

CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES
FOR STUDENTS WITH EMOTIONAL AND BEHAVIORAL DISORDERS

by

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CERTIFICATION OF THESIS/PROJECT CAPSTONE WORK

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ABSTRACT

Elementary students who exhibit behavioral problems often underachieve in all academic subjects, especially in developing their reading skills (Haak, Downer, & Reeve, 2012). This issue of student emotional and behavioral disorders creates a problem of classroom management for teachers. This review and synthesis of the literature to address the question of what are effective classroom management strategies for use with school age students exhibiting emotional and behavior disorders has produced three findings. The first is that research has identified three main types of classroom management strategies that produce positive impact on students with emotional and behavioral disorders: classroom instruction, teacher positive feedback and praise, and student self-monitoring. The second finding is that of the three types of strategies, the classroom instruction and teacher positive feedback and praise increased the time on task and academic performance of these students. Classroom instruction appears to produce positive academic results at the early elementary and late middle school levels, while teacher positive feedback and praise appears to produce results across all grade levels. The third finding is that student self-monitoring appears to be the type of classroom management strategy that decreases negative emotional and behavioral incidents by students with emotional and behavioral disorders across all grade levels. As a result, this strategy type also increases student time on task. These findings are relevant to the professional development of general and special education teachers, and will be dispersed to them through a professional development project in the form of a digital brochure.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Statement of the Problem

Many factors such as student age, gender, socioeconomic status (SES), culture and family history, language, peer relationships, teacher-student relationships, and learning disabilities or special needs can contribute to student emotional and behavioral disorders (EBDs) (Darney, Reinke, Heiman, Stormont, & Ialongo, 2013). Unacceptable behaviors in classrooms affect students' academic, social, and physical learning environments. Teachers identified some of the biggest problem behaviors seen in their elementary students as: attention deficit problems, talking disrespectfully to teachers, wandering around the classroom without permission, interrupting lessons by talking out of turn or at an inappropriate time, and refusing to cooperate or complete work (Teyfur, 2015). Elementary students who exhibit behavior problems often underachieve in all academic subjects, even more so in developing their reading skills (Haak, Downer, & Reeve., 2012). This issue of student emotional and behavioral disorders creates a problem of classroom management for teachers. A research question to address this problem is, which classroom management strategies for use with school age students are effective for students exhibiting emotional and behavioral disorders? The most appropriate way to address this question is to conduct an extensive literature review, synthesize the findings, and then use the results to create professional development for teachers.

Background

I developed this question based on my observations of teachers' frustrations in understanding

and knowing how to deal with students who have behavioral and emotional issues, in various schools where I held long term substitute positions. So far in my teaching career, I have held four long term substitute teaching positions within three years of day to day substitute teaching in multiple elementary schools, three in regular education elementary positions and one as a reading teacher in grades K-5. Many of the teachers I interacted with expressed similar concerns; they felt like no one was doing anything to help them and that they were doing a disservice to the other students in the classroom due to the many disruptions from students with behavioral problems during instruction time. Teachers felt like the students demonstrating the disruptive behavioral and emotional problems did not belong in their classroom and that they should have the right to say these students are not allowed to return to their classroom until the issue is resolved or a plan is put in place to resolve the issue. The students exhibiting the emotional and behavioral disorders were often discussed in a negative way and labeled as “bad students”. I felt like these students deserved more of a chance and maybe if the right strategies were in place, the students could successfully show improvement in academic growth. Because these teachers did not seem to know how to manage these students and I did not have a solution for them, I decided to research this problem and create some form of professional development for these and all teachers.

Terminology

For the purpose of this study, there are a couple of terms which need to be defined and explained in order to enhance the reader’s understanding of this topic. The main terms are “classroom management strategies” and “emotional and behavioral disorders.” According to Emmer and

Sabornie (2015) classroom management is “establishing and maintaining order... whose goals include student learning as well as social and emotional growth. It also includes actions and strategies that prevent, correct, and redirect inappropriate student behavior” (p.8). Classroom management strategies, then, are strategies a teacher employs or could employ to maintain classroom management. These strategies include clearly explaining the expected routines and having students practice the routines (Ravitch, 2007). Emotional and behavioral disorders covered in this study are defined by Section 300.8 (c) (4) of The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) as, “a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance” (§ 300.8). Conditions include a student’s “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” (§ 300.8). Other conditions include inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression. A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems” (§ 300.8).

Theoretical Framework

The theory behind this proposed research is the learning theory that learning increases with time on task: “learning is dependent on the extent to which students actually spend the time in learning that they need if they are to learn” (Anderson, 1984, p. 143). Part of the role of teachers is to assist students in staying on task. Teachers can use classroom management strategies to help them do that. A similar theory in literacy by Gee (1987) is literacy as a social practice. A school

classroom is what Gee calls a “Discourse”. Gee defines a Discourse as, “a socially accepted association among ways of using language, of thinking, and of acting...used to identify oneself as a member of a socially meaningful group or “social network” (p. 1). To learn the literacy of the classroom Discourse requires students to not only be a part of that Discourse but to also take on the identity of that Discourse. Students who are disruptive in the classroom are not taking on the Discourse identity of a learner and therefore are not learning or able to learn the literacy of the classroom Discourse.

