequently is the inclusion of curriculum guiding Social and Emotional Learning (SEL). Another meta-analysis of Classroom Management Programs revealed that the largest contributing factor to program success related to social and emotional outcomes was the presence and level of focus on SEL (Korpershoek et al., 2016). Many programs include comprehensive curriculum that explicitly teaches social skills and emotion-management, or are noted as being implemented in tandem with curricula that do. SEL is woven into both preventative and reactive strategies and has foundational considerations for the reasons why different behaviors are considered appropriate as well as meaningful methods for teaching them in developmentally appropriate ways.

Another term used in more than one behavior management program is the “token economy”. This strategy uses student behavior as a contingency for rewards or punishments that include physical points or currency given to students to be traded for preferred items such as stickers or small objects. Some programs favor this approach for conditioning students to engage in desired behaviors and other programs criticize the use of this approach and specifically suggest strategies that work towards internal motivation rather than extrinsic rewards.

Classroom Management Programs

The previously referenced IY TCM is just one of several classroom management programs that was evaluated in the studies presented in this literature review. The Well-Managed Classroom (WMC) initiative, which also grew into Well Managed Schools (WMS), were both subjects of different studies that included interventions done in tandem with school-wide implementation of Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (PBIS). PBIS is a widely used school-wide intervention strategy and was referenced in the study of a school adding the GREET-STOP-PROMPT (GSP) approach. PBIS was also mentioned in one of two studies

evaluating the Conscious Discipline (CD) program as well as the Class-Wide Function-Related Intervention Team (CW-FIT) strategy which was a token-economy intervention done a few times each week that supported social responsibility. The final program introduced in the research was the Un Buen Comienzo (A Good Start; UBC) intervention that was implemented on a large scale in Chile in preschool settings.

Research Focus

The collection of relevant research for this review was limited to empirical studies published in 2000-2021 that directly linked classroom management and behavior regulation. The search was further limited to only include interventions done at the early childhood and elementary school levels. No location parameters were imposed on the search and studies were included that took place in several countries including the United States, Chile, Norway, China, South Korea, and Taiwan. Demographics varied by study to isolate urban areas with notable imbalances of race, socio-economic status, or behavior management concerns to those who targeted specific student groups such as those receiving special education services.

The question sought to be answered within this review was: What does research in the 21st century suggest is the impact of classroom management on behavior regulation in early childhood and elementary classrooms?

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Literature Search Procedures

The collection of relevant literature to be used in this thesis was conducted through a search of Education Journals, ERIC (EBSCOHost), and EBSCO MegaFILE for peer-reviewed studies and publications narrowed to those published from 2000-2021. The key words used were “student behavior,” “classroom management,” “regulation,” “classroom management program,” and two meta-reviews of multiple classroom management programs were obtained through the addition of “classroom management programs.” The search for empirical studies was further narrowed to only include those interventions made in early childhood or elementary school settings. This chapter is structured to review the following: Demographics, Methods, and Limitations of these empirical studies, considerations for the impact of Student Behavior on the educational experience, the role of Teacher Behavior and Bias, Teacher Training, a review of Classroom Management and the programs reviewed in the study, the strategies of Prevention and Reaction, and the Impact of Program Implementation with High Fidelity.

Demographics, Methods, and Limitations

Each of the empirical studies reviewed used demographics that varied according to their purpose. International studies were included spanning four continents to include: North America, South America, Europe, and Asia. The majority of studies sought to increase the validity of implementation of a specific behavior management program or strategy and did so by gathering data pre and post-intervention in specified settings with little or no district-directed classroom management. Some of these studies were implemented school-wide and others through individual classroom implementation. Because the main focus of this review was narrowed to student behavior, many studies were intentionally placed in urban areas with reports of high

levels of concern related to disruptive behavior as well as below-average academic achievement with speculations as to behavior being a factor. For studies in the United States there were considerable notations for the racial discrepancy between teacher and staff with most teacher populations being made predominantly of white females and urban schools frequently having a much larger population of racial diversity among students. One study in particular was focused on the disparities in exclusionary discipline that were taking place in a school district taking black students out of the classroom significantly more than any other race with a predominantly white faculty (Cook et al., 2018). The schools in this district were all under review at a State and Federal level for the high-risk ratio of exclusionary discipline, defined as discipline that takes the student out of the learning environment for office referrals or suspension. Cook et al. (2018) argued that exclusionary discipline should be limited because it does not solve the problem, address the behavior, or help the teacher and student move toward resolution that prevents further occurrence. Specific data showed that the risk ratio for students of color was a 2.5 pre-intervention, which indicated that they were more than twice as likely to be removed from class as their white peers learning in the same environment. The experiment included mandated racial equity training as well as the implementation of the GREET-STOP-PROMPT (GSP) program which will be described later in this chapter. For early childhood programs there was much more focus on Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and growth and often less variance in demographics occurred within the studies while notations were made for race, socioeconomic environments, and program ratings as well as teacher education levels.

Another trend in the purpose of study emerged related to the effectiveness of teacher training on the fidelity of implementation for various interventions and strategies. For these studies there were different levels of training and coaching that occurred with pre and post

implementation data gathered regarding teacher efficacy, perceived usefulness, and effectiveness of the program or strategy.

Methods of implementation for the program intervention studies usually varied regarding the amount of time provided in training as well as the follow-up coaching and accountability provided to the intervention schools/classrooms as compared to the control schools/classrooms. Methods of data collection of the various studies included: teacher reporting or survey (of personal opinions regarding self-efficacy and implementation as well as reporting on student behavior, engagement, and performance), student reporting (of feelings of efficacy or belonging), observation of teacher behavior (done by administrators, coaches, and outside observers or researchers), observation of students behavior or engagement (done by coaches or outside observers or researchers), and student academic performance using standardized testing measures.

Programs and strategies were considered valid when supported by data showing a decrease in disruptive behaviors and discipline, increased student engagement and/or achievement, and improved school climate as measured by increased positive behavioral acknowledgment and prosocial behavior. Frequently the limitations of data collection were acknowledged to be the qualitative restrictions that exist with measuring behavior and climate. Because human behavior measured by humans is subjective, acknowledgments have to be made questioning the validity of teacher reporting used as a primary tool for data collection. Studies seeking to overcome this obstacle were those that used a stronger combination of methods including observations made by third parties who did not know the objectives, and multiple assessment tools that measure engagement, achievement, and behavior using behavior trackers that count data that can be quantified for evaluation. Even stronger validity was gained by studies

that either video-taped observations for multiple observers to validate later or had high percentages of extra observers validating school visits.

