

The Relationships between Knowledge of Literacy Instruction, Demographic Factors and the
Classroom Management Orientation of Teachers of Students with Emotional Disorders

by

Emily Kleintop

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Of the Requirements for the Degree

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Emily J. Kleintop

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APPROVED BY:

Margaret Ackerman, Ed.D., Committee Chair

Sally Childs, Ed.D., Committee Member

Robert Dodd, Ph.D., Committee Member

Scott Watson, Ph.D., Associate Dean, Advanced Programs

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this correlational study was to test the theory that relates the teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction to the classroom foci for classroom management of the teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders. The problem of the study is that students with emotional behavioral disorders continue to present high levels of unemployment and social adjustment problems in adulthood. The literature suggests a need for improved preparation of special educators for provision of literacy instruction as well as a shift towards academic priorities for students with emotional behavioral disorders. The study examined whether there is an effect from the knowledge of language concepts for literacy instruction, years of experience, education level, classroom setting, or grade level taught on the orientation towards classroom management. A total of 42 teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders completed a demographic questionnaire, the *Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition*, and the *Behavior and Instructional Management Scale*. The responses were analyzed using multiple regression procedures. The results indicated that an increase in knowledge of language concepts for literacy instruction related to a decrease in both instructional and behavioral control. Also, the teaching of the secondary grade level related to a decrease in behavioral control.

Dedication

In gratitude, I dedicate this dissertation to my husband, Jason, and my children, Leah, Hadley, and Callan. I will be forever grateful for the love and support shown me. Without the sacrifices made by my family, I could not have completed this endeavor. Also, my parents, Ted and Mary Greene, have always encouraged me to pursue my dreams. My sister, Maggie Greene, continues to inspire and amaze me. Finally, I am grateful to God for giving me the strength to carry on in the face of adversity. This paper was completed in His service.

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

There is a persistent need to understand how educators can intervene successfully in the adult outcomes of students with emotional behavioral disorders (EBD). This population of students, more so than any other category of students with a disability, faces bleak adult outcomes in the domains of employment and socialization (Wills et al., 2010). In addition to behavioral challenges, students with EBD frequently present a literacy deficit (Lopes, 2005). The current litigious climate increases the mandate to provide effective instruction in order to increase reading achievement of all (Moats, 2009). Frequently, the professional development focus is aimed at behavior management for teachers of students with EBD; however, a focus upon quality academic instruction is essential to changing the outcomes of the students (Wills et al., 2010).

Background

A synopsis of observational studies of self-contained special education settings uncovered a lack of quality instruction, student engagement, with great chunks of time devoted to independent work and the instructional periods often wasted with behavior management (Swanson, 2008). There is evidence that empirically-based instruction is rarely provided directly for students with emotional disturbance (Billingsley, 2007). In fact, students with EBD are most often taught in a setting with a focus on obedience which serves only to decrease student engagement and hinder motivation (Bartholomew, 2007). It is plausible that the absence of best practices in reading instruction is owed to poor preparation of special education teachers (Swanson, 2008).

The literature suggests a need for improved preparation of special educators for provision of literacy instruction as well as a shift towards academic priorities for students with EBD; however, it is unclear as to whether the instructors' knowledge can be correlated to their orientation towards classroom management through focus on control of instruction or control of behavior. It is also unclear as to whether the experience level of the teacher is correlated to the instructional knowledge and classroom orientation. The exploration of this correlation may provide indications for improving the instructional preparation and procedures for teachers of this population in order to best serve students with EBD. The economic impact of students' social dysfunction and unemployment rates affects all citizens as it strains our nations' resources. Thus, the need to find the most successful means for preparation of teachers serving students with EBD in order to create productive, contributing adults is paramount.

Problem Statement

Research indicates that students with emotional behavioral disorders (EBD) commonly demonstrate a deficit in literacy development (Lopes, 2005). Research consistently supports direct-intensive literacy instruction as a means for remediating this deficit (Roberts & Wilson, 2006). However, students in self-contained settings for emotional needs spend little time engaged in instruction (Swanson, 2008). Teachers of students in special education programs for EBD place an emphasis on behavioral remediation at the expense of academic instruction (Wills et al., 2010). It is theorized that the lack of use of best practices is a result of lack of training and development of special educators in this domain (Swanson, 2008).

The problem of the study is that students with EBD, more than any other disability category, are faced with high levels of unemployment and social adjustment problems in adulthood (Wills et al., 2010). Current research suggests engaging, small group direct instruction may increase academic achievement and limit disruptive behaviors in order to improve outcomes (2010). In contrast, instruction for students with externalizing behaviors includes little teacher-led, research-based practices (Billingsley, 2007). Exploring the correlation between teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction practices and the classroom management focus as well as the experience and education level of teachers serving students with EBD may inform teacher preparers of the ideal approach to and emphases of professional development.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this correlational study is to test the theory that relates the teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction to the classroom foci for classroom management of the teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders. Students with EBD more so than any other disability category face bleak adult outcomes related to poor development of social and academic skills (Wills et al., 2010). Current studies of student who have received self-contained special education classroom placement have revealed little academic advantage (Swanson, 2008). The continuing deficit in literacy for students with EBD can likely be attributed to the hesitancy of teachers to utilize best instructional practices for this population (Vannest et al., 2010). Other researchers assert that there is a need to question qualifications of established teachers for providing instructional remediation based upon prior training (Crawford, 2007).

Significance of the Study

It is commonly assumed that a special educator has the ability to offer more intense, explicit, targeted instruction than the general educator (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2011). Unfortunately, a culmination of observational studies of special education classrooms exposed low quality instruction, reduced student engagement, great chunks of time devoted to worksheet completion and instructional time spent waiting for instruction to begin (Swanson, 2008). Studies consistently report little use of empirically-based instruction led by teacher for students with emotional disturbance (Billingsley, 2007). Students with EBD continue to present a one to three year deficit in literacy development and possess the bleakest adult outcomes of any disability category (Swanson, 2008). Evaluation of the instructional knowledge and classroom management priorities of teachers in this field may determine the correlation to teacher preparation. The implications of those findings could provide insight as to the root cause of students' outcomes and suggest the ideal professional development intervention for this pervasive dilemma.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

The study aims to determine whether teachers' instructional preparation relates to their classroom management focus of control as well as whether classroom management orientation is affected by the level of teacher's experience, education, or grade level taught. By correlating the data for each of these variables, the study will answer the following questions:

RQ1. Does the level of teacher knowledge of literacy instruction affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

H₀1a: There will be no significant correlation between the level of knowledge of literacy instruction practices of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

H₀1b: There will be no significant correlation between the level of knowledge of literacy instruction practices of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

RQ2. Do the years of teaching experience affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

H₀2a: There will be no significant correlation between the level of experience of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the number of years teaching and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

H₀2b: There will be no significant correlation between the level of experience of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the number of years teaching and the

teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

RQ3. Does the teachers' education level (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) affect their orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

H₀3a: There will be no significant correlation between the education level of the teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the degree earned (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

H₀3b: There will be no significant correlation between the education level of the teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the degree earned (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

RQ4. Does the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline (Education or Non-Education undergraduate degree) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

H₀4a: There will be no significant correlation between the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline as measured by the type of undergraduate degree earned (Education or Non-Education) and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

- H₀4b: There will be no significant correlation between the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline as measured by the type of undergraduate degree earned (Education or Non-Education) and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.
- RQ5. Does the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?
- H₀5a: There will be no significant correlation between the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) of a teacher of students with emotional disorders and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.
- H₀5b: There will be no significant correlation between the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) of a teacher of students with emotional disorders and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.
- RQ6. Does the setting of the teacher's classroom (urban, suburban, or rural) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?
- H₀6a: There will be no significant correlation between the setting of the teacher's classroom as measured by the report of urban, suburban, or rural and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

H₀6b: There will be no significant correlation between the setting of the teacher's classroom as measured by the report of urban, suburban, or rural and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

Identification of Variables

Teacher knowledge of literacy instruction is the first independent variable which is defined as an understanding of the "basic building blocks of the English language" which includes syllabic knowledge and linguistic features of morphemes and phonemes (Joshi et al., 2009). The Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition will be administered to the participating teachers. The instrument is intended to quantify instructors' feelings regarding preparedness to teach typical and struggling readers as well as their knowledge of literacy (2009).

The *Experience Level* of teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders is the second independent variable which is defined as the number of years the teacher has been in service. The teachers will be asked to report the number of years teaching students with EBD specifically.

The *Education Level* of teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders is the third independent variable which is defined as the level of degree the teacher has earned through coursework. The categories will be divided into Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters credits. Additionally, the *Teacher's Undergraduate Degree Discipline* is defined as an Education Bachelor's degree or Non-Education Bachelor's degree.

The *Grade Level Taught* of teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders is the fourth independent variable. The categories will be divided into teachers of elementary students with emotional behavioral disorders, which is defined as grades kindergarten through six, and teachers of secondary students with emotional behavioral disorders, which is defined as grades seven through twelve.

Also, the *Classroom Setting* will be defined as urban, suburban, or rural and will be based upon the teacher's report.

Classroom Management Focus is the dependent variable which is defined as the belief system that a teacher executes regarding the ideal approach to classroom management in both the domain of behavior control and instructional practices (Martin & Sass, 2010). The Behavior and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS) will be administered to quantify what a teacher perceives as their definite approach within the classroom and determine whether a greater emphasis is placed on instructional controls or behavioral controls (2010). The score that a participant receives on each subscale for Behavior Management and Instructional Management indicates the degree of control the teacher exercises in that domain. Martin and Sass assert that teachers fall upon a continuum in each domain from non-interventionist, least directive and controlling, to interventionist, most controlling (2010).

Definition of Terms

Emotional Behavior Disorders are referenced in this study using the federal definition as defined by the IDEA law:

A condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree, which adversely affects educational performance: An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers. Inappropriate types of 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. (Council for Exceptional Children, 2010).

Direct Instruction is referenced in the literature. According to the current understanding of terms in special education, direct instruction is “an instructional approach to academic subjects that emphasizes the use of carefully sequenced steps that include demonstration, modeling, guided practice, and independent application” (WETA, 2010). Within this study, this will also refer to the usage of research-based literacy instruction programs developed based upon the direct instruction model.

Social skills are a compilation of explicit and implicit actions which improve the possibility of establishing and maintaining social position by increasing an individual’s tendency to engage in positive social interactions (Gumpel, 2007).

Behavior management is defined by Martin and Sass as “similar to, but different, from discipline in that it includes pre-planned efforts to prevent misbehavior as well as the teacher’s response to it” (2010).

Instructional management is defined by Martin and Sass as addressing “teachers’ instructional aims and methodologies and includes aspects such as monitoring seatwork and structuring daily routines as well as the teacher’s use of lecture and student practice versus interactive, participatory approaches to instruction” (2010).

Best practices are referenced throughout the literature with the understanding that these are the pedagogical processes that are generally accepted by researchers, based on empirical data, to be those that should be utilized to help all students be successful (Cunningham et al., 2009).

CHAPTER TWO: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The teaching of reading is a multifaceted instructional task for any teacher with any student; and, the challenge of managing this is greatly increased when teaching students with disabilities. Although frequently overlooked as pertinent to the pedagogical practices for students with emotional disorders, the teaching of literacy presents a unique challenge. The mandate to provide effective instruction to increase reading achievement of all students is intensified in the current litigious climate (Moats, 2009). In the field of teaching students with emotional disorders, the professional development focus is frequently aimed at behavior management; however, improving the academic instruction of students with emotional disorders is vital for improving the students' outcomes (Wills et al., 2010).

Correlation between Emotional Disorders and Literacy Delays

In an early study of the correlation between EBD and language processing skills, Diana Rogers-Adkinson attributed underlying neurological dysfunctions to both deficit areas (2003). Additionally, a likely connection is the dependence upon communication to develop relationships with others (Bellis, 2002). Early researchers on the topic theorized that EBD often result from language deficits which cause disruption in social relationships (Stansbury & Zimmerman, 1999). More recently, Raymond C. Tervo conducted a cross-sectional descriptive study which yielded the indication that expressive language delays increase the odds of children developing social-emotional problems (2007). Similarly, deficits in receptive language yield increased likelihood for externalized behavior problems (Rescorla et al., 2007). This is clearly indicative of the relationship between language development and social-emotional development.

It becomes more evident that there is a relationship between language delays and children's behavior at school age as the interactions with others and school expectations increase (Rescorla et al., 2007). Children with EBD may be less likely to correctly process input from teachers and peers, which can lead to further delays in development of language skills (2007). Reciprocally, students who continuously struggle with reading and academic skills in elementary school develop low self-efficacy which lends itself to increasing non-compliance (Legere & Conca, 2010). Thus, reading problems are often concurrent to inattention and limited self-regulation (2010). Furthermore, an early indicator of the development of behavior and reading problems is a low level of task engagement (Oakes et al., 2010).

It has been discovered that students with reading problems at the end of grades one and two have a greater likelihood of demonstrating antisocial behaviors than students without reading problems (Sutherland et al., 2008). The relationship is so strong that the US Department of Education stated in 1998, "A child who is emotionally disturbed has an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors" (Pierce et al., 2004). In some instances, students with EBD originally display academic deficits which cause negative feedback from teachers and peers, poor self-opinion in academics, and leads to aggressive acts of frustration; while others display disruptive behavior in precedence to academic difficulties (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). Research has established that instruction and pedagogy utilized can preclude the establishment of both academic and social behavior delays, as truly effective instruction can avoid a pattern of falling behind and failures (Scott et al., 2007). The reciprocal relationship between learning and behavior problems over time is affected by the child's

environment; a stimulating environment can reduce the association between reading achievement and antisocial behavior (Sutherland et al., 2008). Generally, the average student with EBD presents substantial academic problems which demand intensive remediation while the student's disruptive or aggressive behavior and lack of motivation deter the teacher's attempts to provide intensive instruction (Sutherland et al., 2008). However, the reviews of treatment results for academic interventions for students with EBD reveal the overriding tenet that targeted interventions for academics will yield positive results for academic achievement (Mooney et al., 2004).