Rationale

The problem of classroom management strategies to reduce behavioral problems with school age students is one that concerns all teachers. Addressing this problem will benefit the field of education by giving educators information on research-based classroom management strategies to use when working with students exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems. These classroom management strategies will provide educators with knowledge on how to connect with and understand students with behavioral problems and give educators tools they can use to help prevent a frustrated classroom environment with continuous behavioral problems and to help create a positive and engaged learning environment. The goal of this proposed research is to produce new knowledge that will assist educators to use appropriate researched-based classroom management strategies to help students with emotional and behavioral problems increase their time on task and academic achievement.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

Numerous studies have been conducted to help educators become aware of the most commonly identified behavioral and emotional problems exhibited by school students. The purpose of this review is to gather studies of classroom management strategies that have been used with students to create a positive learning environment with few disruptions from students with behavioral or emotional problems. To find those studies, I searched the leading educational databases and used the keywords of *emotional and behavioral problems/disabilities/issues*, *emotional and behavioral management strategies*, and *classroom management strategies*. A total of 15 studies were found. They are reviewed below, and grouped according to grade range of participating students.

Before examining student behaviors in various grade levels, it is helpful to identify what teachers see as the skills needed by students. Poulou (2005) conducted research on teachers' suggestions of skills students need to prevent reoccurring emotional and behavioral problems in school. Participants were 427 in-service school teachers, most of whom were female.

Participants were given a list of 17 skills and asked to rate the significance each skill had on students' social, emotional, and cognitive skills and abilities. Teachers ranked the 17 skills, with number 1 being the most important and number 17 being what teachers felt was least important. Analysis showed that teachers rated "recognizing and identifying emotions," "expressing emotions," and students' "ability to accurately assess emotional intensity" (p.44) as the top three most important emotional skills needed by elementary students to help prevent emotional and

behavioral problems. Results of this unique study will be considered during the analysis of the studies reviewed below.

With Students in Kindergarten to Grade 2

Working with first grade students, Lane, Wehby, Menzies, Gregg, Doukas, and Munton (2002) conducted a study on the effects of early literacy instruction on students exhibiting early signs of emotional and behavioral problems. Participants included seven students who had not responded to other school wide literacy and behavioral intervention programs. Participants demonstrated high levels of risk for emotional and behavioral problems on a Student Risk Screening Scale. This study was conducted over a nine-week period and consisted of 30 thirty minute lessons three to four times a week. “*The John Shefelbine’s Phonics Chapter Books*” (p. 444) were used to instruct the participants in blending skills, learning and reviewing new sounds, rereading, dictation and writing, and learning high frequency words. The participants’ academic and social skills were assessed using a variety of measures before intervention began. Curriculum measures were used to assess academics, and observations were used to assess student behaviors. Fluency in oral reading and nonsense words were the academic aspects measured and total disruptive behaviors and negative social interactions were the behavioral aspects measured. Results showed, “that all participants made strong progress in decoding skills” (p. 449) and, “had a decrease in disruptive behavior exhibited in the classroom” (p. 451). Early literacy instruction could be an effective strategy for improving emotional and behavioral problems in elementary students.

Working with three African American males, ages five, six, and seven, McDaniel and Flower (2015) conducted research on the effects of using a behavioral graphic organizer as a self-monitoring classroom management strategy to reduce disruptive classroom behaviors that led to student removal from the classroom. Students that participated in this research were from a K-12 school in the Southeast suburbs of the United States. The school was in an area that provided educational services to a population of mainly African American males; it even provided self-contained classrooms for students with “challenging behaviors” (p. 508). All three participants had IEP’s that detailed their behavioral problems, and had been recommended by their teachers to be part of the research. Participants were given some assessments before the research data collection process began. The participants’ behavioral and emotional strengths and weaknesses were assessed using a Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. The data from this questionnaire was used to rate the students within five behavioral and emotional areas, and then students were given five different subscale scores. Researchers then collected research data on the students’ scaled behavioral and emotional issues by using “a multiple baseline design” (p. 510) to determine if the Antecedent-Behavior-Consequence (A-B-C) Graphic Organizer (GO) (the A-B-C GO approach) as behavioral intervention strategy was effective for decreasing unwanted disruptive classroom behaviors. The A-B-C GO approach was first introduced to the classroom teacher, the classroom aide, and the school counselor during a one hour training session. The implementation of this GO intervention then followed several important steps: “allowing the student to calm down enough to discuss the incident, making sure the discussion was confidential and done in a private area, assisting the student in filling out the A-B-C GO, and lastly have the student return to instruction” (p. 511). Data analysis and visual observation of all three participants indicated “an overall decrease” (p. 516) in disruptive classroom behavioral

and emotional issues as a result of using the A-B-C GO intervention strategy. Therefore, McDaniel and Flower (2015) have found that the A-B-C GO is an effective classroom management strategy for elementary students with emotional and behavioral problems.

Working with participants ranging in age from seven to eight years, Fairbanks, Sugari, Guardino, and Lathrop (2007) conducted two studies examining the effects of a responses to intervention (RTI) approach to behavioral problems in elementary classrooms. Participants were identified by their teachers and included ten students from two different second grade classrooms, five males and five females. In study one, a “check-in-check-out (CICO)” (p. 291) tier two self-monitoring behavioral intervention was implemented. For students whose behavioral problems were unresponsive to this tier two level of intervention, teachers “completed the Functional Assessment Checklist for Teachers and Staff” (p. 295) and created a “function-based individualized behavior support plan” (p. 296) for participants in study two a tier three behavioral intervention. The focus of this study was to help the students find alternative behaviors that were acceptable to the classroom teacher while providing the students with the attention he/she may have been seeking. A quasi experimental design was used to collect data over five phases in study one and five to six phases in study two. Observation forms and an interval recording system was used to collect data across both studies. Results from both studies showed an improvement in student behavioral problems. In study one the students that responded to the CICO tier two intervention showed that “problems behaviors” almost “immediately decreased” (p. 300) and the students who responded to functional based tier tree intervention in study two showed that, “problem behaviors were reduced” (p. 304). This study indicates that an RTI approach could be a successful classroom management strategy for elementary students with emotional and behavioral problems.