Only one specific behavior assessment tool was reported other than study-specific behavior counting or teacher reporting which was the Head-Toes-Knees-Shoulders (HTKS) task (Erturk Kara, 2018; Wanless et al., 2011). This task measures attention, memory, and inhibitory control through a series of commands for the student to follow. This is done privately with one assessor and one student at a time. Wanless et al. (2011) focused their study on the reliability of using the HTKS task as an accurate measure of student behavior and predictor for future behavior, engagement, and academic outcomes. This task was completed in four countries (United States, China, Taiwan, and South Korea) with a data pool that included 814 preschool-aged children, 695 parents, and one teacher from each of 73 classrooms (Wanless et al., 2011). Data was collected from both parents and teachers via survey as to the behavior of the children, academics by the standard achievement tests relevant to the country, and the HTKS task was administered by a researcher in two sessions. Results in all four countries were favorable to the HTKS task as a reliable measure of behavior regulation and a prediction of academic achievement in preschool children. Erturk Kara (2018) used the HTKS scores as indicators of the validity that the physical arrangement, routine, and use of visuals in the preschool classroom contribute to behavior regulation. The classroom teacher administered the HTKS task before and after complete implementation of the teacher-created plan. While Erturk Kara (2018) reported increased behavior regulation as measured by the HTKS task in agreement with teacher reporting on the individual students, the lack of control group, ability to isolate factors, and the small sample size make it difficult to ascertain if the HTKS was measuring developmental growth or response to the plan itself.

Student Behavior

In a meta review of classroom management programming Freiberg et al. (2020) argued that, “Student behavior for administrators and teachers is a time-consuming distraction from teaching and learning” (p.320). They went on to provide research linking student behavior to not only student achievement but to teacher retention and classroom quality impacting the experience of both. The meta review conducted was done in follow-up of a 2006 review of classroom management programs. This review was isolating additional study of classroom management programs specifically targeting disruptive behavior and discipline practices. They found that there was a significant decrease in organizations existing from the prior meta-review and explained this by way of organizations merging, in addition to some not being updated and therefore losing relevance. Studies found for the remaining programs as well as new program studies revealed new depth over the 12 years between reviews revealing increased emphasis by classroom management programs on SEL (Freiberg et al., 2020). Despite this initiative, there continues to be evidence that negative student behaviors are a source of stress for teachers and even a cause for leaving the profession.

In a study of the Class-Wide Function-Related Intervention Teams (CW-FIT) program, discipline was regarded as one of the top concerns for educators (Kamps et al., 2015). One of many studies into the Incredible Years: Teacher Classroom Management (IY TCM) program pleaded that, “Measures aimed at preventing and reducing problem behavior and coping issues are central to ensuring that all students experience optimal development and positive learning outcomes at school” (Aasheim et al., 2019, p.899). This study of program implementation in a regular Norwegian school setting used a random selection of students, as opposed to focusing on

students with problems regulating behavior, to gather data supporting the fact that when disruptive behavior is reduced in a classroom, *all* students benefit.

One study using data collected from implementing the IY TCM program was narrowed to identify the effects on students receiving special education services. Reinke et al. (2021) hypothesized that students receiving special education services would show a decrease in disruptive behavior and emotional dysregulation, as well as increased concentration, prosocial behavior, and social competencies, just like their general education peers. All of the hypotheses mentioned were supported by the data in the research, specifically when measured against similar students in the control classrooms receiving no intervention. Additionally, the data was compared to another study also referenced in this review (Reinke et al., 2018) which used the same sample for their study using a group randomized trial and found that when the data was moderated to only include children receiving special education services, the effect range increased significantly. These results lead researchers to speculate that students from this specific population were benefiting even more from the program intervention. Concessions were made for the potential impact of the district-wide high fidelity implementation of the Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions (PBIS), which also occurred prior to the IY TCM intervention.

Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2009) explored the adaptive behaviors of kindergarten students related to self-regulation skills upon entrance and classroom quality. Children were interviewed prior to entrance to kindergarten and invited to play a series of self-regulation games such as toy sorting and gift-wrapping to generate baseline data. Parent questionnaires were also administered and classroom observations by researchers during the first 5 weeks of school measured both student behavior and classroom quality. Several measures were taken to increase the validity of the pre and post data including weekly video-taping and reliability checks by multiple observers.

Classroom quality was assessed with regards to, “positive and negative climate, teacher sensitivity, regard for student perspectives, behavior management, productivity, instructional learning formats, concept development, and quality of feedback and language modeling” (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2009, p.963). Student adaptive behaviors that were measured included self-control, time spent engaged in learning, and results of the mock report card created by teachers. Findings from this study revealed that children with higher self-regulation in the Fall assessments reliably predicted adaptive behavior scores for the Spring. Additionally, the two greatest factors for predicting higher adaptability scores were students in classrooms with higher classroom quality as well as students who had attended preschool.

Ritz et al. (2014) engaged in a study of behavior management specific to preschool classrooms. Prior research revealed a trend that non-compliance was among the most prevalent behavior challenges for teachers working with preschool-aged children. This mixed-methods study gathered data qualitatively via teacher surveys as well as quantitatively through classroom observations. Five classrooms from two different schools were observed for over 28 hours using dual-observations for validity % of the time to calculate how often different appropriate strategies were being used for resolving noncompliance (Ritz et al., 2014). The purpose of the study was to see if recommended behavior management strategies were being used with consistency in preschool classrooms and this question was answered positively in favor of the consistent use of appropriate reactive behavior management strategies.

The Schmitt et al. (2012) study also focused their student sample on preschool-aged children. The study was conducted with attention to the teacher-child relationship and behavior regulation, seeking to find correlation between those and language/grammar development. Research was provided suggesting that students with disruptive behaviors and lower levels of

behavioral regulation receive less academic instruction because teachers are spending more time on redirection. One hundred and seventy-three randomly-selected children from over thirty preschools were subjects in this quantitative study. Data on behavior and teacher-student relationships was gathered via teacher reporting and language and grammar samples were taken in one-on-one sessions for each student with trained assessors in a quiet room in the child's school both pre and post intervention. A control group was given the intervention of language facilitation strategies focused on grammar. The findings indicated no correlations between disruptive behavior and language gain but did find that the significant factor on language acquisition was that of the quality of the teacher-student relationship (Schmitt et al., 2012).

Teacher Behavior and Bias

Chuang et al. (2020) was another study of the IY TCM program with a focus on Elementary Children with aggressive behavior that placed emphasis on the critical role that behavior management in a child's early years and preschool stages plays in the likelihood of future aggressive behavior. The study specifically focused on training teachers for the effectiveness of the intervention with these students, and significant data was gathered regarding the impact of the classroom management and teacher behavior in the form of reaction. Chuang et al. (2020) stated that, "Before entering school, young children use aggression to communicate their feelings or thoughts. This type of 'instrumental aggression' does not usually persist unless it is maintained as a result of the interaction between the child and the environment" (p.128). The correlation between adult reactions to behaviors in early childhood and the outcomes for children as they enter school was found to be significant. A study of two toddler classrooms revealed that even at the youngest of ages, the emotional tone of the classroom was set by the teachers' response to the behaviors of the children (Gloecker & Niemeyer, 2010). While this study was

quite limited to a small sample and observations were qualitative and subjective to the perceptions of the observer, they identified a strong correlation between teacher behavior and classroom climate.