Significance

Studies have verified the relationship between deficits in social skills in childhood and the emergence of mental health deficits including substance abuse in adolescence and adulthood (Grumpel, 2007). A number of negative outcomes have been identified for students with emotional behavioral disorders including reading deficiencies in more than 60% of the population and high resistance to academic interventions (Oakes et al., 2010). High school students with EBD rank above any other disability category in levels of unemployment and social adjustment problems (Wills et al., 2010). Moreover, the impact of a delay in language skills increases with age as students demonstrate learning difficulties which include math difficulties (Nelson et al., 2003).

“Research suggests that students with EBD have higher reading achievement early in their school careers than students with LD, but students with LD make significant gains in reading while students with EBD show few gains from early to late elementary school”

(Sutherland & Singh, 2004). Students with emotional behavioral disorders respond orally in class at half the rate of their peers and become inattentive to material at much greater rates than students with other disabilities, which leads to less academic instruction and exposure to academic material (Blood, 2010). It is likely that students with emotional behavioral disorders have little faith in their own cognitive abilities, as researchers have established that students with emotional behavioral disorders felt considerably worse about their cognitive abilities than their typical peers (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). When students develop learned helplessness, they demonstrate a lack of motivation to respond and a lack of belief that responses are effective or valuable (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). This leads to a cycle of failure and decreasing motivation.

In reality, the reduction of the disruptive behaviors of students with emotional behavioral disorders may be secondary to creating positive academic outcomes, while the primary focus should be increasing engagement and response to instruction (Sutherland et al., 2008). When students do not meet the expectations of the teacher for academic and behavioral skills, students experience social and academic failure, along with teacher rejection, which leads to a pattern of reduced instructional opportunities (Sutherland et al., 2008). If teachers do not hold high expectations for their students' learning abilities, their literacy instruction will not occur or will not be sufficiently engaging to offer students the full opportunity for success (Copeland et al., 2011). In fact, the continued occurrence of a goal for improvement in reading skills in a student's individualized education plan is indicative of the instruction provided being inadequate for meeting the student's needs (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2011). Therefore, a general recognized need to improve the knowledge and implementation of literacy instruction among

special educators remains, particularly for students in upper elementary school who continue to possess a literacy deficit (Dingle et al., 2011).

The provision of efficacious instructional methods reduces the likelihood of students exhibiting externalizing behaviors in order to avoid academia that is perceived as too difficult for their successful participation (Scott et al., 2007). The demands of teaching students with EBD require teachers to develop alternative instructional strategies to improve the academic and behavioral skills of their students (Haydon et al., 2009). Establishing techniques for increasing response rate and engagement of students with EBD is the probable solution to remediating both academic and behavioral deficits in this population (Blood, 2010). Educators must recognize that they cannot control or force student learning or behaviors; however, the provision of quality instruction and management strategies increases the probability that students will become engaged and demonstrate appropriate behavior while increasing their learning (Sutherland et al., 2008).

“Students with EBD (a) are absent from school more than students from any other disability category, (b) have the lowest grade point average of any disability category, and (c) fail more courses than students in any other disability category” (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). As a consequence of the unlikelihood that a student with EBD will earn and maintain employment due to academic and behavioral deficits, it is vital that interventions that are effective for improving literacy skills and outcomes for students with EBD be utilized (Pierce et al., 2004). For example, productively accessing the general education curriculum content at the intermediate and secondary level is greatly dependent on students’ ability to read the textbook with

accomplishment (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2011). Failure to address the concurrent academic problems with problem behaviors has limited the effectiveness of treatments administered (Sutherland et al., 2008).

No Child Left Behind has demanded a call for equity for all students based upon aiming for the greatest possible outcomes, which places an onus upon the teacher to seek ideal remediation methods (McLaughlin, 2010). “Academic interventions are paramount to the school and success of the Emotional Behavioral Disorder/at risk students” (Wills et al., 2010). Additionally, the movement towards standards-based education requires the use of empirically validated instructional practices and interventions for all students (Jackson et al., 2009).

Theoretical Framework

The challenge of motivating students with emotional behavioral disorders for engagement in school activities is repeatedly discussed in the literature. Intrinsic motivation and academic achievement have positive and reciprocal influences upon each other in the school setting (Corpus et al., 2009). Adolescents are aware of their reading deficits which negatively impacts motivational constructs (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2010). The cycle is incessant as the negative attitudes surrounding reading activities develop as tasks become more challenging, thereby further slowing reading progress (Roberts & Wilson, 2006). Therefore, embedding a motivational aspect of reading instruction is vital to enhancing the reading skills of struggling readers who typically avoid reading activities (Quirk & Schwanenflugel, 2004).

The intrinsic motivation theory establishes that confidence and a desire to participate in challenging tasks develops when a person accomplishes one challenging task or learns a new

skill (Palmer, 2005). Successful completion of a task which appears challenging leads to intrinsic motivation (Pachtman & Wilson, 2006). Thus, the remediation of reading ability utilizes the social cognitive perspective which is based upon students' thoughts about themselves as opposed to the behaviorist focus on environmental factors such as rewards (Palmer, 2005). Under the behaviorist perspective, motivational growth is often mistakenly considered synonymous with behavioral reinforcement or classroom management (Bartholomew, 2007). This focus on behaviors in a self-contained setting for students with EBD may lead students to nurture in each other increased misbehaviors while the poor academic performance persists (Billingsley, 2007). Placement in the special education environment with this emphasis leads to loss of motivation (Mowschenson & Weintraub, 2009).

Research regarding motivational constructs validates the role of arrangements within the classroom to encourage an academically focused environment to mitigate disruptions and raise engagement levels (Guardino & Fullerton, 2010). The stimuli in the environment and other factors in the classroom setting reflective of classroom strategies influence student engagement and motivation levels (Lee et al., 2010). Factors such as the nature and quality of teacher and student interactions have a profound effect on student development (Hamre et al., 2011). Thus, recurrent, brief discussions regarding the significance of reading may yield significant student growth in motivation for reading (Quirk & Schwanenflugel, 2004).

Instructional procedures impact motivation and achievement. Heydenberk and Heydenberk examined the efficacy of a social-emotional literacy program for kindergarten and first grade students which taught explicit communication skills and resulted in significant

decreases in verbal and physical aggression (2007). Similarly, Canney and Byrne's case study of circle time as an intervention to communication and behavior revealed gains in social skill development (2006). Both studies support the finding that a focus upon school or classroom wide mastery goals may enhance intrinsic motivation over the course of a school year (Corpus et al., 2009). It is necessary to introduce the elements of challenge, curiosity, fantasy, and control to increase motivation by creating a sense of accomplishment, drawing students in to the experience, engaging imagination, and allowing student choices (Palmer, 2005).

Current Practices

It is commonly assumed that a special educator has the ability to offer more intense, explicit, targeted instruction than the general educator (Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2011). Unfortunately, a culmination of observational studies of special education classrooms exposed low quality instruction, reduced student engagement, great chunks of time devoted to worksheet completion and instructional time spent waiting for instruction to begin (Swanson, 2008). Studies consistently report little use of empirically-based instruction led by teacher for students with emotional disturbance (Billingsley, 2007). In fact, Peck and Scarpati have reported that frequently their special education student teachers partially duplicated the techniques taught thereby undermining the strategy's success (2010).

The general finding of observational studies in special education classroom settings suggests the use of poor classroom practices and a lack of teacher ability to proactively support the needs of students with challenging behaviors (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). Teachers foster the learned helplessness of students with emotional behavioral disorders by offering little academic

stimuli or reinforcement while attempting to create a less aversive climate with little expectations (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). Frequently, special education teachers address the variety of instructional levels within their classroom by assigning worksheets that show little connection to the student's needs (Johns et al., 2008). Teachers may rely on worksheets because of the reduced demand on planning time; however, the frustration and boredom it produces in students reduces their motivation and increases behavioral problems thereby creating more teacher work (Johns et al., 2008).

Ineffective practices. In her qualitative study of special education teachers' instructional practices, Crawford identified a theme regarding teachers' beliefs that the students' acute intellectual disabilities relieved the teacher of the duty to utilize quality curricular materials following state standards (Crawford, 2007). Similarly, Swanson reports that the instructional engagement of students in special education settings is well below that of peers; students in special education spend 25% of their time in frequently undifferentiated seatwork while their peers in general education spend only 2% on such tasks (2008). Teachers' attention in special education settings is often monopolized by disruptive behavior as opposed to reading instruction, while the teachers' response to inappropriate behavior fails to mitigate the behavior (Wills et al., 2010). In contrast, the highly effective strategy of small-group instruction is highly underutilized in self-contained special education classrooms with whole group and undifferentiated seat work reigning above empirically validated methods (Swanson, 2008).

Ineffective academic instruction may become the aversion to which students respond with behaviors designed to aid in escape or avoidance, which in turn cause teacher avoidance

behaviors as teachers reduce instruction of students with problem behaviors (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). When students exhibit inappropriate behavior and are removed from class or group, a negative reinforcement cycle is initiated as the student's demand has been removed and the teacher is relieved of the stressful disruption (Oliver & Reschly, 2010).

It has been noted that “in all school programs, too much learning time is lost in counting lunch money, waiting for school buses, waiting to go to lunch, and taking restroom breaks” (Johns et al., 2008). This is amplified in the special education settings designed to control behaviors of students with EBD. Observational studies suggest that students who demonstrate high rates of problem behavior are involved in less academically focused interactions with teachers than their peers without problem behaviors (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). In fact, studies suggest that negative relationships between teachers and students in kindergarten are indicative of academic and behavioral problems through eighth grade; the behavior may have been continuously reinforced as academic demands were removed by teachers (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). Additionally, research on practices in classrooms for students with emotional behavioral disorders reveals that students' low rates of correct responses yield low rates of reinforcement which places them at greater risk for developing the sense of learned helplessness which further discourages motivation to learn (Sutherland & Singh, 2004).

Examinations of the reading growth of students who have received several years of resource room instruction suggest few benefits (Swanson, 2008). In fact, in one extreme case study of a boy with a learning disability, the student exhibited a loss of twelve words per week in the special education classroom compared to an increase of thirty-eight words per week after

transitioning into the general education setting (2008). The reluctance of special education teachers to utilize research-based practices can likely be associated with the continuing reading deficit of one to three years below grade level for students with EBD (Vannest et al., 2010). Supporting this idea, Crawford concludes in her study that there is a need to question the system for qualification of veteran teachers based upon their preparation and professional development (Crawford, 2007).

Typically, students with EBD are taught in an environment with an emphasis on control and compliance which in turn decreases levels of engagement and inhibits motivation (Bartholomew, 2007). There is a common misconception that the establishment of behavior management indicates conveyance of motivation to learn (Bartholomew, 2007). However, there are several best practices for reading instruction which could simultaneously improve academics and behavior; nonetheless, limited practices are correctly utilized in special education classroom reading instruction (Swanson, 2008). Too often, the middle school education plan of students identified with a reading disability does not address the need for reading intervention (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2010). This reflects surrender on the part of the teachers to the acceptance that the reading deficit will remain. Sadly, Crawford's study revealed the perception of students regarding teachers' expectations impacted their effort and self-efficacy (2007). As a result, researchers warn against the overuse of accommodations which limit students' potential and reading growth (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2010). Additionally, the common practice of assigning independent reading with basal readers without instructional support leads to boredom and frustration and increases reading struggles (Solith & Vousden, 2009).

Teachers of students with EBD often express the belief that their students will not profit from academic instruction until they develop a specific level of appropriate social behavior which may never occur, thereby causing students to never receive direct instruction in core academics (Mooney et al., 2004). Direct observations of classrooms for students with EBD indicate students and teachers are engaged in negative interactions more than 20% of the time while positive interactions occur less than 5% of the time (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). This cycle of negativity and waiting for students to become school ready is significantly detrimental to the outcomes of students with EBD.

Frequently, students with unique learning needs remain behind their peers in literacy skills in middle school; however, the instruction of reading skills becomes a secondary concern, although it continues to prevent students from grasping and accessing the content material that is vital to adult success (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2011). Sutherland and associates established in their survey of teachers of students with EBD that teachers self-reported fewer competencies in planning and provision of academic instruction to their students than other classroom management factors (2005). This is a likely result of efforts to improve instruction for students with literacy delays being generally comprised of changing the students' materials and teachers' manuals; while in fact, teachers require intensive supervised training experiences for adapting instruction more than new materials (Morris, 2011). Too often, preservice special educators' limited field experience is provided in settings in which the cooperating teachers' limited knowledge of literacy instruction provides little opportunity to experience research-based methods, while a greater instructional focus may be the accommodations and modifications

listed in the students' Individualized Education Plan (Leko & Brownell, 2011). Few quality field experiences may be offered to preservice teachers due to the lack of truly exemplary inservice special educators who are fully applying the research-based practices taught in the university; as caseloads and demands increase, the individualization of instruction decreases (Copeland et al., 2011).