Working with primary students, Clunies-Ross, Little, and Kienhuis (2008) conducted a study on proactive and reactive classroom management strategies and the effect they have on teacher stress and student behavioral problems. The focus for this summary is on classroom management strategies and how they affect student behavioral problems. A total of 21 schools participated in the study. From a total of 216 elementary teachers 97 were selected to be part of the study, 73 females and 24 males. Of the 97 selected teachers, a subsample of 20 teachers agreed to be observed in their classroom setting. Data were gathered through four questionnaires. Teachers were asked to provide information on, “demographics, disruptive student behavior, teacher management strategies, and teacher self-reported stress” (p. 697). After a 30-minute classroom observation was conducted, the questionnaire data and observation data were matched. “Overall” self-reported and observed data showed “most teachers were observed as being more positive than negative in their responses to student behaviors” (p. 701) and chose “proactive strategies” (p. 700) instead of “reactive strategies” (p. 700). These proactive strategies included “listen actively and negotiate commitments, instruct the child in coping skills, modify the current teaching style, spend time and energy to help the child, and read articles about problems” (p. 700). Data analysis showed a “positive correlation” (p. 700) between self-reported proactive classroom management strategies and positive teacher responses noted during observation. Results indicate that teachers who used positive academic and social responses increased the on-task behavior of their students, while teachers who used negative teacher responses and self-reported reactive strategies increased the behavioral problems including off-task behaviors. Reactive classroom management strategies are not strategies that will benefit students with behavioral or emotional problems. Proactive classroom management strategies could be effective strategies to help students with behavioral and emotional problems.

Working with kindergarten students, Daunic, Corbett, Smith, Barnes, Santiago-Poventud, Chalfant, Pitts, and Gleaton (2013) conducted a study on implementing social emotional learning foundations (SELF) together with literacy instruction. Participants in this study were from two large elementary schools in Florida. Involved in the study were eight teachers in the treatment group, ten teachers in the control group, 30 participants in the treatment group and 27 participants in the control group. Both the control group and the treatment group had a mixture of African American students, Caucasian students, Hispanic students, and multiracial students. SELF lessons were throughout 16 lessons which introduced a related book incorporating both a SELF competency skill and teaching students how to apply verbal skills through conversation, comprehension skills, and new vocabulary, 20% of these lessons were videotaped to assure proper implementation of the intervention. Several different scales were used to collect data on SELF competencies and literacy skills in both the treatment group and the control group before and after intervention. Descriptive statistic results showed that implementing SELF competencies and literacy skills together is possible and, “can lead to improvements in self-regulation that should enhance positive social and academic development” (p. 49). Results of this research indicate that this combination of social emotional skills and literacy skills appear to be effective in preventing problem behaviors during literacy instruction and would be an effective strategy to use in elementary classrooms with students exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems.

With Students in Grade 3 to Grade 6

Working with participants whose average age was 10.1 years, Sutherland, Wehby, and Yoder

(2002) conducted a study of the relationship between teacher praise and student opportunity to respond and the effect it has on students with emotional and behavioral problems. While previous research indicated that both strategies have been proven effective classroom management strategies for students with emotional and behavioral problems, these researchers wanted to know if there was a “sequential” (p. 5) or non-sequential relationship between both strategies. Participants included 216 students and 20 teachers in 20 self-contained classrooms in a southeastern United States school. A correlation design was used to measure the relationship between teacher praise and opportunity to respond (OTR) during 10 15-minutes of direct observation sessions, per classroom, conducted during explicit teacher lead instruction. Data were collected on nine teacher behaviors and one student behavior (correct response), using a coded system. Results showed that a “significant positive correlation was found” (p. 8) between the strategies of teacher praise and OTR. Teachers who used higher levels of praise also gave students more OTR which in return produced more correct academic responses from students with emotional and behavioral problems. The reverse was true for teachers who used low levels of teacher praise. They tended to also give students fewer OTR which resulted in more incorrect academic responses. Using the classroom management strategies of OTR and teacher praise could be effective strategies to help students with emotional and behavioral problems increase correct academic responses and time on task.

Working with a fourth and fifth grader, Dunlap, Clarke, Jackson, Wright, Ramos, and Brinson (1995) conducted a study to determine if self-monitoring was an effective classroom management strategy for students with emotional and behavioral problems. Participants were enrolled at two different public schools in self-contained special education classrooms due to their emotional and behavioral outbursts. This study measured behaviors under two categories,

task engagement and disruptive behavior, during the subjects of math, reading, and English. After baseline data was collected participants received an, “individualized self-monitoring form” (p. 169) and 30 minutes of training on how to use the form. Participants received instruction on the different behaviors listed under each measured category. Participants were then given time to practiced using the forms until the teacher felt they had mastered the strategy. The participants kept the self-monitoring form on their desk and during specific intervals they had to check “yes” or “no” by the listed behaviors under the categories of on task engagement and disruptive behaviors. A consultant also observed and noted the students’ “on task engagement and disruptive behaviors” (p. 171) to compare the students’ data against the consultant’s data, for accuracy. Results showed that the strategy of self-monitoring “significantly reduced the participants’ disruptive behaviors” (p. 171) and “significantly increased on task” (p. 171) engagement, compared to multiple baseline assessments. The strategy of self-monitoring could be an effective classroom management strategy for students exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems.