Hoffman et al. (2005) echoed the sentiments of these studies with regard to the shift in focus onto teacher behavior as a means to regulate student behavior. This emphasis on teacher behavior includes modeling desired behavior and self-control as well as remaining composed when disruptive behavior by students occurs. Hoffman et al. evaluated the impacts of implementing the Conscious Discipline (CD) program in both the study of training teachers with supporting students with challenging behaviors (2005) as well as ways to improve school climate through positive teacher behavior and the reduction of rewards and punishment using CD (2009). A further study of CD was specifically aimed at the social validity of the program among teachers (Caldarella et al., 2012). The goal of the intervention in the experiment was to help create self-awareness for teachers of their own emotions and teach them healthy ways of managing those emotions so that they can minimize negative reactions to students with challenging behaviors. The sample size was relatively small, limited to early childhood teachers in one school setting. Regardless, the teacher-reported validity and acceptance of the program as a useful tool in teaching SEL as well as improving classroom climate was in favor of the program. Additional findings to support the emphasis on teacher behavior and attitude was discovered in the questions on the survey where several teachers acknowledged use of the self-regulation strategies in their personal life outside of the classroom.

Another theme that emerged when examining the teacher role in handling difficult behaviors was that of teacher bias. In the Cook et al. (2018) study, teacher bias against students based on race was shown to be significant in the documented offenses for which students were

sent out of the room. Even when the data was controlled for other factors such as socio-economic status, there were indisputable rates for which black students were sent out of the room for minor offenses such as dress code violations and disrespect whereas white students offenses were much more severe to warrant exclusionary discipline such as office referrals or suspension. The findings were interpreted to say that the black student experience was affected by the mistrust and lack of bonding with teachers which perpetuated further behavior problems as a result of the teacher bias.

Similar findings were collected in the Thijs et al. (2008) study on the impact of the teacher's perspective of the teacher-child relationship on the child's experience. They investigated how teacher perceptions translated into the pedagogical practices teachers self-reported they use with their students. The sample for this study included 81 teachers and 284 children from regular Dutch kindergarten classrooms (Thijs et al., 2008). Self-reporting on the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale (STRS) was the only method for data collection. Limitations were also acknowledged for the fact that each teacher was reporting on three different students (one hyperactive, one inhibited, and one average) and therefore the data could not be fully moderated by child. Findings indicated that teachers' self-reported behavior intentions were related to the unfavorable relationship perceptions with students, claiming that "it appears not only the perceived unfavorable relationships are a nuisance to teachers, but also that they reflect specific difficulties for children" (Thijs et al., 2008, p.256)

A study focused on the teacher perceptions of parent involvement revealed that teacher bias about the *perceived* parent involvement of their students can directly affect the teachers' relationship with the students and the behavior management strategies used in partnership with families (Herman & Reinke, 2017). Herman and Reinke linked teacher bias, when received as

judgment of parents, is a factor that may decrease the parents' willingness or ability to support their child at school. More details about this study will be shared in the next section.

The third mention of bias that occurred was in some of the international studies where programs or strategies conflicted culturally with the teachers in the study. In Wanless et al. (2011) it was acknowledged that culturally-specific parenting and teaching practices related to the expectations of child behavior in the presence of adults became a factor in comparing the implementation across cultures. Another study that reported cultural conflict in this way was Aasheim et al. (2020) with the acknowledgement that teachers in Norway struggled to connect with the training module videos made in American classrooms because of teacher behaviors that they couldn't relate to and therefore didn't feel could apply in their setting.

Finally, multiple studies noted that teacher bias in favor of positive outcomes can be a factor in both the validity of the data and the way that perceptions of change can affect attitudes and climate. Chuang et al. (2020) reported that *expectancy effects* for positive change could be a factor that couldn't be ignored for the positive changes in teachers' perceptions in the intervention group over the control group of study. Additionally, Carlson et al. (2011) described the possibility of teacher bias in reporting to be worthy of consideration regarding the ways in which teachers self-report that may include a *desirability bias* which may cause people to rate themselves more favorably because of the social implications that occur when being the object of study.

Teacher Training

After acknowledging the challenges that exist with the negative behavior of students, and the role that teacher behavior and bias plays in mitigation, the studies on effective classroom management, regardless of program/strategy, all share research in the responsibility of adequate

training for effective implementation and teacher self-efficacy. The Cook et al. (2018) study referenced previously, regarding the concerns of exclusionary discipline, reported that the problem was largely due to the teacher-reported lack of training in prevention strategies as well as tools for responding to the negative behaviors. Teacher surveys revealed a low self-efficacy for managing behavior, acknowledging that they feel they are inadequately trained in practices to assist in both the prevention as well as appropriate responses to problem behaviors (Cook et al., 2018). As a result of this, the GSP strategy was implemented in the intervention groups with strong coaching support. A *tell-show-do-feedback* model was used where coaches were a part of the initial training done prior to the school year, modeled the strategies for the teachers, and then were made to be observers in the classroom. Using fidelity rubrics, they provided performance-based feedback to the teachers in weekly follow-up meetings (Cooke et al., 2018).

The initial training of the Un Buen Comienzo: A Good Start (UBC) program in Chile was done in a similar fashion to the GSP strategy (Yoshikawa et al., 2015). This program was the first big initiative in Chile to improve classroom quality and student outcomes. It was implemented over two years with coaches introducing the strategies, going into the classrooms for modeling, and then observing the teachers and providing feedback. The video observations were used in addition to coaching as a means for collecting data on randomly selected teachers for documenting the implementation of the program strategies. Yoshikawa et al. (2015) found an increase in emotional support to be one of the biggest areas of growth in the classroom environment and attributed that to the support teachers were receiving from consistent coaching.

One of the findings in the Freiberg et al. (2020) meta review of classroom management programs focused on behavior management was that there exists a dissatisfaction for the amount of professional development (PD) done each year on classroom management. Since their review

was a follow-up to a 2006 study, they found that several programs no longer existed, had merged with others, or were no longer deemed relevant by the schools that had been using them. They postulated that the constant movement between strategies and programs demonstrated that schools were shifting away from “quick fix” strategies and embracing bigger programs that were more holistic in their approach. This included more attention to programs that taught the whole child through SEL and emphasis on school climate (Freiberg et al., 2020). The intervention of the IY TCM in Norway was said to have been introduced for some of the same reasons. Aasheim et al. (2020) reported that while teachers in Norway average high educational levels, there is not traditionally much in-service training on classroom management as well as strategies that support SEL. While the implementation of the IY TCM training program was not as successful as the Norwegian schools hoped it would be, it was suggested that the struggle to initiate program implementation with fidelity was most likely due to the cultural disconnect between the Norwegian teachers and the American teachers in the training modules (Aasheim et al., 2020). This drove the explanation that training and coaching have large impacts on program success and was suggested as consideration for further research.

One of the challenges in providing effective training was referenced in the Carlson et al. (2011) study on group training for the IY TCM program. It was stated that in the early childhood setting, in particular, having all of the teachers out of the classroom for training was not feasible, and having many substitute teachers was less than ideal for the students. One of the ways that they avoided this was to offer the training in the evenings and provide meals and small incentives such as gift cards for the teachers in attendance (Carlson et al., 2011). Another unique strategy for use in a preschool setting was done using self-video monitoring (Shernoff & Kratochwill, 2007). In this study, randomly-selected teachers were provided training on the IY TCM with

efforts aimed at increasing the use and confidence of proactive strategies for dealing with disruptive behavior. During implementation, teachers were provided materials to videotape their lessons and asked to self-monitor their implementation of the strategies and review them weekly. The variable in this study was that random teachers were also given access to phone coaching consultations throughout the study to discuss their videos. Findings from this study showed that all teachers participating in the self-monitoring videos showed reductions in challenging classroom behaviors, regardless of the use of the coaching consultations. Teachers with coaching support did, however, consistently report higher levels of confidence using the new strategies (Shernoff & Kratochwill, 2007).