The common practice in the teaching of students with EBD is the utilization of social or behavioral instructional strategies at the expense of structured small-group interventions (Wills et al., 2010). In settings employing such low curriculum fidelity, several themes emerge including: lack of professional development, lack of perceived sustainability, and lack of belief in the curriculum's ability to meet student needs (McIntyre et al., 2005). Hence, it is probable that a lack of usage of best practices in reading instruction is due to poor training and skill development of special education teachers (Swanson, 2008).

Empirically Established Strategies

The expectations for accountability and the litigious environment in special education mandate quality teachers' practices including use of evidence-based instruction (Ferretti & Eisenman, 2010). Legere and Conca investigated the effects of an intensive reading instruction intervention in a case study which revealed significant correlating improvements in the elementary student's behavior and attitude (2010). Similarly, King-Sears and Bowman-Kruhm assert that adolescents with reading deficits continue to require intensive, small group research-based reading instruction in order to improve academics and attitudes in all content areas (2010). Studies suggest that the ideal remediation for students with behavior deficiencies is the

embedding of social skills instruction within quality literature lessons; thereby addressing behaviors in conjunction with academics (Marchant & Womack, 2010). In fact, researchers have established the relationship between a high rate of teacher interaction in direct instruction and a reduced rate of student inappropriate responses which provides evidence of the need for quality instruction delivered by the teacher to concurrently address behavior (Lee et al., 2010). Correspondingly, in their study, Denton and associates avowed that the provision of additional instruction time is futile if the practices utilized are not highly effective (2010). An examination of the research regarding interventions for students with emotional behavioral disorders consistently validates the improvement of behavior as a result of academic gains (Oakes et al., 2010). The importance of instructional methods indicates the need for educators to develop instinctive abilities to make decisions regarding materials and methods based on formative assessments (Choppin, 2011).

A study of the validity of scripted instructional programs produced confirmation of the fact that the instructional method increases students' on-task responses per minute and reduces teacher redirection of competing behavior (Cooke et al., 2011). The rate of student responses to ensure engagement in students with EBD is a minimum of 3.2 correct responses per minute, which demands the teacher utilize a consistent direct instruction approach (Wills et al., 2010). In contrast to the approach of general exposure to whole words and constructivist learning, it is far more efficient to teach phonemes and phonics explicitly (Solity & Vousden, 2009). When teaching students who are already presenting a deficit in literacy skill development, efficiency in removing that deficit is of utmost importance. Likewise, in the instruction of students who

demonstrate extraordinary frustration with school demands, instructional methods which mitigate frustration are crucial for success. In support of this, Poplin found in her inquiry of students receiving explicit instruction that students expressed gratitude for having the concepts explained clearly and repeatedly until their understanding was firm as opposed to being expected to construct their own understanding (2011).

There is little question as to the validity of direct instruction of discrete skills as the stronger approach, as it consistently yields greater results in comparisons to whole language instruction (Solity & Vousden, 2009). For example, in a comparison study of a school in Texas with a rate of 80% low socio-economic status receiving direct instruction methods versus a nearby affluent suburban schools, the direct instruction school performed one to two grades levels above the comparison group (Roberts & Wilson, 2006). Likewise, longitudinal examinations of direct instruction in New York City revealed significantly higher rates of high school graduation, college applications and acceptance (Roberts & Wilson, 2006). In addition to academic gains, a benefit of the small group direct instruction is reducing student errors which in turn mitigates student frustration and raises enjoyment (Wills et al., 2010). The entire classroom environment can be altered by implementing engaging instruction which limits disruptive behavior (2010).

In his report of direct instruction validity, Rory Donaldson suggests that teachers use of creative instructional methods are akin to experimenting and gambling away precious time in students' academic lives (2011). In contrast, creating positive experiences with research-based effective strategies increases student and teacher engagement which leads to an increased amount

of positive interactions (Vannest et al, 2010). Affirming this theory, an observation of paraeducators' utilization of a non-scripted intervention program revealed off-task instructional behaviors such as asking unrelated questions, calling on individuals to respond and losing the group, and offering unnecessary corrections; these examples may be a representation of typical teacher behaviors mirrored by the paraeducator (Cooke et al, 2011). This is in disparity to a highly successful model which included increased small group time, increased oral reading practice, and improved response rates without student behaviors disrupting instructional flow (Wills et al., 2010).

In order to sustain implementation of quality instructional practices, administrators must provide clear support and expectations which includes protecting teachers from other demands, providing models and feedback, and demonstrating students' progress to teachers (Mooney et al., 2004). In order to establish the expectation that academic instruction is a vital component of teacher performance, administrators must be provided with instrumentation to identify effective instructional practices for students with EBD (Sutherland et al., 2005). A highly structured classroom instruction management system implemented with fidelity allows teachers to increase instruction delivered to students with EBD (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). Student engagement is observable in behaviors such as eye contact with teacher, actively attending to presentation, response to teachers' questions, and involvement with the instructional materials (Johns et al., 2008). There is an established correlation between the time-on-task and student achievement which suggests students spend a minimum of 70% of their time engaged in academic tasks (Johns et al., 2008). When this does not occur, students develop a sense of learned helplessness

as they believe their behavior does not influence ensuing events; this is likely when reinforcement occurs quite infrequently and fails to demonstrate contingency (Sutherland & Singh, 2004).

Typically, the model in a special education setting is a slow-paced reduced intensity program; however, studies suggest greater results are derived from blocks of intense, structured instruction (Poplin & Rogers, 2005). Again, the importance of diminishing the students' reading deficits in a short amount of time must be recalled. To this end, the elimination of students' misunderstanding or poor habit development must also be immediately addressed. In the limited research regarding reading interventions for students with EBD, explicit instruction which provides errorless learning due to immediate correction of errors is suggested (Wills et al., 2010). By removing the students' frustration with the task and forming of poor reading habits with intense instructional methods, the students' entire outlook upon participating in literacy activities may shift thereby altering their classroom behaviors. Indeed, teachers of students with significant intellectual disabilities who present high levels of behavior challenges have ameliorated those behaviors when implementing a behavior plan within instructional plans (Allor et al., 2010). This is contrary to the standard approach of implementing instructional plans within a behavior plan for students with EBD. In union with the use of effective instructional strategies which yield growth, students' efficacy regarding academic performance can be increased with weekly collaborative goal setting and monitoring meetings with the teacher (Quirk & Schwanenflugel, 2004).

Studies in behavioral momentum found that the presentation of brief, simple tasks with positive reinforcement prior to administering the challenging task leads to increased perseverance through the challenging task (Vostal & Lee, 2011). Reading interventions could utilize behavioral momentum to address need for persistence, as evidenced by study results which demonstrate fluency momentum carried over into the beginning of a fifth grade leveled passage following the reading of a third grade leveled passage (Vostal & Lee, 2011). While persistence through presentation of discrete tasks may endure, the boundaries of a continuous reading task may be unclear and the reinforcement for task completion may not be sufficiently striking (Vostal & Lee, 2011). The typical response to student frustration with continuous reading tasks may be to offer accommodations or modifications for the task. Accommodations are defined as alternative methods for learning and demonstrating mastery with the same outcome criteria for all students, while modifications make revisions to the criteria for mastery; overuse of both may cause insufficient response to students' needs via specialized instruction (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2011). The inappropriate usage of accommodations and modifications eliminates student engagement in the task. It has been empirically established that students who are not academically engaged have the negative effect of becoming passive learners, developing low rates of perseverance in challenges, and becoming anxious, withdrawn, and angry which leads to future failures (Johns et al., 2008).

Billingsley sought the best instructional procedures for instructing students with EBD in mathematics based on a paradigm of improving academic performance and behavior through instructional strategies (2007). In her study, Billingsley found that students preferred and

appeared most engaged in a combination of teacher-led direct instruction and computer assisted instruction (2007). This computer and teacher-led approach also proved most academically effective for students with EBD; discrediting the use of independent worksheet pedagogy (Billingsley, 2007). In addition to the need for explicit teaching with guided practice, independent practice can be enhanced with classroom technology (Cumming, 2010). Most importantly, continuing to persist in applying strategies with fidelity is the key to success in educating students with disabilities (Peck & Scarpati, 2010).

By definition, effective instruction produces student success in an efficient manner (Scott et al., 2007). The key to a successful curriculum and effective instruction for students with EBD is a high rate of engagement in performing learning activities (Johns et al., 2008). It appears that efforts which exclusively focus on academic remediation lead to little gains in academia or behavior; therefore, intervention efforts should balance approaches for academic and behavioral deficits as there is little evidence of the directionality of the effects of learning and behavior (Sutherland et al., 2008). The use of strategies for increasing student response and participation addresses both academic and behavioral needs while requiring little time and effort for implementation and lends itself to incorporation into most subjects and grade levels (Haydon et al., 2009). Using the technology of a student response system (SRS) both provides every student with an opportunity to respond and immediate feedback through a visual display of the responses of all students (Blood, 2010). Examination of the effectiveness of a SRS revealed greater response rates to formal questions and improved performance on daily quiz scores (Blood, 2010). The use of highly effective instructional strategies naturally raises the probability of

correct responses, which must be reinforced at consistently high rates (Sutherland & Singh, 2004).

Successful research-based interventions include increased opportunities to respond; during instruction, teachers should evoke four to six responses per minute with 80% accuracy while independent practice activities should yield eight to twelve responses per minute with 90% accuracy (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). Choral responding has returned positive effects as it requires teachers prompt students' unison responses at a pace which increases attention to task and number of responses (Haydon et al., 2009). A system of mixed response which features the ratio of 70 choral response opportunities to 30 individual opportunities is also highly effective for increasing engagement, but does require modeling and practice to use appropriate volume with built in reinforcement to be successful (Haydon et al., 2004). Student use of personal response cards such as white boards on which they can write their response with some anonymity increases participation because all students have opportunity to respond without judgment or discouragement (Haydon et al., 2004). The use of errorless learning strategies in which the correct answer is embedded in the question ensures reduction in incorrect responses and aids students who might otherwise engage in disruptive, avoidant behavior to gain mastery (Haydon et al., 2004). The provision of positive reinforcement for students' independent attempts at mastering material increases the students' competence perception and motivation (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). "84% of 747 students in grades three through six indicated that they preferred to be praised for trying hard rather than for their ability level" (Sutherland & Singh, 2004).

Environmental interventions. Teacher mediated interventions are validated as effective for improving reading abilities of students with EBD; additionally, inclusion of student choice and interest along with reinforcements, such as token economies, improve academic performance (Pierce et al., 2004). “Although reducing disruptive behavior might have positive effects on the classroom environment and associated variables, increasing task engagement might increase the efficacy of instructional procedures in the classroom, resulting in increases in achievement and concomitant positive developmental outcomes, including providing incidental opportunities for prosocial instruction in the context of instructional demands” (Sutherland et al., 2008). Effective classroom management strategies for students with EBD should include physical organization that promotes learning, curricular restructuring for pacing and variation as well as frequent teacher movement around the classroom (Sutherland et al., 2008). Teachers’ perceived sense of accountability for using mandated strategies influences their sustained implementation as well as the ease at which the strategies can be embedded into current practice (Dingle et al., 2011).

A self-contained setting for students with EBD can become the supportive climate in which special educators can teach the prosocial behaviors and academic skills for functioning in the general education environment (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). Effective reading instruction for students with EBD must help students initiate and persist in challenging tasks, as they may not benefit fully from research-based interventions when reduced task engagement and disruptive behaviors interfere with instruction (Vostal & Lee, 2011). In order to create a positive classroom environment, it is vital that the curricular content and instructional delivery method create high levels of student response both during instruction and the practicing of skills (Johns et al., 2008).

Students' learning and behavior problems may be best remediated through environmental effects, as students with EBD and their teachers are likely to find the classroom environment aversive as a result of established negative interaction patterns (Sutherland et al., 2008). In fact, there is a solidly emerging research base to contribute to effective pedagogical practices for students with EBD, but teacher trainers may need to emphasize the research base and encourage teachers to become more adept at consuming research (Sutherland et al., 2005). Furthermore, strategies for classroom management are only effective if they account for teacher time and effort, resources, and routines in order to be coherently embedded for consistent application (Scott et al., 2007).

Knowledge of literacy instruction. No Child Left Behind's legislation demands that teachers have specific knowledge of the five components of literacy in order to be highly qualified; however, the amount of coursework in reading and practicum experiences completed impact the knowledge developed by teachers (Copeland et al., 2011). It is vital that preservice special educators understand the importance of learning about the development of reading skills in order to fully teach the components of reading using instruction that is systematic, explicit, individualized, and intensive (Leko & Brownell, 2011). Previously, the general opinion regarding literacy instruction for students with significant deficits was to remediate with functional instruction to allow for recognition of key terms; however, it has been more recently established that quality literacy instruction techniques designed for typical students will also benefit students with disabilities and increase their reading achievement (Copeland et al., 2011). Therefore, "...it is vital that teachers become proficient in multiple ways to teach literacy

knowledge and skills rather than relying on a single method or program” (Copeland et al., 2011). To this end, quality professional development which includes an intensive practicum is the surest way to improve teacher knowledge and skill which will truly improve reading instruction for struggling readers (Morris, 2011).

Researchers have established the lack of impact on classroom practice derived from singular professional development workshops that fail to apply active learning, alignment with teacher knowledge and beliefs as well as curriculum, and sufficient duration or follow up support (Morris, 2011). Teachers must be motivated in order to alter their pedagogy for greater student success; this may be increased by demonstration of student growth through data (Dingle et al., 2011). Student performance data is indispensable to both motivate and assist teachers in planning instructional methods. Formative assessment as a tool for instructional planning is essential, but must be understood by administrators and teachers and be made easy to implement through measures such as technology (Mooney et al., 2004).