Working with students ages eight to nine years, Chalk and Bizo (2004) conducted a study to determine if specific praise increases on task behavior of elementary students. Participants of this study consisted of 109 students and four classroom teachers. The Observing Pupils and Teachers in Classrooms (OPTIC) observation strategy was used to document students’ on task behavior. Students also completed a Myself-As-Learner scale to measure students’ perceptions of themselves. Each of the four classes acted as their own control group due to baseline data collected before intervention began through two OPTIC sessions. The four teachers were given a 45-minute training that detailed clear examples of either positive praise or specific praise. A number system was used to assign the type of praise each teacher would use. After each lesson

teachers were asked to complete a tally sheet indicating the type of praise used and a rating scale to show students' on task behavior. To ensure teachers used praise in the ways instructed the OPTIC approach was used. OPTIC was used three times for each condition. Results showed that ratings for all on task behavior increased for both conditions. However, specific praise continued to increase on task behavior throughout all three OPTIC sessions while positive praise "plateaued" (p. 344) by the second OPTIC session. Specific praise would be a strategy that teachers could use to improve on task behavior of students with behavioral and emotional problems.

Working with participants whose average age was 8.45 years, a strategy for outside the classroom, was explored by Denault and Déry (2015). They conducted a longitudinal study in Canada to determine if there was a relationship between student participation in organized school activities and behavioral and emotion problems in school. The original sample of students were 601 male and female students, with varying academic abilities, from different schools, different types of family structures, and different family income levels. From this sample, the students were broken up into two groups: the experimental group, students who were receiving special education services for emotional and behavioral issues; and the control group, students who were not receiving any services. For this study parents and teachers were given surveys to fill out describing the types of organized activities their children/students were involved in. Several different checklists and scales were used to assess students' "social skills and conduct problems" (p. 171). Through descriptive analysis of the data collected between the control group and the experimental group, researchers determined that "frequency of participation in organized school activities had a positive effect on social skills" (p. 172), which in turn had a positive effect on behavioral and emotional conduct problems. Researchers also found a "correlation between low

socioeconomic status and participation on organized school activities and higher level of conduct problems” (p. 172). The researchers also discovered that students with special needs participated less than normal students in organized activities and exhibited fewer social skills, thus “leading to higher levels of conduct problems” (p. 173). Therefore, this study revealed that frequent participation in organized school activities has a positive effect on student behavioral and emotional skills in the classroom setting, and mostly in the area of social skills. However, social skills are correlated with behavioral and emotional issues. This strategy could have a positive effect on increasing students’ social skills which in turn could assist in decreasing unwanted behavioral and emotional issues in elementary students.

Working with fifth and sixth grade participants, Jull (2006) conducted a study on the effects of a self-monitoring computer program called Auto-Graph, on participants with emotional and behavioral problems. Participants included 65 students from two different classrooms at two different schools, in local proximity to each other. Both participating teachers’ classrooms contained multiple students with emotional and behavioral problems who were classified by the teachers as challenging. “The Auto-Graph computer application” (p. 180) self-monitoring strategy was implemented for six weeks. After any type of behavioral incident teachers asked the participants to answer three questions on a behavioral checklist form. Once the form is checked for accuracy and signed off on by the teacher participants were then able to transfer the information into the Auto-Graph computer program. Once entered into the computer the data created an “individualized” graph summary “behavior record” (p. 18) allowing participants and teachers to see and reflect on participants emotional and behavioral patterns. Through teacher interviews results showed that by using the Auto-Graph self-monitoring computer program participants were better able to manage problem behaviors, improve, “problem behaviors” (p.

25), and reduce emotional and behavioral incidents. This was partially due to the teachers' ability, "to respond sooner, more often, and more consistently to disruptive behaviors" (p. 25) before they became confrontational and disruptive. The Auto-Graph self-monitoring strategy could be a good classroom management strategy for students exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems.

With Students in Grade 7 and Above

Working with eighth grade participants, Swinson and Knight (2007) conducted a study to determine how verbal feedback from teachers effected the challenging behaviors of students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Participants in this study included 303 students from 20 different classrooms from a large school in an English city. Of these participants 24 were specifically selected due to "regularly displayed challenging behavior" (p. 245). Over the course of one week, participants were "observed at 10-second intervals and judged to be either "on-task" or "off-task"" (p. 246). Simultaneously teacher verbal feedback was also documented, whether the verbal feedback was negative or positive and whether it was in response to academic or social behavior. Data note whether teacher verbal feedback was directed at the specifically selected participants or at other classmates. Results showed that the specifically selected participants received a "much larger portion" (p. 248) of verbal teacher feedback than their classmates and almost always received positive verbal teacher feedback on their academic work with "little to no negative" (p. 248) verbal feedback. However, the specifically selected participants also received the most negative verbal teacher feedback on their social behaviors with little to no positive verbal teacher feedback when exhibiting appropriate social behaviors,

compared to their classmates. Results from this study indicated that teachers who implemented positive verbal feedback in their classrooms achieved “much higher percentages of on-task behavior” (p. 248), in both academic and social areas, from the specifically selected participants. Adversely teachers who implemented negative verbal feedback in their classrooms achieved much lower percentages of on-task behavior, in both academic and social areas, from the specifically selected students. The classroom management strategy of positive verbal teacher feedback in both academic and social areas could have a positive effect on students exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems.

Working with 15 participants ages 15 to 17 years, Malow and Austin (2016), conducted a study on how a mindfulness curriculum effected students with behavioral and emotional problems. Participants were enrolled in a self-contained classroom at residential school in the northeast part of the United States. “*The Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents*” (p. 88) was used as a pre-and post-assessment for participants. The “*Learning to breathe: A mindfulness curriculum for adolescents to cultivate emotion regulation, attention, and performance*” (p. 86) curriculum was used to teach students mindfulness activities. This program was implemented for six weeks at the beginning of the school day for approximately 5-10 minutes. The classroom teacher lead different mindfulness exercises every session. Mindfulness exercises had participants get into a specific relaxing “position” directed by the teacher, “with eyes closed” and “focus only on” their “breathing in silence” (p. 88). During the sessions participants were encouraged to acknowledge any thoughts that came into their heads and then let them go, to help them destress and let go of anxieties. Participants were encouraged to focus on their breathing and be mindful of their bodies from the tips of their toes to the top of their head. In comparison to pretest scores, posttest results from “*The Resiliency Scales for Children and Adolescents*” (p.