An early study involving the IY TCM program was investigative coaching practices specifically and their impact in tandem with behavior support planning (Reinke et al., 2014). A method of implementation being noted was the use of weekly coaching meetings for teachers with disruptive students to assist those teachers in creating and revising behavior management plans. Coaches gathered data during classroom observations by calculating on handheld devices the specific strategies the teachers are using in real-time in the classroom, which informed discussion at weekly follow-up sessions (Reinke et al., 2014). Significant impact on the program was found in favor of the intervention to decrease disruptive behavior, however, without randomizing the use of the behavior support plans for at-risk students, Reinke et al. (2014) acknowledged that it was impossible to determine if the impact fell more on the collaboration with coaches, or on the behavior support plans themselves.

All of the studies around the IY TCM program acknowledged the importance of effective training, including coaching in some way, and Reinke et al. (2018) explained that this approach is learner-centered and seeks to support the teacher as learner by building on the teacher's

strengths through collaboration. Aaesheim et al. (2019) argued that teachers are the *targets* of the training suggesting that any changes in student behavior can be directly correlated to changes in teacher behavior. Chuang et al. (2020) signifies that teacher training is critical for implementation of a program to be done effectively. Other programs, such as CW-FIT, were documented to include a similar process to IY TCM, with the teacher training followed by coaches present at the first 2-3 instructional interventions in the classroom and feedback given to teachers (Kamps et al., 2015). Additionally, the Well Managed Classroom (WMC) program studied by Burke et al. (2011) noted that coaching support was offered to teachers and even used as an intervention directed by administrators for teachers who did not meet expectations for fidelity of implementation. In this study, a post-evaluation fidelity check occurred three years after implementation. This study was specifically tracking the link between program fidelity and student outcomes related to behavior and academic achievement. Findings did indicate a correlation between fidelity and favorable student outcomes that also included documentation of coaching support; however, because the amount and quality of coaching were not tracked throughout the study, these findings are more assumptive in nature regarding coaching and more significantly linked to teacher behavior and fidelity. Additionally, it was noted that teachers known to implement the program with high fidelity were often given more challenging students. As a result, therefore, this takes away from randomization. There was also no pre-intervention data gathered for this study since the program had been in place for a number of years and was specifically targeting long-term fidelity and not pre and post-intervention statistics (Burke et al., 2011).

The previously mentioned study by Herman and Reinke (2017) on teacher bias in regards to perceived parent involvement claimed to be the first randomized trial that found a change

specifically as a result of targeted training. The intervention implemented for this study was for the IY TCM program, which has “positive parent-teacher partnerships” as one of its three main goals and the object of their first full training day (Herman & Reinke, 2017, p. 94). Data for this study was collected from one school district, including over 1,800 students and just over 100 teachers in 9 elementary schools. A combination of teacher surveys and reports, observations of both teachers and students made by outside researchers, and data from standardized test scores were used in the analysis. Because this study was measuring teacher-*perception* of involvement and not *actual* involvement, only teachers completed surveys for this research, and parents were not involved. The rating scale that was used with teachers was one measuring contact and comfort level with parents. *Contact* was defined as “the amount of contact parents have with school personnel (e.g., attending meetings, volunteering and visiting the school)” and “*comfort*, sometimes called ‘bonding’ or ‘alliance’ refers to the quality of the relationship, not just the frequency of contact” (Herman & Reinke, 2017, p.90). The data taken on perceived parent involvement was used to place students into one of 4 quadrants describing the parent involvement in terms of high/low. This study did not discuss in detail the behavioral or academic outcomes of the data collection as those were used for different articles. They did, however, comment on the significant changes to perceived parent involvement made by teachers pre and post intervention. The most significant was that “80% of the parents who transitioned to the High Contact/ High Comfort class at follow-up were from the intervention group, versus 20% from the control group” (Herman & Reinke, 2020, p. 98). They acknowledged this as the most important finding in their research. These findings placed significant favor on the hypothesis that teachers could be trained to improve their partnerships with parents without requiring any behavior change to be made by the parents.

Classroom Management

Most studies on classroom management, specifically those gathering data on the outcomes of implementing classroom management programs, offer extensive evidence that quality classroom management has a direct, positive impact on student achievement and behavior. The Rimm-Kaufman et al. (2009) study on contributing factors of children's self-regulation and classroom quality to adaptive behavior in kindergarten used observers blind to study objectives and found many of the correlations hypothesized between those factors of predictive self-regulation and classroom quality. They also reported that "...surprisingly, classroom *quality* did not moderate the relationship between children's self-regulation and self-control, work habits, and engagement. Thus, classroom *management*, on average, appeared to make comparable contributions for all children sampled" (Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2009, p. 968).

Classroom management was one of the central focuses of a study by Pressley et al. (2019) analyzing the different approaches related to teacher effectiveness and experience. Teachers were separated into three groups including *new/developing* teachers, *proficient* teachers who have 3+ years of experience, and *highly effective* teachers. Teachers were randomly selected for this mixed method study where teachers reported on a number of questions with answers given on a Likert scale describing strategies they use for relationship-building with students, classroom management, and behavior management. In addition to these questions that offered quantitative data, two open-ended questions about classroom environments were used to help provide context for researchers since no observations were done as a part of the study, and only teacher surveys were used to collect data. Attention was drawn to new/developing teachers in regards to the fact that they had often not been trained formally in classroom management and

that PD would be important during their first several years of teaching. The analysis of teacher self-reported behavior signified that the implementation of formal classroom management and years of experience directly impacted teacher effectiveness at all levels. Reinke et al. (2018) also found evidence that individual teachers, and their management, hold relevance in the success of students in minimizing and regulating negative behaviors. They discovered this when controlling their data for analysis categorized at the student level, class level, and school level. Findings revealed that behavior management specifically showed higher variability when narrowed between classrooms over doing so by child or school (Reinke et al., 2018).

A meta-analysis of Classroom Management Programs and studies (Korpershoek et al., 2016) revealed that the largest contributor of effectiveness on social-emotional outcomes for different programs was the presence of a focus on Social/Emotional Learning (SEL). This analysis reviewed 54 random and non-random studies that were published from 2003-2013, excluding those that did not collect data on entire classrooms or have control groups in the study. They also narrowed their review to programs that measured multiple outcomes including behavioral, academic, motivational, as well as other relevant outcomes like self-efficacy. Effectiveness was determined by measured change in student and/or teacher behavior. SEL was considered to be the most significant result of effective classroom management strategies and programs (Korpershoek et al., 2016).

Another study that investigated the direct correlation between socialization and positive behavioral outcomes was conducted by Valiente et al. (2020) in both the preschool and elementary school environments. Attention was given to socialization related to peer interactions and student-teacher interactions. The emotional state of stress for teachers was calculated as well as the impact of negative peer interactions occurring such as bullying. This review of relevant

research related to various socialization processes indicated to researchers that socialization should be taught directly in the classroom environment (Valiente et al., 2020). This was preceded in support by a study by Calderaella et al. (2012) where data collected by survey found that 100% of the 17 early childhood educators surveyed believed that social and emotional skills should be taught directly in the classroom. Chuang et al. (2020) referenced the critical role that schools play in the development of social skills and emotional competence as well. They specified that this is especially important for children with high levels of aggression and that programming with scaffolding in place to continuously increase positive, prosocial behavior while minimizing aggressive behavior is necessary for their success in future social interactions (Chuang et al., 2020). Aasheim et al. (2019) claimed that social skills are needed in every interaction that occurs in the school setting, and the ability to self-regulate socially, including skills of communication and collaboration, are also linked to academics because of the social nature of learning in a classroom full of peers.