Teacher Factors

In addition to instructional methods, the teacher has an enormous impact upon student success and motivation. Federal and state policy may mandate specific practices, but in reality “...what happens in the school and classroom is most often mediated by teachers’ practices, how teachers interact with colleagues and families, and how these relationships are embedded in the larger community” (Ferretti & Eisenman, 2010). In support of this, Gladwell asserts that teacher effects outrank school effects or class size effects (2008). The ability to adapt and enhance instruction is a complex process which requires continued learning and reflection by committed

teachers (McIntyre, 2005). Indeed, studies regarding curriculum fidelity revealed the importance of the teacher value added component in assessing programs (Osmundson et al, 2012). Additionally, teachers' academic expectations of students become fulfilled; and, when set low based upon initial interactions or apparent characteristics, low performance is generally maintained (Crawford, 2007).

Teacher expectations. When teachers possess low expectations of the abilities of their students with emotional behavioral disorders, they create a class environment which deprives students of academic opportunity while increasing rate of failure and competing behaviors based upon lack of motivation and persistence (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). Due to the impact of problematic relationships between students with EBD and their teachers, particularly for students with aggressive behaviors, changing the reinforcement cycle of students' inappropriate behavior requires both student and teacher-level intervention (Sutherland et al., 2008). This is reflected in the literature reviews examining classrooms for students with EBD that reveal the teachers praise to reprimand ratios range from 2:1 to 4:1 in favor of reprimands (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). Teachers' expectations are further reflected in research which states that teachers typically provide activities below the instructional level of students who display problem behavior; in fact, high aggressors are provided less instruction in a self-contained setting for students with EBD (Sutherland & Singh, 2004).

Undergraduate preparation. The quality of interactions between teacher and student is influenced by the teacher's ability to provide effective instruction (Sutherland et al., 2008). Too often, special educators were prepared with very broad pedagogical practices for every grade

level and are not prepared with the extensive knowledge of developing literacy skills for students with disabilities; furthermore, their classroom settings frequently lack sufficient supports and materials (Dingle et al., 2011). It appears that beginning teachers enter the classroom unprepared for management challenges due to insufficient preparation by teacher education programs which is the predominant explanation provided for teachers leaving the teaching profession (Scott et al., 2007).

Experience and education level. Teacher stress and attitude may also impact instruction and interactions with students. A Greek study of 373 special educators revealed that more than half of the teachers are significantly stressed by teaching students with EBD second only to the teaching of students with Autism (Kokkinos & Davazoglou, 2009). However, it was also revealed that fidelity in curriculum implementation reduced teacher stress levels while increasing students' social and academic progress (2009). It can be derived that successful instruction is beneficial to both students and teachers. If teachers believe in the ability of their instruction, they may be more likely to raise the standard of expectations for students as well. Inversely, there is evidence that teachers' beliefs and expectations impact the degree of fidelity of their curriculum instruction (Azano et al., 2011). However, implementing curriculum with fidelity requires comprehension of the content and skills, or scope, as well as sequence (Jackson et al, 2009). Often, teachers fail to use strategies proven effective for students with EBD due to their insufficient training or disbelief of the research (Vannest et al, 2010). For instance, social skill instruction is suggested as a clear intervention for students with EBD, but ineffective professional development inhibits the actual practice (Cumming, 2010).

Educators' own personal motivation to grow and view themselves as continuing learners which is also impacted by their established content and pedagogical knowledge, impacts the success of their trainings to increase their longevity for teaching this population (Dingle et al., 2011). An examination of the coursework of preparing special educators revealed a general finding that universities provide little to no preparation in the areas of structured environment, active supervision and student engagement, school wide behavior expectations, and classroom routines (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). This may relate to a high rate of attrition among special educators, particularly among those who teach students with EBD; teachers with confidence in their ability to manage behavior may be more likely to stay as their counterparts may be likely to change professions (Sutherland et al., 2005). There appears to be a connection to ineffective classroom management which relies on punishment or exclusion; when there is a lack of effective management, there is an increase in burnout and attrition for teachers (Scott et al., 2007).

In fact, Prather-Jones reports that teachers in the field of EBD experience the greatest shortages and highest attrition rates in comparison to other special education categories (2011). To investigate this concern, Anderson and Hendrickson issued a follow up survey in their study to examine career satisfaction among early-career teachers of students with EBD which revealed eleven out of twelve respondents intended to continue teaching special education while one desired to move to general education (2007). However, at least half of the respondents voiced concern over the undue hardships created by conflicting demands of standardized testing and meeting individuals' education goals (Anderson & Hendrickson, 2007). In 1993, Billingsley

established a framework for teacher attrition which suggested that teachers' decisions regarding their commitment to the teaching field are frequently influenced by external factors, employment motivation, and personal reasons (Prather-Jones, 2011). Under this framework, the commitment of a teacher in this field may change over their tenure. In fact, Martin and Sass assert that a teacher's approach to classroom management and planning of instructional activities may evolve over time, as evidenced by a previous study in which student teachers began their experience by prioritizing quality lesson plans but gradually shifted to planning activities which discouraged disruptive behavior (Martin & Sass, 2010).

This may align with the findings of a qualitative study of teachers of students with EBD who have a minimum of seven years' experience, as they consistently reported flexibility and willingness to deviate from plans as a key to their longevity in the field (Prather-Jones, 2011). Further, Knoblauch and Hoy affirmed that teacher behaviors are influenced by teachers' sense of efficacy which manifests persistence; teachers with early, easily-attained success experience shrinking sense of efficacy when they experience failures (2008). Experienced teachers of students with EBD also commonly reported the acceptance of limitations and the recognition that huge gains in academics or social skills are unlikely to be observed; they recognize the variety of outside factors affecting their students' outcomes (Prather-Jones, 2011). In other words, they suggest that a prerequisite of a lasting tenure in this field is the release of control of instruction or high expectations of student performance. This supports the findings of a qualitative study of urban high school teachers' attitudes regarding evaluation and professional development which

reported a general belief that veteran teachers resisted change and clung to autonomy to protect themselves from criticism (Maslow & Kelley, 2012).

While special education teacher shortages are a frequent problem, it has been established that anything less than highly effective teachers will lead to devastating outcomes in regards to achievement (Copeland et al., 2011). As a result of the increased demands created by the behaviors of students with EBD, their teachers must possess increased ability to organize a classroom in order to address behaviors while addressing academic deficits and supporting student inclusion (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). Studies have documented the orientation of many teachers of students with EBD towards classroom management to the degree of detracting from the academic instruction of their students, which indicates the need for teacher instructors to aid teachers in identifying the relationship between effective academic instruction and students' classroom behaviors (Sutherland et al., 2005). Rather than devote time to behavior management that precludes learning experiences, highly effective teachers plan appropriate times for non-instructional activities and create systems that ensure students transition smoothly from one activity to another with built in reinforcements for doing so efficiently (Johns et al., 2008).

Effective teacher traits. “Effective teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders understand the importance of the time-on-task variable and realize that the time the students spend engaged in meaningful activities must provide them with a high degree of success” (Johns et al., 2008). The body of research on the effects of teacher praise on students with EBD suggests a result of increased correct responses in math and reading with greater task engagement and reduced disruptive behavior (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). In addition to teacher

praise, teacher-mediated interventions are an effective means of increasing student performance and include token economies, contingency contracting, adjustment of task difficulty, providing structured instruction, and story mapping, as they all require manipulation by someone other than the student (Pierce et al., 2004).

The probability that the highest rate of student growth and achievement will occur is greatly dependent on teacher's allocation and fruitful use of instructional time (Johns et al, 2008). The clear discrepancies in teacher effectiveness suggests an apparent impact on student achievement as research submits that recurrent exposure to a series of ineffective teachers results in significantly harmful outcomes (Sutherland et al., 2005). If preservice teachers are provided the opportunity to actively practice their pedagogical tools, they are likely to fully adopt the practice and apply the tools to their professional practice (Leko & Brownell, 2011).

Teachers with effective classroom management orient themselves towards preventive strategies with explicit instruction as opposed to reacting to disruption (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). The habits of a highly effective teacher include planning of too many rather than too few lessons, without depending on simple busy work to occupy extra time (Johns et al., 2008). Teachers who have well-run classrooms create high amounts of successful periods of engaged learning which reduces behavior management demands (Johns et al., 2008). Student-teacher relationships are improved when negative student behavior is reduced and a more positive learning environment is created via effective instruction (Haydon et al., 2009).

Instructional control. Many researchers assert that the teacher-effectiveness quotient is most affected by the variable of time-on-task for creation of student engagement (Johns et al.,

2008). In observations conducted to rate teacher effectiveness, high rates of students' disruptive behaviors along with low rates of teacher response was the top cause of an ineffective ranking (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). Highly effective teachers recognize that challenging behaviors are frequently predictable under certain circumstances and use their predictions regarding likely challenges to develop routines and arrangements to prevent the need for the identified challenge to occur (Scott et al., 2007). Additionally, the careful and systematic planning by the teacher and selection of academic materials that are targeted for students' instructional level ensures that students can attain high degrees of success (Johns et al., 2008). Effective teachers clearly communicate expectations regarding behavior and participation by clearly teaching routines and recognizing students' appropriate behavior with specific verbiage and demonstrated consistency in response to both appropriate and inappropriate behavior (Oliver & Reschly, 2010).

Quality implementation. Generally, when curriculum is evaluated, it is assumed that teachers understand the concepts that they are teaching and follow the sequence (Osmundson et al., 2012). In reality, instruction implementation is quite complex and many obstacles to fidelity occur (McIntyre et al., 2005). Many factors influence teachers' attitudes surrounding the curriculum such as their amount of planning time, sense of autonomy, and expectations for their students in addition to their own knowledge (Azano et al., 2011). In relation to this, many special education classroom teachers undervalue the abilities of the students; which decreases teacher fidelity and student achievement and efficacy (Poplin & Rogers, 2005).

Research validates the assumption that summative assessment results are higher for students instructed by teachers with high fidelity rates than their peers in less vigorous settings

(Azano et al., 2011). Avowing this theory, David Elkind supports the need for specific knowledge of content and child development in teacher training programs (Elkind, 2004). Evaluation of teachers' content and pedagogical knowledge are key elements of curriculum fidelity examinations (Osmundson et al., 2012). Simply basing assumptions regarding instruction upon the written curriculum overlooks the reality that designers cannot predict teacher content knowledge and application that each teacher will make based upon their perceived students' needs or setting factors (Choppin, 2011). Examination of the impact of reading programs designed to provide intensive reading instruction consistently reveals the requirement of the teachers' knowledge for quality implementation (Moats, 2009).

Teacher background and current setting. NCLB and IDEA assume that effective instruction will be implemented for success, yet research-based practices are not generally observed in settings for students with emotional behavioral disorders (Mooney et al., 2004). It is theorized that a deficit in appropriate teacher training for teachers of students with EBD leads to a limited orientation towards academic instruction as the preservice training focuses on management of behavior (Mooney et al., 2004). Additionally, the element that is crucial to effective teaching is a teacher's ability to reflect and evaluate their instructional behaviors and verbiage which may not be transmitted in teacher preparation (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). The amount that a teacher learns and grows from training is influenced by the teacher's prior knowledge, beliefs, and skills as well as interactions with peers and content and the ability of the training to apply authentic implementation practice (Dingle et al., 2011). Activity theorists contend that learning is affected by context which is developed by a person's actions, beliefs,

and knowledge; this theory of learning applies to teacher development as it relates to the student teacher's interactions within a given context (Leko & Brownell, 2011).

Meanwhile, research has provided suggestions for classroom-based interventions for positive results, but promoting their adoption by teachers remains a challenge as the dynamic between teachers and students affects the implementation of such interventions (Sutherland et al., 2008). It is also essential that all adults working in the classroom display unity in their approach to student instruction, prediction of problems, and development of consistent proactive strategies to create a strong action plan (Scott et al., 2007). In contrast, an overuse of accommodations and modifications in the classroom may actually avoid students' reading requirements, which fail to provide intensive reading instruction which is not meant to be displaced in the students' individualized education plans (King-Sears & Bowman-Kruhm, 2011). Approaches which vary in expectations of students and randomly utilize accommodations and modifications are caustic to student growth and learning as "inconsistency is the enemy of instruction" (Scott et al., 2007).

These dynamics are further influenced by the setting of the classroom, which may consist of many variables. A variety of grade levels may be served in classroom for students with EBD. The classroom may be positioned within a public school or a separate facility, and may be positioned in an urban, rural, or suburban region. There are prominent differences between schools based on their settings; generally, urban and rural schools are challenged at greater rates in terms of resources or materials, teachers, facilities, and discipline problems (Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008). With this in mind, Martin and Sass qualified the *Behavior and Instructional Management Survey* with the contention that it may only measure the teacher's reported

behaviors within their current setting as opposed to being exclusive characteristics of the teacher (2010). Grade level bears influence as high school settings typically feature greater autonomy among teachers, with less administrator time devoted to teacher evaluation and more administrative management of the demands of young adult students (Maslow & Kelley, 2012). Additionally, urban settings present unique challenges as administrators may have greater demands to manage students' social, behavioral, economic, and learning needs with high rates of teacher turnover rather than investing in evaluating and collaborating with teacher (Maslow & Kelley, 2012). A combination of setting factors may create further stress, as a study of teachers from an urban high school reported most felt they must pursue their own learning as the professional development planned for them was irrelevant and time-wasting, so while dedicated, their methods varied greatly (Maslow & Kelley, 2012).