88) showed that after participating in the mindfulness curriculum participants scored higher in the categories of “optimism, self-efficacy, adaptability, sense of trust, perceived access to support, comfort with others, and tolerance of differences” (p. 89). Participants scores in the categories of sensitivity, recovery time, and impairment went from a high score during pretesting to a lower score during post testing. Using the strategy of mindfulness could be an effective classroom management strategy for students exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems.

Working with participants ages 13 to 15 years, Carr and Punzo (1993) conducted a study on how self-monitoring effected academic and behavioral outcomes for students with emotional and behavioral problems. Participants included three students from a self-contained classroom in an inner-city school that were classified as having emotional and behavioral problems and receiving academic intervention in reading, spelling, and math. In this study students were asked to self-monitor accuracy and productivity in reading, math, and spelling. Participants were taught, “an explicit definition of academic achievement” (p. 243), to understand the importance of self-monitoring their accuracy and productivity. After some modeling through scaffolding from the teacher, students were given a “self-recoding sheet” (p. 243) to document their corrected and returned work completed during 10 minutes of independent work time after direct instruction during intervention. Participants had “to count the number of items given, the number of items completed, and the number of items completed correctly” (p. 243), and record them on their self-recording sheet. The teacher also recorded student on task behavior during the 10-minute independent work sessions. Results showed self-monitoring “significantly increased” (p. 244) both academic achievement and on-task behavior of all participants. Therefore self-monitoring could be a beneficial classroom management strategy for students with behavioral and emotional problems.

Working mainly with participants of secondary school age, Swinson and Cording (2002) conducted a study to determine if assertive discipline was an effective classroom management strategy for students with emotional and behavioral problems. Assertive discipline “essentially is making your requirements clear, giving positive feedback (praise and/or positive responses), and mild but irritating sanctions for rule breakers” (p. 72). Participants in this study were from a school specifically designed for students with diagnosed emotional and behavioral problems and ranged in age from seven to sixteen. The entire school participated including eight classrooms with one teacher and one aide per classroom. Two classrooms were elementary classrooms and six classrooms were middle and high school classrooms. Teachers received three two hour trainings on assertive discipline. Teachers were observed teaching lessons in all subjects pre-training and again six weeks after assertive discipline was introduced. Baseline data was collected before teachers implemented assertive discipline to measure student time on task and the amount of disruptive outburst by students. A systematic objective 30-minute observation approach per classroom was used to measure whether students were on task or off task, doing what was asked of them by the teacher. Results showed that across all classrooms, time on task improved and “there was a decrease in disruptive incidents” (p. 74), when assertive discipline was implemented. Assertive discipline would be a classroom management strategy that elementary teachers could use with students who are diagnosed with behavioral and emotional problems.

Working with seventh and eighth grade students, Hunter and Hayden (2013) conducted a study examining the effects of the instructional strategies Number Heads Together (NHT) and Number Heads Together + Incentives (NHT+I) on students with emotional and behavioral problems. NHT is “an instructional strategy in which the classroom teacher groups students

together making sure there is a mixture of high, average, and low students” (p.40); then the teacher assigns each group of students numbers from one to four. The teacher then poses a question and the students must work together to come up with an answer making sure everyone in the group is able to answer correctly if called upon. The teacher calls out a number, and a student with that number from each group must respond. The teacher then asks the group if they all agree with the answer and gives feedback. This process is repeated until all questions have been posed. NHT+I is the same instructional strategy except an added incentive is given whereas NHT has no reward. During NHT+I, students “selected an incentive before instruction and then a reward was provided if the student earned at least three out of five tally marks for on-task behavior” (p. 42). The participants in this study consisted of four emotionally and behaviorally disturbed students from a mid-western urban city middle school. The participants were part of a self-contained classroom of eight students. Data were collected from student quiz scores and on task behavior. The study was conducted over two months during math instruction. First baseline scores were established through “10 item” (p. 41) quiz scores that were collected after the teacher ran her typical whole group math instruction and collected on task data using tally marks based on her observations. Next NHT was conducted, and data collected. Data analysis showed that although both strategies “showed improvement” in the on task behavior and quiz scores of the participants with behavioral and emotional problems when compared to baseline scores, NHT+I had a “higher on task percentage” (p. 42) of behaviors and correct quiz scores when compared to NHT. The strategy of NHT+I could be an effective classroom instructional strategy to increase on-task behavior and academic achievement in students with emotional and behavioral problems.

Summary of the Review

This literature review contains reviews of 15 research studies. They have been grouped according to the grade range of the participating students. The sections of this review are studies focusing on elementary students from Kindergarten to grade 2 (5 studies), students from grades 3 to 6 (5 studies), and students in grade 7 and above (5 studies). Studies included nine studies which were conducted in the United States, from areas in southeastern US, western, mid-western, and northwestern US, to northeastern US. Studies also included six studies conducted outside of the US: one in Canada, one in Australia, and four in the United Kingdom.

Chapter 3: Methodology

To address the research question of which classroom management strategies for use with school age students are effective for students exhibiting emotional and behavioral disorders, an extensive review of the literature was conducted. This chapter explains the data collection process, presents the data analysis, and creates the synthesis. The data collection section describes how the research studies were found for this particular study and what was done to organize the data. The data analysis section provides an examination of all the research studies collected and draws connections among their findings. The synthesis section summarizes what was found as a result of the data analysis and presents it as findings.