Specific classroom and behavior management programs were central to the majority of the literature reviewed. Eight articles were published between the years 2000 and 2021 on the IY TCM program using five different sets of data collected at different times, in two countries. Shernoff and Kratochwill (2007) studied implementation in a preschool setting with emphasis on collecting data regarding disruptive behavior. Carlson et al. (2011) was also targeting preschool intervention with attention to the effects of group training. Reinke et al. (2014) was a smaller-scale study in an elementary school setting with emphasis on behavior plans and the impact of coaching on teacher training. A large-scale study of over 1,800 students and 105 teachers in a large urban school district supplied data for several research studies looking at parent involvement, special education impacts, aggressive behavior in elementary school, and

general effectiveness of the IY TCM intervention (Chuang et al., 2020; Herman & Reinke, 2017; Reinke et al., 2018; Reinke et al., 2021). The final studies discovered in this review were those done on the implementation of IY TCM in a Norwegian setting (Aasheim et al., 2019; Aasheim et al., 2020). Each of these studies provided context for the IY TCM program describing it as “an evidenced-based prevention program designed to train teachers in effective classroom management practices and in turn, reduce student disruptive and aggressive behaviors” (Chuang et al., 2020, p.129) The strategies for prevention mentioned include the establishment of high expectations set by teachers and the training of ways to provide high-rates of positive reinforcement. Classroom management skills are taught proactively with practices such as “using behavior-specific praise, building positive relationships with students, using pre-corrective statements, teaching classroom expectations and using proximity to reduce disruptive behavior” (Reinke et al., 2018, p. 1045-1046). It was previously mentioned that one of the top priorities of the program was on parent partnership with Herman and Reinke (2017) finding favorable outcomes when studying the impact of that on training specifically. All of the IY TCM studies allude to the curriculum’s focus on positive prevention strategies and reacting with intention to positive behaviors over negative ones. While the various studies focused on different program aspects and hypothesized different things, they all shared favorable outcomes with implementation of the program.

Positive Behavior Supports and Interventions (PBIS) is a reactive behavior management strategy that was acknowledged by multiple studies regarding implementing new classroom management programs. Reinke et al. (2018) noted that before IY TCM implementation, “Even when PBIS is implemented with high fidelity at the school level, teachers may still struggle with proactive classroom management”(p.1045). One of the reactive strategies encouraged in PBIS is

increasing reaction to positive behavior through reinforcement rather than giving attention to negative behavior. The Robacker et al. (2016) study used an example of this with the implementation of a token economy. This strategy encourages positive behavior through the use of extrinsic rewards that condition a response for positive behavior by reinforcing it with desired objects such as stickers or tokens which can be traded for objects based on students' interests. The sample classroom in this study was using a class set of iPads to experiment with, giving the students rewards in real time during literacy lessons using Class Dojo. This app allowed teachers to tap on students' names during the lesson to distribute tokens digitally and students could see when they received rewards displayed on the board at the front of the room. While target behaviors did increase throughout the study during the literacy class period chosen for intervention, there was discussion surrounding the potential negative impacts of having students competing and seeing the rewards of their peers, as well as the unrealistic nature of the time required by teachers attending to the token system while also trying to provide instruction (Robacker et al., 2016).

The CW-FIT intervention is also a token-based strategy that uses a game-approach to provide reinforcement to students in teams (Kamps et al., 2015). The game would be played a few times each week. The teacher would set a timer in the room and have the students grouped in teams by seat assignment such as row or table. With each beep of the 3-minute timer, the teacher would scan the room, and whatever teams that had all students meeting the expectations previously agreed upon would receive a token. This strategy was intended to incentivize students to meet high expectations and increase positive climate through community-building and peer accountability. It was also acknowledged that inappropriate behavior was ignored when using this strategy. Similarly to the other incentive-based program, this program was noted to be more

labor-intensive for teachers than was ideal and the competitive component may have unintended negative side effects (Kamps et al., 2015).

The Cook et al. (2018) study claimed that even with a district-wide effort to improve school climate with PBIS, the fidelity of implementation was lacking which called for the attempt to be proactive with the initiation of GREET-STOP-PROMPT(GSP). This is a program that emphasizes simple strategies that require little training to be implemented. Much of the training time was done in the classroom with coach-modeling, followed by coach-observation and feedback. The GREET component includes being proactive in preventing disruptive behaviors by promoting a positive, engaging climate. This includes building community with simple, intentional strategies such as greeting students at the door. The STOP component encourages teachers to be more self-aware of their biases and potentially harmful reactions by pausing when they encounter unfavorable student behavior. Using program-specific self-regulation techniques such as deep breathing and considering mentally what is *actually* happening versus what the teacher might mistakenly perceive, they wait before responding to negative student behavior. The final component, PROMPT, contains specific response strategies for problem behaviors that follow the STOP period which avoid the use of exclusionary discipline (Cook et al., 2018).

Another study that directly referenced PBIS was the Burke et al. (2011) study. This was mentioned previously in regards to teacher fidelity and positive student outcomes as well as the impact of coaching. The program examined in this study was the Well-Managed Classroom (WMC). Another study by Oliver et al. (2019) used the same approach where the program had expanded into Well-Managed Schools (WMS). Both programs were designed to model the Boys Town Family Home Program initially created for residential treatment programs serving at-risk

youth. Its adaptation for classrooms began in 1979 where classroom teachers were trained to explicitly teach social skills and appropriate behavior (Oliver et al., 2019). The program places emphasis on relationships and positive climate, direct instruction of social skills, encouraging positive behavior through reinforcement of expectations as well as appropriate teacher responses to negative behavior. The Oliver et al. (2019) study was specifically looking at two elementary schools that were already using PBIS with fidelity prior to WMS intervention. Eighty children and twenty teachers were chosen at random for data collection with half in a school implementing WMS as a school-wide initiative and one school staying with only the PBIS initiative. The goal of the intervention was to increase positive school climate and teacher-praise, specifically in an environment where PBIS was already implemented. The most significant finding was related to teacher behavior which was the fact that teachers implementing WMS were “using between 9 and 10 more praise statements in a 20-minute observation compared with teachers in the control condition” (Oliver et al., 2019, p. 32). This finding suggested validity to the efforts to use the PBIS and WMS programs in tandem to increase the positive reinforcement of desired behaviors and positive school climate.

Conscious Discipline (CD) is another classroom management program focused on prevention through the proactive strategy of building positive community and focusing on teacher modeling of self-regulation (Caldarella et al., 2012; Hoffman et al., 2005; Hoffman et al., 2009). Specifically, teachers are “trained in the seven basic powers for self-control: perception, unity, attention, free will, love, acceptance, and intention.” (Caldarella et al., 2012, p. 591). The goal is to help create self-awareness for teachers of their own emotions and teach them healthy ways of managing those emotions so that they can minimize their negative reactions to students with challenging behaviors. There are goals for equipping teachers to be proactive as well as

strategies for using conflicts as learning opportunities for students through modeling and teacher support (Caldarella et al., 2012).