Professional development needs. Thus, Hamre and associates investigated professional development in curricular changes and discovered teachers' belief sets which conflict with training cause disengagement; and, those who have been in a setting for a significant length of time resist shifting paradigms regarding instructional methods (2011). Due to this, Gladwell condemns reform designed to increase credentials for teachers and proposes that instructional skill is truly inherent as opposed to teachable (2008). Others may disagree with Gladwell's assertion; yet, the research consistently validates the importance of teacher preparation and skill, thereby necessitating investigation into the means for improving the teacher qualities for students with emotional behavioral disorders. Vannest and associates proclaim, "Teaching as a vocation is a choice we engage in daily and this choice in how we teach is uniquely powerful in the effects

on vulnerable populations. The highest needs students require the most highly qualified teachers” (2010).

Teacher beliefs. It is thought that teacher instructional behavior can be altered by provision of the rate at which vital teacher behaviors are observed, with follow up observations scheduled and ensuing data shared to demonstrate teacher progress (Mooney et al., 2004). “Schools as a whole, and teachers as a group can experience successes and failures, and these mastery experiences greatly influence collective teacher efficacy beliefs’ (Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008). Teachers are identified as effective more often if they demonstrate an understanding that training continues throughout their tenure, and are responsive to their unique students (Copeland et al., 2011). Similarly, it is vital that educators monitor an intervention’s effectiveness for their students and ensure academic gains are being made (Pierce et al., 2004). In fact, as tools for evaluating classroom programs for students with EBD are developed, it is vital that research presents a connection between the program improvement and student outcomes (Tsai et al., 2013).

Research submits that a teacher’s commitment to providing the highest quality instruction is correlated to the teacher’s motivation for entering special education, which includes desire to raise student achievement, empathy for students with special needs, or increased options for gaining employment (Leko & Brownell, 2011). Prather-Jones’ study on the importance of personality in the longevity of a career in teaching students with EBD found several recurring themes regarding the belief of the teacher that they are able to make a difference, have the right “personality,” or feel a calling to it (2011). However, Anderson and Hendrickson’s study of

early-career teachers of students with EBD reported a faction between the teachers' reported beliefs regarding important practices and that which they actually implement (2007). By the same token, an examination of the literature regarding evaluation of programs for students with EBD suggests that establishment of a philosophy of practice for the classroom does not guarantee an influence on teacher practice or student outcomes (Tsai et al., 2013).

For many special educators, the lack of understanding of early literacy development causes an over reliance on the canned program or the assumption that certain skills are simply not applicable for extremely struggling learners (Copeland et al., 2011). In fact, while teachers may assume that their instruction and behavior management are aligned, very often teachers' possess an inconsistency in their thinking about instruction versus behavior management (Martin & Sass, 2010). Even in-service teachers of typical first grade students report after years of service that they never truly understood how to teach children to read, as they lacked basic understanding of how children develop early literacy skills; furthermore, they do not comprehend how to collect and analyze data to determine effectiveness and alter instruction accordingly (Copeland et al., 2011).

The view that certain students are incapable of reaching full literate status causes rich and appropriate literacy instruction to be withheld from that group (Copeland et al., 2011). Conversely, teachers' expectation of students to perform at their developmentally appropriate level in academic tasks, coupled with removal of criticism, is likely to increase student motivation and reduce behaviors related to learned helplessness (Sutherland & Singh, 2004). Experiences of success in which struggling readers demonstrate significant improvement in

response to teacher manipulated interventions are likely to change the expectations and orientations of an educator (Morris, 2011). Teachers' interactions increase in response to the increase in student responsiveness to the instruction; as the teachers detect student interest, they also become more encouraged and motivated to deliver challenging instruction (Haydon et al., 2009).

It is recognized that along with instruction on collection and analysis of student progress data, supports for evidence-based reading instruction methods is needed to improve teacher training (Mooney et al., 2004). Bandura's theory regarding teacher efficacy stresses that changing beliefs requires more than simply exposing the learner to the right example, as the learner must find relevance and value in the example in order to alter beliefs (Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008). A master teacher of struggling readers must possess knowledge of the discipline, problem-solving abilities, and confidence that teaching techniques can in fact change students' performance (Morris, 2011). Research points to a need for teachers of students with EBD to receive both pre-service and in-service training for providing high-quality instruction and increased support to permit them to meet the academic demands of their students (Sutherland et al., 2005).

Challenges to effective training. "One of the most common challenges faculty reported in their university programs was that candidates entering their courses lacked needed background knowledge of the reading process and had limited skills and/or experiences related to reading instruction" (Copeland et al., 2011). Clearly, the background knowledge and beliefs that preservice teachers bring to their teacher preparation programs influences the content and skills

that teachers learn (Leko & Brownell, 2011). Additionally, a quality practical fieldwork experience can alter the teacher's opinion regarding the ability of a struggling reader, which frequently causes the teacher to experience a sense of powerlessness if it is attributed to a child-based issue (Morris, 2011). Similarly, teacher factors that influence successful implementation of evidence-based practices include: teacher's understanding of the material taught, ability to differentiate for individuals, and personal beliefs that correlate with strategies (Dingle et al., 2011). In order to become very effective reading teachers, educators must fully understand evidence based practice, the correlation between language and literacy, and the development of typical readers (Copeland et al., 2011).

Truly effective professional development yields increased teacher knowledge and skills as well as shifts in beliefs, which correlate to changes in instructional delivery that increase student learning (Dingle et al., 2011). An outcome of training is that teachers draw from both conceptual tools, ideas that guide decisions, and practical tools, which are skills and strategies for instruction, but their adoption of each set is dependent on the alignment to their own education tenets (Leko & Brownell, 2011). Beginning teachers express a sense of ill-preparedness, stemming from a lack of opportunity to apply classroom knowledge in field work or personal misunderstanding of reading processes (Leko & Brownell, 2011).

No Child Left Behind requires special education teachers be highly qualified by holding certification in special education and the core subjects they teach, which is attained via state subject matter tests, yet the number of teachers who do not meet this criteria remains high (Mooney et al., 2004). It is critical that special education teachers of students with EBD are

adequately prepared in classroom organization and behavior management skills as their students are more likely to spend the majority of their time in a self-contained classroom setting (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). Unfortunately, “research indicates that teachers of students with EBD may not be adequately prepared, have less experience, and receive less education” (Oliver & Reschly, 2010). Frequently, the beginning reading class provided in preservice teacher training fails to lead to content mastery out of the context of application to instructing students within a curriculum, which requires knowledge of reading and effective instructional techniques to become high quality instruction (Leko & Brownell, 2011).

Managing Behavior through Instruction

While several researchers have explored and contended an improvement in social skills resulting from reading improvements, a collateral positive effect has not been firmly established; however, social adjustment changes may well take longer than reading changes and interventions while both are absolutely necessary (Benner et al., 2011). Social adjustment deficits, akin to reading deficits, do tend to increase and become less susceptible to intervention over time, which suggests the importance of finding supports for success of students who struggle behaviorally and academically (Nelson et al., 2011). A current shift in the thinking about Response to Intervention methods to the Multi-Tiered Systems of Support spearheaded by Common Core implementation is the integration of academics and behavior, as both are equally critical to student success (Gamm et al., 2012). Interestingly, researchers have hypothesized that students with EBD have a great resistance to typically effective reading interventions especially in the early grades, yet recent findings have submitted success with interventions at the secondary level

(Mooney et al., 2008). Additionally, studies continue to corroborate the belief that behavior and attention must be managed through instruction, as students exhibit less inappropriate behavior when engaged in instruction (Benner et al., 2010). Causton-Theoharis and Theoharis point out that it is a basic human need to feel belonging and when that is lacking, people often become angry and shut down or retreat from learning, which is often exacerbated in a separate space created for students with behavior problems denied access to the rich curriculum of the mainstream setting (2009). This likely causes the appearance of "...the demeanor of students with EBD who struggle academically suggests that they have disengaged from school and do not care to keep trying to learn." (McDaniel et al., 2010).

However, students with EBD are able to benefit from reading instruction as effects are consistent among an array of studies with varying programs; thus, supplementary instruction with targeted phonologic interventions or provision of early intervention for at-risk students with EBD is beneficial (Benner et al., 2010). In order to create dramatic gains in achievement for students with EBD, teachers must shift to a proactive intervention approach to reading instruction (Mooney et al., 2008). An examination of several studies on reading interventions for students with EBD established that explicit instruction procedures were most effective; additionally, the importance of standard-procedure based programs as opposed to teacher-developed approaches was validated (Benner et al., 2010). In a comparison of students with EBD and students with exclusive Learning Disabilities, those with EBD demonstrated significantly greater response to Corrective Reading, a direct instruction reading program

(Mooney et al., 2008). This suggests that the explicit instruction works to mitigate behaviors which typically hinder the learning process.

Literacy instructional practices have been determined to typically consist of explicit, code-based instruction or meaning-based holistic instruction, observation studies revealed teacher-managed explicit instruction and student-managed implicit instruction led to the greatest decoding gains (Cunningham et al., 2009). In order to maximize student success, programs must be used with fidelity, frequency, and measures for mastery which should initiate goal setting and progress monitoring to motivate students with EBD (Mooney et al., 2008). It is reported by teachers of this student population that behavior problems can become obstacles to implementation of effective instruction, but the same teachers do perceive scripted remediation programs to be an effective intervention and would value additional support for managing behavior (McDaniel et al., 2010).

While approximately 1% of school-age students are identified as EBD and served in special education programs, it is estimated minimally that 6% of school-age students have EBD; therefore, a well implemented Response to Intervention model for school-wide academics and behavior may effectively support students for success in general education (Oakes et al., 2012). Within this paradigm, application of proactive interventions for behavior and academic remediation are especially necessary in programs designed for students with EBD. Students with EBD are quite often not identified and thereby provided appropriate services before they are several years into their school career; therefore, in order to convert older students with EBD into capable students, reading programs must teach basic word-reading skills (Benner et al., 2010).

As a student is identified in need of special education services due to effects of EBD, the student's education should provide the next tier of intervention recognizing that remediation for behavior should accompany learning student skills. Generally, struggling readers at the secondary level read words but cannot understand text and require immersion in literacy activities and building of fluency (Mooney et al., 2008). Hence, engaging age-appropriate activities should be utilized to provide the skills that have are missing.

A synthesis of the research regarding the reading of students with EBD suggests a range of 31-81% prevalence of reading underachievement and the deficits ranged from 0.53 to more than two grade levels behind peers (Benner et al., 2010). It is apparent that when teaching more diverse learners, teachers must be exceedingly skilled in evaluating situations and designing responses to student needs rather than following set routines (Mayer et al., 2011). Literacy is dependent on students' understanding of oral language; therefore, teachers must understand phonological awareness in order to provide quality instruction to students who must gain sensitivity to sounds in spoken words (Podhajski et al., 2009). However, in interviews of teachers of students with EBD with a minimum of seven years' experience, the greater half of the participants reported neither their pre-service nor in-service training was adequate in preparing them for their role (Prather-Jones, 2011).

Literacy remediation certainly takes on a new level of urgency for middle and high school students with EBD, as students must regularly read and write to demonstrate mastery of all content (Mooney et al., 2008). Likewise, proficiency in oral language and usage of written communication for social purposes increase at the secondary school level. A reading problem

may begin with the learning of phoneme-grapheme relationships but eventually affects all literacy areas, as students who are not fluent also struggle to comprehend and gain knowledge (Podhajski et al., 2009). “Evidence-based programs implemented at high levels of fidelity are needed to decrease the likelihood of students with EBD experiencing negative post-school outcomes” (McDaniel et al., 2010). In fact, an examination of the reading levels of incarcerated adult males determined that the younger inmates most often had lower reading levels than their older counterparts (Shippen et al., 2010). This is suggestive of the possible life altering impact that literacy skills could have upon the young adults.

The hypothesis that manipulating the instructional antecedent of written expression tasks by providing Direct Instruction to remediate this area could alter the disruptive behavior, improve writing skills, and avoid full placement in a special education setting (Hogan-Burke et al., 2007). Effective classroom practices have been found to be so significant by Kane and associates that they suggest a one-point difference in the scores of classroom practices is related to a one-seventh standard deviation increase in reading performance and one-tenth in math (2010). While they offer the caveat that this may simply be the identification of practice of already effective teachers, Kane and associates approximate that literacy scores will improve as a result of increased practice of engaging students with deeper questions and discussion, as opposed to spending time planning and developing strategies (2010). The research continues to validate the importance of engaging instruction to improve behavior and academic performance.

Shifting Teacher Orientation

The unique challenge of the English language's lack of one-to-one phoneme/grapheme correspondence demands that teachers of reading in English have a solid understanding of sound-symbol relationships in oral language in order to provide systematic phonics instruction (Washburn et al., 2010). Such importance is placed upon the ability of a reading teacher to implement research-based instruction, identify struggling readers, and differentiate instruction in response to student needs that it is theorized the teacher has the capacity to preclude reading failure (Washburn et al., 2010). Positive outcomes were yielded from professional development that emphasized language structure knowledge and how to provide explicit instruction rather than introducing a curriculum (Podhajski et al., 2009). Teachers' beliefs, which are frequently based upon their undergraduate education rather than current research, are a powerful indicator of the alignment of their instruction with research-based practices (Cunningham et al., 2009). Anderson and Hendrickson verified this in their study of teachers of students with EBD when no relationship was found between the teachers' theoretical knowledge and instructional competencies, classroom management strategies, or overall teaching performance (2007).