Data Collection

The data for this research synthesis study consist of the 15 research studies found through the data collection process of exhaustively searching the leading educational databases for peer-reviewed research studies. Data were then organized into three categories according to participant age: early elementary, late elementary/beginning middle school, and late middle school/high school. These categories emerged from an analysis of the preliminary data. These categories then served as the organizing structure for further data analysis, which is explained in the next section.

Data Analysis

To begin, all collected studies were analyzed and coded to determine categories, codes, and themes for the data. Studies within each category were then analyzed and synthesized to produce new findings. Findings from each category were then further synthesized to produce results related to the research question for this study. The remainder of this section details the analysis process and the results.

The first category of studies are those working with students in grades Kindergarten to grade 2 exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems. Of the 5 studies in this category, two approached the issue of classroom management from the perspective of instruction: one study examined using early literacy instruction as a classroom management strategy (Lane, Wehby, Menzies, Gregg, Doukas, & Munton, 2002) and the results showed a decrease in disruptive and negative social behaviors; the other study examined using instruction in literacy skills and social skills together as a classroom management strategy (Daunic, et al. 2013) and the results showed an increase in both academic achievement and social skills. Another study (Clunies-Ross, Little, & Kienhuis, 2008) examined the teacher's use of a proactive classroom management strategy including a positive approach and praise as a classroom management strategy, and the results showed an increase in academic achievement and a decrease in emotional and behavioral incidents. Two studies investigated self-monitoring as a classroom management strategy: one study (McDaniel & Flower, 2015) used a behavioral graphic organizer to help students self-monitor; the other (Fairbanks, Sugari, Guardino, & Lathrop, 2007) used a check-in check out (CICO) self-monitoring system. In both studies, the results showed a decrease in negative emotional and behavioral incidents by the students. Analysis of this category shows that

classroom management for students in Kindergarten to grade 2 with emotional and behavioral problems can be achieved by several means: teaching students literacy and social skills, teaching them several ways to self monitor their behavior, and having teachers exhibit proactive (positive and praise) behaviors.

The second category of studies are those working with students in grades 3 to 6 exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems. Of the 5 studies in this category, two studies examined teachers using praise as a classroom management strategy. These strategies are teacher praise together with opportunity to respond (OTR) (Sutherland, Wehby, & Yoder, 2002) and specific praise (Chalk & Bizo, 2004). In both studies, the results showed an increase in academic achievement and time-on task. Two studies shifted the emphasis from the role of the teacher to the role of the students, using student self-monitoring as a classroom management strategy. Self-monitoring in grades 4 and 5 was done through a check list form (Dunlap et al., 1995) in 1995, but 10 years later with students in grades 5 and 6, the self-monitoring was done through a computer program that turned checklists into graphs (Jull, 2006). In both studies, the results showed increased student time on-task and decreased negative emotional and behavioral incidents. The fifth study in the category was conducted in Canada and looked outside the classroom for its classroom management strategy, examining the use of student participation in organized school activities as a classroom management strategy (Denault & Déry, 2015). Results to this approach showed an improvement in students' social skills in the classroom. Analysis of this category shows that classroom management for students in grades 3 to 6 with emotional and behavioral problems can be achieved by two types of strategies: self-monitoring and teacher praise. Further research will need to be conducted in the United States to determine if the Canadian approach of student participation in organized school activities as a classroom

management strategy has merit in this country.

The third category of studies are those working with students in grades 7 and above exhibiting emotional and behavioral problems. Of the 5 studies in this category, two studies examined using positive response/feedback/praise from the teacher as a classroom management strategy. Teacher positive verbal feedback especially on academic matters improved student academic and social performance (Swinson & Knight, 2007), while assertive discipline which also involves teacher praise increased student time on-task and decreased incidents of negative emotional and behavioral behaviors (Swinson & Cording, 2002). Another study also focused on the teacher but this time on instruction, examining the grouping of students into mixed ability groups and using the Number Heads Together (NHT) and Number Heads Together + Incentives (NHT+I) grouping strategies as a classroom management strategy (Hunter & Hayden, 2013). In this study results showed an increased academic achievement and student time on-task. The other two studies in this category examined using a form of self-monitoring as a classroom management strategy: one earlier one used self-recording of corrected and returned work (Carr & Punzo, 1993), the other used mindfulness (self-awareness) as a strategy (Malow & Austin, 2016). However, while results of both studies showed increased student time on-task and decreased negative emotional and behavioral incidents, both these studies, one in 1993 and one as recent as 2016, were conducted in self-contained classrooms. This suggests that some research involving adolescent students with emotional and behavioral problems continues to be with students in non-inclusive settings. Analysis of this category shows that classroom management for students in grade 7 and above (for adolescents) with emotional and behavioral problems involves teacher positive feedback and praise and a mixed ability grouping for instructional, but involves using self-monitoring and self-awareness (mindfulness) by adolescent students when in self-contained

non-inclusive classrooms.