The final specific classroom management program referenced was the Un Buen Comienzo (A Good Start; UBC) program implemented in Chile which was the object of the Yoshikawa et al. (2015) study. Previously mentioned for the training and coaching strategies used, the program also provided over one-hundred book resources to each participating classroom to support the intervention. Oral language and literacy were top priorities of UBC along with emphasis on socioemotional development achieved through behavior management training and support for creating a positive classroom climate (Yoshikawa et al., 2015).

Prevention and Reaction Strategies

One of the strategies for preventing negative behavior in students was through SEL and the explicit instruction of desired behavior. Darcy et al. (2017) focused their research on how experiences in kindergarten classrooms shape the development of self-regulation skills. The method of intervention was for the teacher to explicitly model and teach target behaviors in a lesson once per week. Students met with the teacher pre and post-intervention to self-assess and share the ways that they believed they were meeting the goals. Since one of the objectives was for the students to participate in the goal-setting and management, conferences were held weekly with each student for reflection. The primary targets of the intervention included emotion and behavior regulation. The study acknowledged the limitations of the small sample (one classroom of 19 students), as well as the fact that they began the intervention in late March and concluded the attempt quickly in May. They attributed these factors as explanations for why the data did not yield very significant results. Despite this, they did believe that the self-monitoring and goal-setting directly contributed to an increase in on-task behavior, concluding that there is a

benefit to using modeling and student-guided goal-setting to increase self-regulation related to work habits (Darcy et al., 2017).

Carlson et al. (2017) also addressed this strategy of positive prevention by emphasizing the direct teaching of self-agency for students. Trainers of the IY TCM program urged teachers to promote academic efficacy, self-determination, and behavioral self-control in their students. The second component of positive prevention was the promotion of classroom community and learning through the caring and committed relationships among members of the learning environment (Carlson et al., 2017). Creating a positive community is also identified as a critical part of the CD program (Caldarella et al., 2012). Hoffman et al. (2005) further describe the CD classroom as being identified as the “school family” where teachers work towards motivating students to make positive behavior choices by fostering an empathetic mindset. The family climate is built through routines and classroom centers that promote SEL as well as support students’ needs for security and a sense of belonging (Hoffman et al., 2005).

The emphasis on the need for healthy teacher-student relationships in achieving quality classrooms is another theme woven throughout most research on positive prevention related to issues of behavior management. Aasheim et al. (2019) acknowledged that studies are limited to the reality that the long-term effects of prevention often are delayed in presenting themselves. Despite this, the quality of teacher-student relationships has been consistently correlated to positive school experiences for students (Aasheim et al., 2019). Cook et al. (2018) suggest that efforts to maintain these positive teacher-student relationships require training for teachers equipping them with tools for self-regulation that assist them in their reaction to both perceived and actual offenses of negative student behavior. Doing so with success is suggested to be

advantageous in managing a positive climate, regardless of student behavior, as well as the goal of keeping all students learning in the classroom (Cook et al., 2018).

Another theme throughout the studies on preventive measures that assist in behavior management is the use of positive behavior recognition. In some studies this was achieved through incentives such as the token economy using Class Dojo (Robacker et al., 2016), or the CW-FIT team games (Kamps et al., 2015). Other programs emphasize praise as an important tool used to draw attention to positive behaviors resulting in a decrease of negative behaviors. In one of the studies regarding implementation of the WMC intervention, it was claimed that high-fidelity teachers were maintaining a positive climate with average praise-to-correction ratios of 4:1 (Burke et al., 2011). Alternatively, the observations of low-fidelity teachers found that the average ratio was 1:2, meaning that they were correcting negative behaviors twice as often as acknowledging positive behaviors. Another important distinction between the impact that this had on learning in these classrooms was the fact that when observers took counts of academic engagement at one-minute intervals, the high fidelity teachers were averaging 97% student engagement (Burke et al., 2011, p.213).

The increased use of praise was also a measure used in the Carlson et al. (2011) study of the implementation of IY TCM in preschool classrooms. A key finding was that teachers' increase of use did not happen between the pre and post-assessments related to the program training, but occurred in the follow-up assessment given 16 weeks later. This was suggested to be relevant in noting the delay in implementation of new learning for teachers. Concession was made to the fact that this study relied solely on teacher reporting of behavior, as opposed to observation, however the self-awareness of teachers to the changes in their behavior over time was considered relevant regardless (Carlson et al., 2011).

Proximity praise was one of the primary strategies used to assist in non-compliance for preschoolers mentioned in the Ritz et al. (2014) study. While there was no classroom management program central to this study, it was an observation-based study that sought to discover with what frequency preschool teachers were using appropriate behavior management strategies with their students. Using the strategy of proximity praise, teachers will praise compliant students in the presence of non-compliant students, motivating them to change their behavior. Other proactive approaches included guided compliance and behavioral momentum. In both of these strategies, students were supported to accomplish the compliant behavior with reminders or frequent cueing. While findings in the study were favorable for the use of proactive strategies, it was noted that positive reinforcement was given only 31.8% of the time for appropriate behavior following an incidence of non-compliance (Ritz et al., 2014). This was considered as a gap in the effective implementation of praise as both prevention through proximity and reaction through positive reinforcement and was noted as an area of growth for future teacher development.

Inevitably, despite positive and proactive efforts, it will be necessary for teachers to manage students with disruptive behavior, making it imperative to have strategies in place for appropriate reaction. The impact that appropriate teacher-reaction to disruptive behavior has on the student misbehaving as well impact on the entire class was deemed significant in many studies on classroom management. Hoffman et al. (2005) claimed that disruptions to class could be reduced or even avoided completely by the use of appropriate reactions by teachers when they occur. The research suggested that teacher behavior directly impacts student behavior which impacts school climate, therefore, when teachers self-regulate, learning can be increased for all students (Hoffman et al., 2005).

The STOP component of GSP specifically targets teacher reactions to disruptive behavior (Cook et al., 2018). This self-regulation strategy described in this classroom management program helps to create impulse-control for teachers when they are dealing with dysregulated students. When using this method, teachers are asked to use their self-regulation moment to consider with an open-mind what is actually happening with the student before proceeding with disciplinary action. Since this study was conducted as a result of high levels of exclusionary discipline, unfairly weighted toward students of color, the favorable results were especially significant for the school district considering that the positive changes to teacher reactions kept students in the classroom much more often where learning could be taking place (Cook et al., 2018).

The Ritz et al. (2014) study of appropriate preschool teacher classroom management also collected data on teacher reactions to non-compliant behavior. Acceptable strategies tracked by researchers included verbal reprimands, overcorrection, response cost, and timeouts. Appropriate *reprimands* were narrowed to times when the teacher identified the unsatisfactory behavior by communicating dissatisfaction with the behavior, not the student, and followed-up with an example of appropriate behavior for the student. This strategy for reaction was calculated the highest at 11.4% of the time. *Time-outs* both in close proximity to the incident or by relocation of the child had a large amount of variation in its implementation and were used in 8% of the observations. *Overcorrection* (where the student must practice positive behavior as well as resolve the mistake) as well as *response cost* (removal of privilege or preferred items) were of the lowest strategy teamed with asking other students to *ignore* the outburst and collectively were only calculated at 2.3% of the time (Ritz et al., 2014).