Literacy is exceedingly significant as it is correlated to employment and wages, health, community involvement, and social adjustment (Shippen et al., 2010). While we have advanced in our knowledge of what works for students learning to read, the knowledge and skills teachers require is still absent from many teacher preparation programs (Podhajski et al., 2009). In fact, in Washburn and associate's study of preservice teachers' knowledge of basic literacy constructs, approximately half of the responders were able to use certain reliable phonics principles, which

suggests many teachers lack the explicit phonics principles needed to teach systematically (2010). Teachers with a slant towards skills-based instruction tend to incorporate a greater variety of the aspects of reading, while teachers who favor literature instruction over phonics fail to provide a balanced approach (Cunningham et al., 2009).

In order to retrain and eliminate the constructivist philosophy that has been in vogue for decades, which features little direct instruction, educators require systematic, explicit, intensive instruction (Wilson & Colmar, 2008). Washburn and associates' study of preservice teachers indicated a mismatch in the teachers' perceived ability to teach reading and their actual knowledge, which may prevent the inservice teachers from seeking of being open to education in teaching struggling readers (2010). Cunningham et al. found that teachers' beliefs about literacy instruction activity choices were not significantly related to their knowledge of phonics or literature, but teachers who score well on phonics assessments did spend more time in systematic, explicit instruction (2009). For example, spelling instruction is very complicated and many questions exist regarding how to best instruct students with disabilities, which suggests a need for improved instructional skill in this domain (Calhoon et al., 2010). Spelling must be taught in conjunction with reading, particularly for students with reading disabilities; thus, teachers of this group require ongoing professional development for spelling instruction as it relates to grapheme/phoneme correspondence (Calhoon et al., 2010).

The proper consumption of an intervention procedure for struggling readers is decidedly important. Teachers should self-evaluate fidelity of implementation of a standardized intervention as well as receive observations by experts in the program (Mooney et al., 2008).

Teacher knowledge and beliefs must become aligned with the practices established by research in order to ensure practices are utilized with fidelity (Cunningham et al., 2009). Interestingly, a study of teachers' preferred use of reading instruction time found that the assumption that special education teachers would utilize an entirely different approach to literacy instruction than general education teachers was incorrect, although special education teachers did allocate more time to basic skills and less unstructured activities (Cunningham et al., 2009).

It appears likely that the most recent findings in reading instruction research have been ineffectively shared with both novice and experienced teachers; their beliefs will not align with current recommendations if they do not have knowledge (Cunningham et al., 2009). Multiple researchers have established that teachers of literacy must possess several domains of knowledge, including phonemic awareness, phonics, and vocabulary, in order to create systematic and explicit instruction while recognizing and adjusting to student errors (Cunningham et al., 2009). While the research has indicated an overwhelming gap in the average teacher's knowledge of these skills, teachers' beliefs about their preparation for teaching reading are equally skewed indicating that they may overestimate their knowledge and become resistant to new ideas (Podhajski et al., 2009). However, teachers do change practices to more explicit methods as their disciplinary knowledge increases which insinuates that their beliefs are malleable; a lack of knowledge requires teachers to act on personal beliefs and experience alone (Cunningham et al., 2009).

The notion that teachers cannot know what they do not know may affect many domains in the teachers' duties. In a study of school teachers' knowledge of disorders such as Attention-

Deficit Disorder among school age students, teachers' knowledge was very low regardless of years of experience, degree, or previous experience working with a child with said disorder (White et al., 2010). However, a minimum of a brief training on the subject was demonstrated to improve teachers' likelihood of recognizing and addressing the students' needs (White et al., 2010). Similarly, exploration in training of teachers of reading has revealed gains in the performance of teachers and students as a result of short-term professional development programs; such research consistently validates the impact of teacher knowledge and practice on student outcomes (Cunningham et al., 2009). Too often effective interventions cease to be implemented when the trial ends, which could be due to lack of administrative support, teacher acceptance, or student behavior as teacher and student behavior affect fidelity (McDaniel et al., 2010).

Collaboration as a tool. A review of the skills needed for the teacher of reading as well as the behavior management requirements for the teacher of students with EBD makes apparent that one cannot accomplish this task in isolation. A team of professionals with various expertises contribute to the education of a struggling learner. "Literacy is the key academic skill and, for psychologists and counselors working in educational contexts, being involved with the optimal teaching and learning of literacy will directly impact on their effectiveness across all areas of student difficulty" (Wilson & Colmar, 2008). Co-teaching is defined as a professional collaboration which allows a student to receive special instruction appropriate to meet the needs of their disability while also ensuring access to quality instruction of the general curriculum in the least restrictive environment (Charles & Dickens, 2012). It is the argument of full inclusion

supporters that general and special educators should participate in the same professional development and embrace new roles in order to fully collaborate (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2009).

A major precept of the shift to Common Core State Standards is the belief that all professionals will contribute to planning literacy, numeracy, and behavioral instruction, including but not limited to related service providers, special subject teachers, and counselors (Gamm et al., 2012). Collaboration must occur between literacy specialists, curriculum specialists, school counselors, and teachers in order to plan for solid development of skills required for learners to navigate reading and school requirements (Wilson & Colmar, 2008). Unfortunately, one Australian study found that counselors and educational psychologists may not be knowledgeable about the ideal research-based practices for reading instruction that might best enable a student with reading delays and emotional disabilities to become successful (Wilson & Colmar, 2008). This does not bode well as Hagan-Burke and associates reported significant positive results from an instructional intervention for a student with EBD which involved collaboration between researchers and classroom teacher (2007). The researchers report the reality that this intervention would not have been executable by the classroom teacher alone (Hagan-Burke et al., 2007).

Proponents of a full inclusive school environment contend that the success of all students depends upon a complete change to the school's physical environment, intervention procedures, afterschool programs, and further assert that significant achievement gains have resulted (Causton-Theoharis & Theoharis, 2009). Children with reading difficulties and low self-esteem

in regards to school skills are likely to avoid reading activities and fall further behind in achieving school successes which leads to limited opportunities in life because of the absence of literacy skills (Wilson & Colmar, 2008). Non-certified persons may greatly improve the reading skills of students requiring intensive intervention when supplied with tools such as: research-based reading approach to follow, explicit and extensive training in reading approaches and behavior management, as well as ongoing monitoring and feedback from teachers (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2007). It is ideal if paraprofessionals are provided research-based reading materials with explicit, systematic instructional approaches as maintenance of the quality and consistency of instruction is vital to student success; paraprofessionals should not make instructional plans (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2007).

Co-teaching can be accompanied by several challenges, but one of the greatest impediments to its success may be a lack of professional development and planning time (Charles & Dickens, 2012). Similarly, planning and providing guidance for paraprofessionals presents these challenges. It is essential that paraprofessionals are thoroughly trained in the reading interventions they will implement and behavior management in order to provide small group reading instruction, and the provision of written plans for staff working with students with a history of difficult behavior ensures staff support students to spend more time engaged in learning (Causton-Theohari et al., 2007). Another potential challenge to Direct Instruction implementation in a setting for students with EBD is the scheduling of multiple leveled groups and interference when paraprofessionals deliver instruction concurrently; however, a scripted

program does ameliorate concerns for planning time and eases implementation by various personnel (McDaniel et al., 2010).

Teachers are likely to question the ideal way to utilize a paraprofessional to become an effective tool for instruction to be delivered efficiently, and literature in this domain is increasing in response to this challenge (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2007). Collaboration among teacher and paraprofessionals is successful when teachers assign roles so that the teacher's instructional contact with students is maximized, as all students require access to a highly qualified teacher (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2007). It is clear that this structure is necessary when reviewing Tsai and associates' study of a tool for evaluation of programs for students with EBD in which the data revealed team members did not report the same level of implementation of practices within the same program, possibly due to the variation in their role (2013).

Several themes have emerged from research regarding collaboration for coteaching as well as utilization of paraprofessionals or other support staff. To ease communication and the sharing of resources and knowledge between general and special educators, many free web resources could be utilized to teams of personnel to communicate collaboratively and record the process for later reference (Charles & Dickens, 2012). Utilizing explicit instructional materials is another key to student success when working with struggling readers, and it ensures all school personnel can provide the instruction with fidelity (Causton-Theoharis et al., 2007). Additionally, professional development should be on-going and collaborative with a design for all educators to receive explicit instruction of the basic literacy constructs that have been identified as essential to making decisions regarding literacy instruction (Washburn et al., 2010).

This is supported by Maslow and Kelley's study of the impact of teacher evaluation on practice, in which it was discovered that an initiative which provided teachers with collaboration time weekly in professional learning groups generated enthusiasm even among veteran teachers (2012). Providing such professional development to teams of multi-disciplinary individuals increases the opportunities for students to strengthen their literacy skills in various school settings.

Teacher Assessment Tools

Louisa Moats pioneered the examination of teacher's knowledge set for the instruction of literacy by creating a Teacher Knowledge Survey to assess teachers' understanding of literacy concepts (2009). In her early research of graduate students practicing in both general and special education, Moats discovered teachers had an alarming level of difficulty responding to identifications of morphemes, blends, digraphs, and position spelling patterns (2009). This supported her assertion that there was a need for further examination of practicing teachers' knowledge and the relationship to student performance (2009). In a follow up study which included explicit instruction of literacy skills, Moats established that teachers can deepen their knowledge and the impact on early childhood reading achievement is positive (2009).

Joshi and associates expanded upon Moats' research by creating the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition, which featured questions to determine how well the respondent felt prepared to teach both typical and struggling readers as well as questions related to literacy concepts (2009). This survey extended the Teacher Knowledge Survey to include concepts regarding vocabulary, comprehension, and metacognition in addition to the decoding

and children's literature questions (2009). An assessment of reliability yielded Cronbach's coefficient of .918 (2009). This tool is ideal for measuring the amount of knowledge possessed by a special educator regarding the teaching of reading.

In addition to knowledge of content, teachers must align their management of the classroom to their pedagogical focus. Frequently, teachers report a set of ideals but fail to reflect those priorities in the way they manage their classroom (Martin & Sass, 2010). In order to measure teacher's management style and determine the level of focus upon behavioral control versus instructional control, Martin and Sass created the Behavior Management and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS), which features two subscales to evaluate "the degree of control the teacher asserts over students" (2010). The instrument's reliability was assessed for each subscale and resulted in Cronbach's score of .774 and .770 for the Behavior and Instructional scales respectively (2010). This suggests the tool could be useful in analyzing whether a special educator places greater focus on controlling behavior or controlling the instruction within the room.

Conclusions

Students with emotional disorders are encountering bleak outcomes upon exiting high school. Researchers in this domain have clearly established a correlation between language or literacy skills and emotional disorders. Additionally, researchers in the domain of literacy instruction as well as instruction for students with emotional behavioral disorders have established empirical practices for success. However, the use of those practices is seldom implemented to full fidelity in programs designed to provide instruction to students with EBD.

The motivational theories established for building the intrinsic desire to achieve in academic tasks should provide a framework within teachers of students with emotional disorders should function. The challenge of utilizing intensive instructional means to achieve success for students with emotional behavioral disorders requires quality teacher preparation and teachers' belief in the ability of the procedure. An evaluation of the levels of preparation and belief systems of teachers in this field is necessary to determine the ideal level of teacher preparation to improve student academic performance.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

Students with emotional behavioral disorders, more than any other disability category, are faced with high levels of unemployment and social adjustment problems post-graduation (Wills et al., 2010). Thus, there is a pressing need to understand how educators can best intervene for positive achievement of students in this population. Students with emotional behavioral disorders commonly demonstrate a deficit in literacy development (Lopes, 2005). It is clear that remediation for literacy development should be considered a vital means of improving student outcomes. Direct-intensive literacy instruction is the consistently empirically validated method for remediating this deficit (Roberts & Wilson, 2006). However, students in self-contained settings for emotional needs spend little time engaged in instruction (Swanson, 2008). In fact, teachers of students in special education programs for emotional behavioral disorders place an emphasis on behavioral remediation at the expense of academic instruction (Wills et al., 2010).

The purpose of this study was to investigate the relationship between teachers' literacy instruction expertise, teaching experience, education level, and grade level taught to classroom management orientation. The findings may provide information regarding the ideal teacher preparation factors model for teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders. In the following chapter, the research design and questions, study sample and setting, procedures, and data analysis method will be established.

Research Design

In order to investigate the relationship between teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction and experience level, education level, and grade level taught to classroom management foci for teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders, the researcher conducted a correlation study. The correlation design allows the researcher to collect quantifiable data regarding levels of teacher literacy knowledge, experience level, education level, and grade level taught and classroom management focus in order to examine relationships among the variables (Gall et al., 2007). Essentially, the design analyzed the data to determine the correlation coefficient which provides an indication as to the degree of relationship between the variables (2007).

The study sought to evaluate the amount of knowledge a teacher possesses regarding the basic elements of literacy instruction by administering a survey of knowledge to participating teachers. The experience level, education level, and grade level taught of each teacher was quantified through a demographic survey. The foci of teachers in classroom management were evaluated to determine the extent to which teachers are controlling students' behavior (Martin & Sass, 2010). The study aimed to determine whether teachers' instructional preparation, experience level, education level, and grade level taught impacts their classroom management foci of control.