Synthesis

The results emerging from the analysis of each of the three categories can now be synthesized (combined) into findings that address the research question for this study. These results are presented in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Summary of Data Analysis

Strategy Type	Impact in Early Elementary	Impact in Late Elementary/ Early Middle School	Impact in Late Middle School/ High School
Teacher Positive Feedback & Praise	Increased Academic Achievement & Increased Student Time On Task & Decreased Negative Emotional/Behavioral Incidents	Increased Academic Achievement & Increased Student Time On-Task	Increased Academic Achievement & Increased Student Time On Task & Decreased Negative Emotional/Behavioral Incidents
Student Self-monitoring	Decreased Negative Emotional/Behavioral Incidents & Increased Student Time On Task	Decreased Negative Emotional/Behavioral Incidents & Increased Student Time On Task	Decreased Negative Emotional/Behavioral Incidents & Increased Student Time On Task
Classroom Instruction	Increased Academic Achievement & Decreased Negative Emotional/Behavioral Incidents & Increased Social Skills	----	Increased Academic Achievement & Increased Student Time On Task

A close examination of the analysis presented in Figure 1 above produces the findings of this study. First is that research from Kindergarten to grade 7 and above has examined three main

types of classroom management strategies: classroom instruction, teacher positive feedback and praise, and student self-monitoring. The second is that of the three types of strategies, the classroom instruction and teacher positive feedback and praise increased the time on task and academic performance of students with emotional and behavioral problems. Classroom instruction appears to produce positive academic results at the early elementary and late middle school levels, while teacher positive feedback and praise appears to produce results across all grade levels.

Perhaps the most significant finding of this synthesis is that of the three types of strategies, student self-monitoring appears to be the type of classroom management strategy that decreases negative emotional and behavioral incidents by students with emotional and behavioral disorders across all grade levels. As a result, this strategy type also increases student time on task. Self-monitoring strategies have been used for classroom management since the 1990s, and today they incorporate computers and software as well. All general education and special education teachers would benefit from knowing and being able to teach these two types of classroom management strategies to students with emotional and behavioral disorders. Therefore, this new knowledge will form the basis of a professional development project intended to instruct general and special education teachers on effective classroom management strategy types to implement for students with emotional and behavioral disorders. This professional development project is detailed in the next chapter.

Chapter 4: Results and Application

Review of the Results

After completing a review of the literature to determine what research has been conducted to date on effective classroom management strategies to use with school age students exhibiting emotional and behavior disorders, this researcher has determined three key findings from this synthesis. The first finding is that research has determined three main types of classroom management strategies that produce positive impact on students with emotional and behavioral disorders: classroom instruction, teacher positive feedback and praise, and student self-monitoring. The second finding is that of the three types of strategies, the classroom instruction and teacher positive feedback and praise increased the time on task and academic performance of students with emotional and behavioral problems. Classroom instruction appears to produce positive academic results at the early elementary and late middle school levels, while teacher positive feedback and praise appears to produce results across all grade levels. The third finding is that of the three types of strategies, student self-monitoring appears to be the type of classroom management strategy that decreases negative emotional and behavioral incidents by students with emotional and behavioral disorders across all grade levels. As a result, this strategy type also increases student time on task.

Application of Results to Professional Development

The findings from this study have significance to general and special education classroom

teachers. They can assist teachers in knowing about appropriate types of classroom management strategies to use for students with emotional and behavioral disorders at the grade range they teach, and assist them when working in the classroom with these students. Sharing the findings from this research with teachers is professional development, and the most appropriate form of professional development for sharing this new knowledge is a digital brochure readily available to all interested teachers.

Design of Professional Development Project

The design of this professional development project will be in the form of brochure (see Appendix A). This professional development brochure is intended for educators that teach general education or special education with students who have emotional and behavioral disorders. The information and instruction that the educators will receive during this module will be supported by the findings from this research synthesis. The brochure itself will be a single fold brochure with a front and back and an inside double page centerfold.

Literacy Coaching Project Goals and Objective

The fundamental goal of this professional development is to support general and special education teachers who are working with students who have emotional and behavioral disorders. To address this goal, the following learning objectives provide clarification and description. The first objective is that educators who read this brochure will learn about types of classroom management strategies and about those appropriate for their grade range. The second objective is

that educators who read this brochure will learn this new knowledge about types of classroom management strategies through explanations and visuals to serve as exemplar models. The third objective is that general and special education teachers will be motivated to incorporate the appropriate types of classroom management strategies into their classroom in order to support their students who have emotional and behavioral disorders.

Proposed Audience and Location

This proposed professional development project is for the professional audience of classroom teachers in both general and special education. They will access this brochure through a shared teacher-based website provided by school administrators, in their district. An archived version of this brochure will be accessible at any time, and may be viewed independently by teachers on their computer or device. Therefore, this brochure in digital form will be freely distributed to superintendents and principals in western New York.

Proposed Project Format and Activities

This professional development will take the form of a brochure (see Appendix A). The brochure will include an overview of the purpose and intent of the professional development by clearly describing the problem and need for such information and development. Included in the brochure will be a description of the three types of classroom management strategies and a summary of the data analysis (presented above in Figure 1) from this research synthesis. The brochure will show readers appropriate classroom management strategies and expected results and impact for the

grade range they are instructing. Also, included in the brochure will be a listing of supplemental resources. These supplemental resources will include lesson plans, videos, and related websites of specific strategies within each type of classroom management strategy to serve as examples and models for implementing specific strategies in the classroom.

Proposed Resources for Project

The appropriate resources for this professional development brochure include online internet access and a computer (or similar technology device) for educators to access the brochure and read it. To prepare the brochure will require time to search for appropriate specific strategies for each type of classroom management strategy and at various grade levels. Further time will be needed to compile the list and links to these appropriate resources for use by the educators who read the brochure.

Proposed Evaluation of Project

After reading the brochure, educators will be directed to an online link to the evaluation survey for this professional development brochure where they will be asked to complete a survey measuring the effectiveness of this professional development experience. The survey (see Appendix B) will seek to determine to what extent the information was clearly presented in the brochure, the instructional strategies were explained and modeled appropriately and effectively, and to what extent the educators who read the brochure were personally motivated to use any of these types of classroom management strategies to support their own students with emotional or behavioral disorders.