Response cost is the inverse of the reward component of the token economy using Classdojo in the Robacker et al. (2016) study. In alliance with the PBIS model, teachers' intention was to motivate desired behaviors by use of token incentives and positive reinforcement as a primary means of program use. However, the program did allow for points to be removed via response cost, or consequence, for noncompliance or disruptive behavior (Robacker et al., 2016).

The Conscious Discipline model is one specifically focused on positive prevention but also gives direction for healthy reaction for teachers when necessary that include strategies for effective discipline. Caldarella et al. (2012) concedes that with the foundation of strong self-control, teachers can administer discipline effectively when maintaining their composure, offering encouragement, being assertive, and offering choices to students. When necessary teachers may need to issue consequences to students but must maintain self-control and use empathy and remain positive in their intent at all times (Caldarella et al., 2012).

Impacts of Program Implementation with High Fidelity

A common report made by researchers in studies within this review was whether or not implementation was being done with high fidelity. Studies with coaching components reported on fidelity, regarding it as an important accountability component of teacher training. The IY TCM study analyzed by Reinke et al. (2014) found at the four teacher-observation checkpoints that teacher implementation and fidelity was higher and more maintained by those receiving coaching specifically. Yoshikawa et al. (2015) also reported that accountability through coaching directly improved the fidelity of implementation in the intervention done in Chile.

The Burke et al. (2011) study was geared directly at teacher fidelity and the impact that it has on student behavior as well as data that demonstrated impact on academic achievement. The

data collected on the WMC intervention was taken three years after implementation. They found that teacher fidelity was directly correlated with having higher levels of student engagement as well as fewer behavior issues resulting in suspensions. The data was so significant in predicting the link between program fidelity and academic engagement that it “accounted for 57% of the variance in a linear regression analysis” (p.208). While no findings on academic achievement were found to support a link between program fidelity and higher report cards, it was believed that with higher academic engagement, this impact on academic performance would be inevitable and they attributed the lack of data on this specifically to the absence of relevant pre-intervention data (Burke et al., 2011).

While the primary focus of the literature reviewed was on linking classroom management to behavior regulation, many others commented on the impact of program fidelity on academic performance. Chuang et al. (2020) found that math scores went up during the intervention targeting students with aggressive behavior. The suggestion was made that “the focus on preventing problem behaviors by establishing clear expectations and providing high rates of positive interactions, teachers were likely able to minimize off-task and disruptive behaviors, which may have allowed them to devote more time to deliver math instruction and for students to receive it” (p.132). The Schmitt et al. (2012) study on language and grammar gain also found that while behavior regulation was not significantly linked to academic changes in grammar, a significant result was found related to classroom management in the relationship between teachers and their students. Over the academic year, students with closer student-teacher relationships demonstrated greater language gains relative to their peers (Chuang et al., 2020).

A final comment regarding the impact of program fidelity was described in the Caldarella et al. (2012) study offering a dependent relationship between fidelity and the social validity of a

program as determined by the teachers using it. The premise of the study revolved around the fact that ineffective classroom management is a significant factor in teachers choosing to leave the profession and for teachers to have self-efficacy in using a program they must find it to be valid and perceive it to be a worthy and beneficial strategy. Surveys were used in this study to determine the validity of the Conscious Discipline program and the use of it by 17 preschool teachers working collaboratively in a single preschool. There were findings to suggest that as many as half of teachers didn't see students using the skills taught spontaneously and the same amount of teachers weren't confident that the *students* enjoyed the curriculum and the specific activities done during lessons. Despite this, there was general agreement by all teachers that *they* liked the program and believed it to be valid. In the open-ended portion of the survey some teachers even chose to comment freely that they personally benefited from the emotional regulation strategies and used them to self-regulate in conflicts occurring in their marriages and family relationships as well (Caldarella et al., 2012).

CHAPTER III: Conclusion

Summary

Regulating student behavior is a frequent obstacle for educators that takes time away from learning (Burke et al., 2011; Cook et al., 2018; Freiberg et al., 2020; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2009; Robacker et al., 2016). Classroom management, as a means to lessen and prevent this distraction of negative behavior, has become an increasing priority for school districts around the world. Reducing exclusionary discipline (Cook et al., 2018; Kamps et al., 2015) and keeping *all* students, including those who receive special education services (Reinke et al., 2021), in the classroom learning as much as possible is a top priority. Classroom management strategies and programs have grown and merged over time with research-based prevention and reaction strategies that seek to equip teachers to serve both students who struggle with challenging behavior and their peers (Freiberg et al., 2020). Effective classroom management is widely believed to be the key to reducing problem behaviors in the classroom (Aasheim et al., 2020; Burke et al., 2011; Chuang et al., 2020; Erturk Kara, 2018; Freiberg et al., 2020; Hoffman et al., 2005; Oliver et al., 2019; Pressley et al., 2020; Reinke et al., 2018; Rimm-Kaufman et al., 2019; Shernoff & Kratochwill, 2007). Studies rating the effectiveness of various programs and strategies included several methods of gathering data. Most evaluations included teacher-reports that were both self-evaluative as well as reports of student behavior and achievement. Many included surveys of teacher experience and opinion, with some that surveyed more broadly to administrators, students, or parents. Many validated their data with classroom observations using either video monitors to be reviewed later or third-party observers directly in the classroom.

When looking at increasing positive student behavior in the classroom, many studies found that positive *teacher* behavior is the one of the biggest predictors of success (Darcy et al.,

2017; Gloeckler & Niemeyer, 2010; Hoffman et al., 2005; Ritz et al., 2014; Valiente et al., 2020). Observations of teachers measured positive behavior in the terms of modeling appropriate behavior for students, using classroom management strategies consistently, and exhibiting self-control when responding to challenging students. Classrooms with positive climates, fostered by teachers that had good relationships with their students, were observed to be most successful as measured by high levels of student engagement and/or achievement as well as low levels of negative student behavior.

One of the strategies suggested to be effective in increasing positive climate in the classroom was to help create awareness for teachers of the biases they might have. Teacher-bias was measured with significance in regards to race (Cook et al., 2018), clash of culture (Aasheim et al., 2019,2020; Wanless et al., 2011), perceptions of parent involvement (Herman & Reinke, 2017), teacher perceptions of their relationships with students (Schmitt et al., 2012; Thijs et al., 2008), and the validity of the classroom management strategies or programs they were being asked to implement (Aasheim et al., 2020; Burke et al., 2011; Caldarella et al., 2012).

Teacher-bias was a significant consideration for administrators, instructional coaches, and classroom management programs when looking at methods of teacher training. Lack of teacher-training, professional development, and self-efficacy for handling behavior challenges in the classroom, was acknowledged as one of the primary sources for teacher stress as well as a cause for teachers leaving the profession (Caldarella et al., 2012). Several studies measured the impact of group-training as well as the value of coaching on improving teacher-effectiveness in regards to implementation of classroom management programs (Carlson et al., 2011; Chuang et al., 2020; Hoffman et al., 2005; Kamps et al., 2015; Pressley et al., 2020; Reinke et al., 2014; Shernoff & Kratochwill, 2007; Yoshikawa et al., 2015). Coaching methods such as modeling,

observation, and direct feedback were considered to be the most effective in training teachers to implement programs with fidelity, which was regarded as a critical component of intervention usefulness and longevity.