Research Questions and Hypothesis

RQ1. Does the level of teacher knowledge of literacy instruction affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

H₀1a: There will be no significant correlation between the level of knowledge of literacy instruction practices of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

H₀1b: There will be no significant correlation between the level of knowledge of literacy instruction practices of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

RQ2. Do the years of teaching experience affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

H₀2a: There will be no significant correlation between the level of experience of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the number of years teaching and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

- H₀2b: There will be no significant correlation between the level of experience of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the number of years teaching and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.
- RQ3. Does the teachers' education level (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) affect their orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?
- H₀3a: There will be no significant correlation between the education level of the teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the degree earned (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.
- H₀3b: There will be no significant correlation between the education level of the teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the degree earned (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.
- RQ4. Does the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline (Education or Non-Education undergraduate degree) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?
- H₀4a: There will be no significant correlation between the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline as measured by the type of undergraduate degree earned (Education or Non-

Education) and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

H₀4b: There will be no significant correlation between the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline as measured by the type of undergraduate degree earned (Education or Non-Education) and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

RQ5. Does the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

H₀5a: There will be no significant correlation between the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) of a teacher of students with emotional disorders and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

H₀5b: There will be no significant correlation between the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) of a teacher of students with emotional disorders and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

RQ6. Does the setting of the teacher's classroom (urban, suburban, or rural) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

H₀6a: There will be no significant correlation between the setting of the teacher's classroom as measured by the report of urban, suburban, or rural and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

H₀6b: There will be no significant correlation between the setting of the teacher's classroom as measured by the report of urban, suburban, or rural and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

Participants

The target population for this study is teachers of students with emotional disorders. To locate a sample from this specific population, a convenience sample was utilized within eight Intermediate Units in Eastern Pennsylvania. The convenience sample is based upon participants' willingness to participate as characterized by the response to the researchers' request. To ensure a large enough sample, requests for participation were sent to 250 teachers employed by an Intermediate Unit across thirteen counties in Eastern Pennsylvania. The study requires a minimum of 30 teacher respondents to ensure the data can be generalized to the greater population (Gall et al., 2007). However, an ideal response rate would include approximately 80 participants. At the conclusion of the initial survey data collection period, 35 teachers had participated in the survey, but eleven respondents had not completed the entire survey and were exempted. Therefore, the researcher sought permission to extend the data collection period with the addition of an incentive. The researcher was granted permission to offer participants the opportunity to win a gift card if the response rate was increased. The participants' identifying information was not collected. The number of participants rose to 59, with 43 having completed the survey in its entirety. The demographic information for the sample is presented in chapter four.

Setting

The nature of the study requires that teacher participants work in a special education classroom serving students with emotional disorders. With the aim of attaining a great number of participants fitting this criterion, the researcher requested participation of all Intermediate Unit teachers fitting this profile across thirteen counties in Eastern Pennsylvania, including: Berks, Schuylkill, Lehigh, Carbon, Northampton, Monroe, Pike, Lancaster, Lebanon, Adams, York, Chester, and Delaware. In utilizing this region of the state, the study includes classrooms in rural, suburban, and urban school districts to provide for extraneous variables in setting.

Instrumentation

The first independent variable that will be measured is teacher's knowledge of literacy instruction components. Teacher's knowledge of literacy instruction is defined as an understanding of the "basic building blocks of the English language" which includes syllabic knowledge and linguistic features of morphemes and phonemes (Joshi et al., 2009). Teachers' lack of knowledge of the core components of building literacy is hypothesized to be one of many environmental detriments to students' literacy success (2009). In order to measure and quantify the participating teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction basics, the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition will be administered to the participants. The instrument is designed to measure how well prepared instructors feel to teach typical and struggling readers as well as their knowledge and ability (2009). The reliability of the instrument was examined and determined to hold a Cronbach's score of .918 (2009). The score of the knowledge and ability was calculated for each participant to quantify their knowledge.

The additional independent variables which will be measured include teacher experience level, teacher education level, and the grade level taught. In order to quantify these variables, the participants will complete a demographic survey. The responses will be utilized to place participants in the defined categories for each variable.

The dependent variable that will be measured is the Classroom Management Focus of the classroom teachers which is defined as the belief system that a teacher executes regarding the ideal approach to classroom management in both the domain of behavior control and instructional practices (Martin & Sass, 2010). The Behavior and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS) was designed to measure what a teacher perceives as their definite behavior within the classroom and determine the emphasis placed on instructional control and behavioral controls (2010). The BIMS includes two subscales of Behavior Management and Instructional Management in order to determine the degree of control a teacher implements in each domain, high subscale scores are indicative of a more controlling approach (2010). The BIMS includes 24 statements to which the teacher responded to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree with the statement based upon a six-point Likert scale, 12 pertain to the Behavior control subscale and 12 pertain to the Instruction control subscale. The Cronbach's analysis of reliability resulted in a score of .774 on the Behavior Scale and a score of .770 on the Instruction Scale (2010).

Procedures

The collection of data for this study began upon approval from the Liberty University Institutional Review Board (Appendix A). Permission to use the Survey of Language Constructs

Related to Literacy Acquisition was obtained through author Malt Josh of Texas A&M University. Permission to use the Behavior and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS) was obtained through the author Nancy Martin of The University of Texas at San Antonio. The researcher requested permission from all Intermediate Units in the state of Pennsylvania to conduct the study within service regions. The Directors of Special Education for each of the state's 29 Intermediate Units and nine districts within the Carbon and Lehigh county region were contacted by the researcher with a request to conduct the study within their service region (Appendix B). The researcher received permission from five Intermediate Units and three districts to contact their teachers of students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders. This ensured a total sample of a minimum of 200 teachers serving students with EBD. In addition, the researcher secured the administrator's pledge that they would forward the request to complete the survey via email to the teachers in order to indicate administrative support and increase participation.

The email letter forwarded by administrators to teachers introduced the study and indicated the participation is completely voluntary (Appendix C). The teachers were queried to complete both the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition and the Behavior and Instructional Management Survey via email. Anonymity was protected as the survey was taken online without collection of identifiable information. A survey of demographic information was included within the combination of the two surveys for categorizing of the additional independent variables. The teachers were encouraged to complete the survey without

outside assistance, and a time limit of 60 minutes was imposed to ensure that outside references were not utilized. The average completion time was 22 minutes and 27 seconds.

Data Analysis

The data was collected online and processed on a computer using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0. The collection and analysis of the data was completed during a period of four months. The objective of the research is to examine the relationship between teachers' knowledge of language constructs, demographic variables, and reported level of control exerted over behavior and instruction within the classroom.

The quantitative data from the five variables were analyzed utilizing multiple regression procedures. This statistical technique is useful for determining correlation between the criterion variable and the combination of two or more predictor variables (Gall et al., 2007). In this study, the criterion variable is the scores derived from the Behavior and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS). The BIMS features two subscales, the Behavior subscale and the Instructional subscale, which were calculated by finding the sum of the Likert scale responses for all of the odd numbered and even numbered responses respectively. The scores for both subscales were analyzed via histograms and the Shapiro-Wilk to assume normality.

The predictor variables are the scores of teachers on the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition, the teacher experience level, teacher education level, and the grade level taught. The score on for the Knowledge of Language was calculated by adding the number of correct responses on the knowledge based questions from the Survey of Language Constructs related to Literacy Acquisition. The scores were analyzed via histograms and the

Shapiro-Wilk to assume normality. The teacher experience level was represented by the respondent's indication of the number of years they have been teaching. The education level and grade level taught was divided into categories based on teacher response.

The multiple regression procedure was utilized as it yields the greatest information about the degree of the relationship between various combinations of the variables (Gall et al., 2007). The objective of multiple regression is the ability to use the scores on the predictor variables to predict the criterion variable (Gall et al., 2007). The multiple correlation coefficient (R) indicated the strength of the relationship between the teachers scores on the BIMS subscales and various combinations of teacher instructional knowledge, experience level, education level and type of degree, and grade level and setting of teaching; a larger R value would indicate increased power to predict teacher orientation based upon the predictor variables (Gall et al., 2007). The multiple linear regression procedure was utilized to analyze all independent variables to the score on the Behavior subscale followed by all independent variables to the score on the Instructional subscale.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this quantitative study was to examine whether a relationship exists among the knowledge of literacy instruction and demographic variables (years of experience, education level, undergraduate degree discipline, grade level taught, and setting of classroom) and the teachers' orientation towards classroom management as reported by a group of teachers of students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD). This chapter presents the results found through statistical analysis procedures. The analyses were performed to address the following research questions:

- RQ1. Does the level of teacher knowledge of literacy instruction affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?
- RQ2. Do the years of teaching experience affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?
- RQ3. Does the teachers' education level (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) affect their orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?
- RQ4. Does the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline (Education or Non-Education undergraduate degree) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for

students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

RQ5. Does the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

RQ6. Does the setting of the teacher's classroom (urban, suburban, or rural) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

Descriptive Statistics

The teachers of students with EBD from five PA intermediate units and three school districts within the same geographic region were asked to voluntarily participate in this study. The intermediate units and districts included employed over 200 teachers fitting the criteria. A total of 59 teachers responded; however, only 43 completed the survey tool in its entirety. Additionally, one of the respondent's score on the Instructional Subscale was deemed to be an outlier as the Z score was greater than 3 standard deviations from the mean. As such, this case was not included. The demographic characteristics of the participants are displayed in Table 1.

Table 1

Frequency and Percentages of Demographic Characteristics

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	34	81
	Male	8	19
	Total	42	100.0
Grade Level Taught	Elementary (K-6)	10	23.8
	Secondary (7-12)	32	76.2
	Total	42	100.0
Education Level	Bachelors	5	12.5
	Masters	22	52.4
	Post-Masters	15	35.7
	Total	42	100.0
Undergraduate	Education	34	81.0
Degree	Non-education	8	19.0
	Total	42	100.0
Classroom Setting	Rural	10	23.8
	Suburban	23	54.8
	Urban	9	21.4
	Total	42	100.0

A review of Table 1 reveals that more females ($n = 34, 81\%$) than males ($n = 8, 19\%$) participated. There were 10 participants (23.8%) teaching at the elementary grade level while 32 participants (76.2%) were teaching at the secondary grade level. In reference to education level, the majority of the participants have their Master's degree ($n = 22, 52.4\%$) while the fewest held only a Bachelors ($n = 5, 12.5\%$). The majority of the participants had earned an undergraduate degree in the field of education ($n = 34, 81\%$). In addition, the majority of the participants currently taught in the suburban classroom setting ($n = 23, 54.8\%$) while the rural ($n = 10, 23.8\%$) and urban ($n = 9, 21.4\%$) setting combined made less than half the sample.

Additional independent variables in this study include the number of years the participant has been teaching and the participant's score on the Knowledge of Language Survey, developed by Joshi and associates (2009). The Knowledge of Language Survey is scored by giving one point for each correct answer on knowledge items. The dependent variable in this study consists of the teacher's score on the Behavior and Instructional Management Scale (BIMS), developed by Martin and Sass (2010). The subscale scores were calculated by finding the sum of odd-numbered items for the behavior management and finding the sum of even-numbered items for instructional management. Table 2 presents the descriptive statistics of the years of experience, Language scores, and BIMS subscale scores for each participant.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Continuous Variables

	N	Min	Max	M	SD
Years of Teaching	41	5	36	13.10	7.193
Experience					
Survey of Language	42	14	33	23.67	5.354
Constructs Score					
Behavior Management	42	45	62	53.07	4.175
Subscale					
Instruction Management	42	45	62	53.52	4.424
Subscale					

The years of teaching experience among the participants ranged from 5 to 36 years ($M = 13.10$, $SD = 7.193$). The mean score on the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition was 23.67 ($SD = 5.354$, range = 14 – 33). The mean score on the Behavior Management subscale was 53.07 ($SD = 4.175$, range = 45 - 62). The mean score on the Instructional Management subscale was 53.52 ($SD = 4.424$, range = 45 – 62).

In addition, for descriptive purposes, the BIMS scores were analyzed to categorize participants as reportedly oriented towards exercising greater control over behavior, instruction, or equal focus. Participants were placed in the behavior oriented group if their Behavior Management subscale scores were greater than their Instructional Management subscale scores.

The participants with equal scores were categorized as the Equally Oriented group, and the remaining participants were placed in the Instruction Oriented group. Examination of Table 3 revealed the greatest number of participants placed in the Behavior Oriented group ($n = 20$, 47.6%), while the smallest number were considered Equally Oriented ($n = 5$, 11.9%).

Table 3

Frequencies of Control Orientation

	Frequency	Percent
Instruction Oriented	17	40.5
Behavior Oriented	20	47.6
Equally Oriented	5	11.9
Total	42	100.0

In order to determine whether the data gathered followed the data assumptions for statistical analyses, histograms were used to determine whether the data follows the normal distribution and residual plots were used to determine whether the data satisfied the assumption for linearity and homoscedasticity. The histograms revealed normal distribution for the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition, the Behavior Management subscale, and the Instructional Management subscale. In addition, the Shapiro-Wilk was used to analyze whether the scores for the variables were normally distributed because the sample size was small. As observed in Table 4, the Shapiro-Wilk was not significant for the Behavior Management scores ($p = 0.582$), the Instruction Management scores ($p = 0.063$), and the Survey

of Language Constructs score ($p = 0.163$). This indicates that the data follows the normal distribution, and parametric tests such as Linear Regression and MANOVA are appropriate.

Table 4

Tests of Normality

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov ^a			Shapiro-Wilk
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Sig.
Behavior Management Subscale	.088	42	.200	.582
Instruction Management Subscale	.117	42	.167	.063
Survey of Language Constructs	.100	42	.200	.163

*. This is a lower bound of the true significance.

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

Data Analysis

Multiple regression procedures were utilized to address the research questions which sought to examine whether a relationship exists between the independent variables and the dependent variables. Two regression analyses were run as each of the BIMS subscales was utilized as the dependent variable while examining the effect of the combination of independent variables. The first procedure was utilized to examine the first null hypothesis for each research question; accordingly, the second procedure provided the information to examine the second hypothesis for each question.