Project Ties to Professional Standards

This professional development project ties to the Professional Standards of the International Literacy Association (ILA) because their Standard 6 requires educators to “recognize the importance of, demonstrate, and facilitate professional learning and leadership as a career-long effort and responsibility” (IRA, 2010). Educators who voluntarily read this professional development brochure will meet this Standard by demonstrating voluntary participation in professional development as a professional responsibility. This professional development project also ties to the New York State Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS). The CCLS include standards within the following literacy areas: “reading literature, reading informational text, reading foundational skills” (CCLS, 2015). Applying the findings of this study will enable teachers to support student learning within these literacy areas, and guide students to meet the objective of the specific standards, such as “anchor standards for reading literature, informational texts, and foundation skills” (CCLS, 2015) because these types of classroom management strategies have been shown to increase student academic achievement and time on task.

Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

Overview of Study and Findings

This capstone project explores the question of which classroom management strategies for use with school age students are effective for students exhibiting emotional and behavioral disorders. The researcher has personal interest in this topic based on her own experiences and observations of teachers' frustrations in understanding and knowing how to deal with students who have behavioral and emotional issues in order to help those students improve academically and specifically in literacy. The most appropriate way to address this research question is with an exhaustive literature review and research synthesis. A synthesis of the found research was conducted and produced three findings. First is that research has determined three main types of classroom management strategies that produce positive impact on students with emotional and behavioral disorders: classroom instruction, teacher positive feedback and praise, and student self-monitoring. The second finding is that of the three types of strategies, the classroom instruction and teacher positive feedback and praise increased the time on task and academic performance of students with emotional and behavioral problems. Classroom instruction appears to be produce positive academic results at the early elementary and late middle school levels, while teacher positive feedback and praise appears to produce results across all grade levels. The third finding is that of the three types of strategies, student self-monitoring appears to be the type of classroom management strategy that decreases negative emotional and behavioral incidents by students with emotional and behavioral disorders across all grade levels. As a result, this strategy type also increases student time on task. These findings are relevant to the professional

development of general and special education teachers, and will be dispersed to them through a professional development project in the form of a digital brochure.

Significance of the Findings

These findings are significant to the field of classroom practice because they provide teachers with important information that can have an impact on teacher performance in the classroom. The types of classroom management strategies identified in the findings can allow teachers to provide appropriate support and instruction when working with students with emotional and behavioral disorders. These findings are also significant to the field of literacy because they provide a research-based identification of types of classroom management strategies proven to have a positive impact on increased academic achievement, increased time-on task, and decreased negative emotional and behavioral incidents for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, across a wide grade range. These results when applied by classroom teachers help students increase their time on task and therefore spend more time on literacy learning.

Limitations of the Findings

The findings for this study do have limitations. One is that they are based on the existing research, and that research into classroom management strategies for use with students who have emotional and behavioral disorder has proven to be very scarce. Therefore, although research has been conducted at various grade levels, the low number of specific studies in each grade range

placed a limitation on the synthesis results. For example, many of the studies found focused on small groups of students; there was limited empirical research that included more than ten students in a study. As time passes, perhaps more empirical research will be conducted in each of these grade ranges in order to provide a stronger more complete picture not just of types of classroom management strategies but also of specific strategies across or appropriate for certain grade ranges.

Conclusion: Answer to the Research Question

The research question that began this research study is, which classroom management strategies for use with school age students are effective for students exhibiting emotional and behavioral disorders? After conducting this study and performing a research synthesis, this researcher determined three findings: first is that research has determined three main types of classroom management strategies that produce positive impact on students with emotional and behavioral disorders (classroom instruction, teacher positive feedback and praise, and student self-monitoring); second that classroom instruction and teacher positive feedback and praise increased the time on task and academic performance of these students, with classroom instruction producing positive academic results at the early elementary and late middle school levels, while teacher positive feedback and praise producing results across all grade levels; and third is that student self-monitoring appears to be the type of classroom management strategy that decreases negative emotional and behavioral incidents by students with emotional and behavioral disorders across all grade levels. Together these findings provide this answer to the research question. The classroom management strategies specifically appropriate for use with

students with emotional and behavioral disorders are strategies that are of three types: incorporating classroom instruction, teacher positive verbal feedback and praise, and self-monitoring.

Recommendations for Future Research

The limitations of the findings of this research provide a basis for these recommendations for future research. The first recommendation is for more research that explores this topic of classroom management strategies appropriate for students with emotional and behavioral disorders, and the second is for this type of research specifically targeting larger groups of students in general education classrooms, across all grade ranges.

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Appendix A: Outline of Professional Development Project

Brochure Content

Page 1 The brochure cover design will include the title of thesis project, a picture of a functioning classroom, and information that explains the content/purpose of the brochure

Pages 2-3 Inside the center fold on page 2 will be the summary of data analysis table showing which strategy types are most appropriate to use for each grade range, pictures or URL links to specific strategies within each type, including forms, check lists, and graphic organizers that may be used with each strategy.

page 3 will contain a section with resources including links to the articles where the classroom management strategies were found, titles of literature and curriculums used to implement the strategies in some of the studies, and URLs for webpages that could provide teachers with more information and assistance on implementing the three types of classroom management strategies.

Page 4 The brochure back page will contain a link to the evaluation survey for this professional development brochure. (see Appendix B for evaluation details) This back cover will also contain this researcher's professional email address where teachers may submit individual professional comments if they wish.

Appendix B: Evaluation of Professional Development Project

Readers will be directed to an online survey that contains these questions:

Was this professional development an effective source and way to help you understand classroom management strategies for students with emotional and behavioral disorders?

Is the information in this brochure clearly presented?

Do you feel the classroom management strategies are explained and modeled in a way that is helpful for you to adapt for use with your own students?

If you are an educator, would you personally use these classroom management strategies to support your own students with specific learning disabilities?