The inclusion of social and emotional learning (SEL) was one of the biggest findings validating effective classroom management programs (Aasheim et al., 2019; Caldarella et al., 2012; Chuang et al., 2020; Korpershoek et al., 2016; Reinke et al., 2018; Valiente et al., 2020). Direct instruction of SEL is considered an important factor in proactive classroom management; teaching self-regulation, which is found to increase prosocial and academic behaviors in students, especially at young ages. Programs referenced in this review emphasizing the critical role of proactive prevention include Incredible Years Teacher Classroom Management, GREET-STOP-PROMPT, Well-Managed Classroom/Schools, Class-Wide Function-Related Intervention Teams, Un Buen Comienzo (A Good Start), Positive Behavior Intervention Strategies, and Conscious Discipline. Each program also had various components for appropriate reactionary guidelines for the instances in which teachers need to respond to dysregulated students. Direct correlations have been found between the self-regulation of teachers and that ability to maintain quality classrooms with minimal disruption.

The final component of effective implementation of classroom management interventions that assist teachers in regulating student behavior is that of program fidelity. Fidelity is said to be achieved through establishing program validity for teachers through training that is thorough and includes a commitment to teacher self-efficacy (Aasheim et al., 2020; Burke et al., 2011; Cook et al., 2018; Kamps et al., 2015; Oliver et al., 2019; Reinke et al., 2018). Use of coaching and classroom-embedded modeling and practice are at the core of programs that see successful implementation as measured by a decrease in problematic behavior which is consistently

reported to be partnered with increased positive classroom climate and increased academic achievement and engagement.

Limitations of Research

This review of relevant research was limited to three main factors including time, age of student populations, and focus of impact. The population of study samples included specifically those with students in early childhood programs and elementary school classrooms. Only peer-reviewed studies published from 2000-2021 were included, and were retrieved using searches of Education Journals, ERIC (EBSCOHost), and EBSCO MegaFILE. Studies were included with samples as small as one classroom with one teacher, as well as those with district-wide implementation affecting over 1,000 students and over 100 educators. The focus of impact was narrowed to studies that specifically targeted a relationship between classroom management and behavior regulation.

The research was heavily weighted to program-specific behavior management interventions. Consistent emphasis was placed on prevention as a primary means of decreasing problem behaviors in classrooms and keeping students engaged. Reactionary strategies for supporting teachers in regulating students by means of co-regulation did not present itself as expected. While quality classrooms and positive school climate were mentioned quite often, specific information about de-escalation was not highlighted in research at any significant level. Percentages of change were offered as measures of program effectiveness and validity, however there was a less-than-expected offering of specifics regarding behavior change in students as a result of the interventions.

Implications for Future Research

The overwhelming emphasis for behavior regulation was placed on proactive, preventative classroom management. Successful implementation was consistently regarded as contingent on teacher behavior and self-efficacy achieved through quality training and coaching. The data gathered via teacher survey and reports indicate a considerable lack of training both in position-supported PD and also initial education and certification. Future research linking teacher education programs and their level of classroom management content would be helpful in determining the proficiency of new teachers as they enter the profession. Additionally, research calculating the amount of PD devoted to classroom management by schools with low levels of disruptive behavior would be helpful in guiding decision-making for district leaders regarding the value of PD on classroom management and its implications for all students regarding academic engagement and quality classrooms with minimal disruptions to learning.

Professional Application

I initially was motivated to choose research regarding behavior regulation and classroom management because I have seen a correlation between the two in my experiences moving into early childhood education in the past several years. I have noticed a trend among my peers that teachers, such as myself, who have embraced the classroom management program in our district have had more success with regulating the behaviors of our students. A common response in our professional learning communities (PLC) by teachers who have not committed to the program has been that they simply have more difficult students than others. While I believe that it is entirely true that different students present different challenges, and different classroom dynamics occur with each group of students that we have, I have always believed that the locus

of control falls much more within the teacher's grasp than many of my colleagues want to believe.

Many preventive measures overlapped in the studies done on classroom management programs. Consistently there is an emphasis placed on having clear expectations for students and having reasonable routines that offer security and predictability that help keep students, specifically the youngest students, engaged and on-task for teacher-desired outcomes. I think the implementation of these expectations and routines from the very first day of school is critical and believe so even more with the studies that I read to support it.

Another important preventative measure is that of investing in the classroom community. Many programs, including the one that I currently use, have components of community-building such as classroom meetings and games that many teachers treat as though they are *extra* activities to only be implemented when there is additional time after all academics are complete. I believe in the research presented that validates taking the time to get to know our students, and have them get to know one another, which fosters a classroom community that imparts responsibility and empathy to one another that translates into more positive behavior.

The final preventative measure that I find to be particularly relevant is the focus on positive behaviors, positive reinforcement, and positive classroom climate. I find this to be a natural inclination because of my personality as a highly relational person, and I see it as a direct contributor to the connection that I form with my students that supports their desire to engage and follow the directions that I give them. It feels like a simple thing to connect positive strategies with a positive classroom climate, however I know that managing disruptive behavior and dysregulated students can interrupt those efforts.

In the last two years I was trained in responding to crisis situations related to escalated student behavior and as a result have been on-call to assist in other classrooms when emergencies arise. I expected to find more about this type of situation in the research on classroom management and wonder if research has yet to be done on the co-regulation and de-escalation techniques that I was recently trained in, or if they are intentionally left out of these programs. Learning how little the focus lies on reaction, compared to prevention, in the studies I reviewed has shifted my mindset. I feel a new drive to strengthen the implementation of proactive measures as well as spend more time and energy equipping the teacher assistants and paras that I work with on my classroom teams to be united in our approach.

I have also recently joined an initiative in our district to be more intentional about the use of our PD and PLC time by creating PLC leads who assist instructional coaches with planning collaborative plans for PLC time as well as fill our district-wide PD days. I plan to use the knowledge I received during this literature review to drive my considerations for ways to maximize training time as well as encourage collaboration among our preschool staff for strengthening our classroom management approaches. As a leader on this team I plan to redirect emphasis to strategies that are proactive and preventative in their implementation in hopes of minimizing our need to train more staff in reactive crisis management.

Conclusion

The goal of education is to impart knowledge and develop students academically, physically, socially, and emotionally. No matter the age or stage of the teacher and learner, the whole-person and all of their needs must be considered for any of those goals to be achieved. Managing negative student behavior can be an unpleasant part of a teacher's role, however, there is much research to support the fact that teachers have within themselves the power to minimize

the level of disruption to the classroom as well as the frequency of the need through preventative classroom management interventions. The teacher's behavior by means of attitude, bias, self-control, and commitment to best practices is the foundational layer of a quality classroom that is managed effectively. While the impact of classroom management on regulating student behavior in the early childhood and elementary classrooms has been directly linked, the impact will only be made if there are responsive teachers committed to its intentional implementation.

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