Behavior Subscale

The first multiple regression was performed utilizing the Behavior subscale as the criterion and Survey of Language scores, experience level, education level, undergraduate degree, grade level taught, and classroom setting as predictors in order to determine if the teachers' reported degree of control through behavior management could be predicted based on the independent variables. The linear combination of predictors was found to be significant ($p = .016$). The multiple regression accounted for 35% of the variability, as indexed by the adjusted R² statistic shown in Table 5.

Table 5

Regression of Behavior Subscale

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.595	.354	.240	3.644

a Predictors: (Constant), Years of Experience, LanguageSurveyScore, Grade Level, Education, Undergraduate, Setting

The correlations between the predictor values and the behavior subscale are presented in Table 6. The survey of language concepts score was significantly correlated to the behavior subscale score ($r = -.325, p = .019$). Grade level taught was significantly correlated to the behavior subscale score ($r = -.430, p = .003$). The other predictors were not significantly correlated to the behavior subscale score.

Table 6

Correlations to Behavior Subscale

	Behavior Subscale	
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)
Behavior Subscale	1.000	.
Survey of Language Score	-.325	.019
Grade Level Taught	-.430	.003
Undergraduate Degree	-.027	.434
Education Level	-.115	.237
Setting	-.061	.352
Years of Experience	-.048	.383

In Table 7, the strength of the individual predictors was evaluated. Grade level taught had the strongest relationship to the Behavior management score with a $B = -4.919$, $t = -3.427$, $p = .002$. The negative relationship indicates a decline in reported control of behavior management when teaching at the secondary grade level. The Survey of Language score has the next strongest relationship to the Behavior management score with a $B = -.328$, $t = -2.952$, $p = .006$. Again, the negative relationship indicates a decline in reported control of behavior management with an increasing score on the survey of language concepts. The correlation coefficient for each of the other independent variables was not considered statistically significant.

Table 7

Predictors to Behavior Management

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		
		Coefficients		Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	69.459	4.752		14.618	.000
	Survey of Language Score	-.328	.111	-.422	-2.952	.006
	Grade Level Taught	-4.919	1.435	-.512	-3.427	.002
	Undergraduate Degree	-.484	1.620	-.046	-.299	.767
	Education Level	.356	.954	.056	.373	.712
	Setting	-.054	.970	-.009	-.055	.956
	Years of experience	-.017	.095	-.030	-.182	.857

a. Dependent Variable: BehaviorSubscale

The multiple linear regression procedure was utilized to analyze the degree of relationship between combinations of the independent variables to the score on the behavior subscale of the BIMS. The correlation coefficient is indicative of the power to predict the subscale score based on the independent variables. All of the bivariate correlation

coefficients were negative with the exception of the variable of education level. Only the correlations between the survey of language score and grade level taught to the behavior subscale score were deemed significant. The results were utilized to examine the following null hypotheses:

H01a: There will be no significant correlation between the level of knowledge of literacy instruction practices of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the survey of language constructs related to literacy acquisition and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

The survey of language score yielded a significant relationship to the behavior management score ($p = .006$). The negative relationship indicates a decline in reported control of behavior with an increasing score on the survey of language concepts. Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

H02a: There will be no significant correlation between the level of experience of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the number of years teaching and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

The correlation between years of teaching experience to the behavior subscale score is not deemed significant ($p = .857$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

H03a: There will be no significant correlation between the education level of the teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the degree earned (Bachelor's

Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

The correlation between the education level of the teacher and the score on the behavior subscale is not deemed significant ($p = .712$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

H04a: There will be no significant correlation between the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline as measured by the type of undergraduate degree earned (Education or Non-Education) and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

The correlation between the undergraduate degree discipline of the teacher and the score on the behavior subscale is not deemed significant ($p = .767$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

H05a: There will be no significant correlation between the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) of a teacher of students with emotional disorders and the teacher's reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

The correlation between the grade level taught and the teacher's score on the behavior subscale is deemed significant ($p = .002$). The negative relationship indicates a decrease in behavioral control with an increase in grade level taught to the secondary level. The null hypothesis is rejected.

H06a: There will be no significant correlation between the setting of the teacher's classroom

as measured by the report of urban, suburban, or rural and the teacher’s reported control of behavior as measured by the BIMS Behavior Management Subscale.

The correlation between the classroom setting and the teacher’s score on the behavior subscale is not deemed significant ($p = .956$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

Instruction subscale

A multiple regression was performed utilizing the Instructional subscale as the criterion and survey of language scores, experience level, education level, undergraduate degree, grade level taught, and classroom setting as predictors in order to determine if the teachers’ reported degree of control through instructional management could be predicted based on the independent variables. The linear combination of predictors was not found to be significant ($p = .198$). The multiple regression accounted for 21% of the variability, as indexed by the adjusted R^2 statistic shown in Table 8.

Table 8

Regression of Instruction Subscale

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.461 ^a	.213	.074	4.27743

a. Predictors: (Constant), YearsExperience, SurveyLanguageScore, GradeLevel, Education, Undergraduate, Setting

The correlations between the predictor values and the instruction subscale are presented in Table 9. The survey of language score was correlated to the instruction subscale ($r = -.278, p = .039$). There were no other significant relationships between predictor variables and instruction subscale scores.

Table 9

Correlations to Instruction Subscale

	Instruction Subscale	
	Pearson Correlation	Sig. (1-tailed)
Instruction Subscale	1.000	.
Survey of Language Score	-.278	.039
Grade Level Taught	-.098	.270
Undergraduate Degree	-.105	.256
Education Level	.141	.190
Setting	-.045	.389
Years of Experience	-.095	.277

In Table 10, the strength of the individual predictors was evaluated. The survey of language constructs score had the strongest relationship to the instructional management score with a $B = -.294, t = -2.256, p = .031$. The negative relationship indicates a decline in reported control of instructional management with increasing knowledge of language

constructs. The correlation coefficients for each of the other independent variables were not deemed significant.

Table 10

Predictors to Instruction Management

Model		Unstandardized		Standardized		t	Sig.
		Coefficients		Coefficients			
		B	Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	65.167	5.577			11.685	.000
	Survey of Language Score	-.294	.130	-.356		-2.256	.031
	Grade Level Taught	-1.915	1.685	-.187		-1.137	.264
	Undergraduate Degree	-2.461	1.901	-.222		-1.294	.204
	Education Level	2.093	1.119	.312		1.870	.070
	Setting	-.606	1.139	-.094		-.532	.598
	Years of experience	-.152	.111	-.246		-1.368	.180

a. Dependent Variable: InstructionSubscale

The multiple linear regression procedure was utilized to analyze the degree of relationship between combinations of the independent variables to the score on the

instruction subscale of the BIMS. The correlation coefficient is indicative of the power to predict the subscale score based on the independent variables. All of the bivariate correlation coefficients are negative to the instructional subscale score except for education level. Only the correlation between the survey of language score and the instruction subscale score is deemed significant. The results were utilized to examine the following null hypotheses:

H₀1b: There will be no significant correlation between the level of knowledge of literacy instruction practices of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the Survey of Language Constructs Related to Literacy Acquisition and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

The survey of language score yielded a significant relationship to the instruction management score ($p = .031$). The negative relationship indicates a decline in reported control of instruction with an increasing score on the survey of language concepts.

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected.

H₀2b: There will be no significant correlation between the level of experience of a teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the number of years teaching and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

The correlation between the years of experience of the teacher and the score on the instruction subscale is not deemed significant ($p = .18$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

H₀3b: There will be no significant correlation between the education level of the teacher of students with emotional disorders as measured by the degree earned (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

The correlation between the education level of the teacher and the score on the instruction subscale is not deemed significant ($p = .07$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

H₀4b: There will be no significant correlation between the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline as measured by the type of undergraduate degree earned (Education or Non-Education) and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

The correlation between the undergraduate degree of the teacher and the score on the instruction subscale is not deemed significant ($p = .204$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

H₀5b: There will be no significant correlation between the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) of a teacher of students with emotional disorders and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

The correlation between the grade level taught and the teacher's score on the instruction subscale is not deemed significant ($p = .264$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

H₀6b: There will be no significant correlation between the setting of the teacher's classroom as measured by the report of urban, suburban, or rural and the teacher's reported control of instruction as measured by the BIMS Instruction Management Subscale.

The correlation between the classroom setting and the teacher's score on the instruction subscale is not deemed significant ($p = .598$). There is insufficient evidence to reject the null hypothesis.

Conclusion

This chapter presented the results of the descriptive and multiple regression procedures conducted to consider the research questions for this study. The next chapter will further discuss these results and derive implications for practical application. In addition, the limitations to the study will be identified along with suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER FIVE: DISCUSSION

Summary of Findings

The research questions in this study were explored through a correlational research design utilizing the responses of 42 participants from classrooms for students with emotional behavioral disorders (EBD) across 13 counties in Eastern Pennsylvania. Data assumptions such as normality, linearity, and homoscedasticity were tested to ensure that parametric statistical analyses were appropriate. The purpose of this research study was to examine whether a relationship exists between knowledge of literacy instruction and demographic variables (years of experience, education level, undergraduate degree discipline, grade level taught, and classroom setting) and the teachers' orientation towards classroom management for teachers of students with EBD. The following research questions were each addressed with a pair of hypotheses which guided analysis procedures:

RQ1. Does the level of teacher knowledge of literacy instruction affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

The first pair of hypotheses stated that there is no significant correlation between the knowledge of literacy as determined by the Survey of Language Constructs score and the reported control of behavior or instruction as measured by the BIMS subscale scores. The results of the multiple regression procedures revealed the correlation coefficients for the Survey of Language Constructs score and the behavior and instructional management scores of teachers of students with EBD were statistically significant. Therefore, there was evidence to reject the pair of null hypotheses for the first research question. The findings suggest that the teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction does affect the orientation

towards classroom management in both the behavior and instruction domain. The negative relationship suggests increasing knowledge of language constructs relates to decreasing control of both behavior and instruction. Additionally, the negative correlation coefficient was greater to the behavior subscale than the instruction subscale.

RQ2. Do the years of teaching experience affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

This pair of hypotheses stated that there is no significant correlation between the years of teaching experience and the reported control of behavior or instruction as measured by the BIMS subscale scores. The regression procedures found the correlation coefficient was not significant between years of experience and the BIMS scores. Therefore, there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The findings do not suggest that years of experience affect the teachers' classroom management orientation.

RQ3. Does the teachers' education level (Bachelor's Degree, Master's Degree, and post-Masters) affect their orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

This pair of hypotheses stated that there is no significant correlation between the teachers' education level and the reported control of behavior or instruction as measured by the BIMS subscale scores. The regression procedures found the correlation coefficient for education level to the BIMS scores was not statistically significant. Therefore, there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The findings do not suggest that

education level affects the teachers' classroom management orientation.

RQ4. Does the teacher's undergraduate degree discipline (Education or Non-Education undergraduate degree) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

This pair of hypotheses stated that there is no significant correlation between the teachers' undergraduate degree discipline and the reported control of behavior or instruction as measured by the BIMS subscale scores. The regression procedures found no significant correlation coefficient between undergraduate degree and the BIMS scores. Therefore, there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The findings do not suggest that the undergraduate degree discipline affects the teachers' classroom management orientation.

RQ5. Does the grade level taught (elementary or secondary) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

This pair of hypotheses stated that there is no significant correlation between the grade level taught and the teachers' reported control of behavior or instruction as measured by the BIMS subscale scores. The regression procedures found a significant correlation coefficient for grade level taught and the behavior subscale scores. Therefore, there was evidence to reject the first null hypothesis. The regression procedures did not find a significant correlation coefficient for grade level taught and the instructional subscale scores. Therefore, there was insufficient evidence to reject the second null hypothesis. The findings

suggest that the grade level taught does affect the teachers' degree of control of behavior but not necessarily instruction. The teaching of a higher grade level yields a reduced degree of control over classroom behavior.

RQ6. Does the setting of the teacher's classroom (urban, suburban, or rural) affect the teacher's orientation toward classroom management for students with emotional behavioral disorders (behavioral control vs. instructional control)?

This pair of hypotheses stated that there is no significant correlation between the teachers' classroom setting and the reported control of behavior or instruction as measured by the BIMS subscale scores. The regression procedures found no significant correlation coefficient for classroom setting and the BIMS scores. Therefore, there was insufficient evidence to reject the null hypotheses. The findings do not suggest that classroom setting affects the teachers' classroom management orientation.

Discussion

Several previous investigations within the field of instruction for students with EBD have established the importance of explicit instruction which produces high rates of engagement and student response to remediate a reading deficit as well as ameliorate disruptive behavior (Lee et al., 2010; Legere & Conca, 2010; Marchant & Womack, 2010; Oakes et al., 2010; Scott et al., 2007). In addition, the body of research regarding quality literacy instruction continues to assert the need for explicit phonics instruction (Roberts & Wilson, 2006; Solity & Vousden, 2009; Wills et al., 2010). However, the research findings also consistently report a general finding of low levels of engagement and absence of direct instruction for literacy within classrooms for students with EBD (Billingsley,

2007; Oliver & Reschly, 2010; Swanson, 2008). In fact, it is reported that most often the classroom for students with EBD is an environment featuring an emphasis on compliance and control of behaviors over engaging instruction (Bartholomew, 2007; Sutherland et al., 2008). This study aligned with previous findings in that the majority of the participants were placed in the Behavior Oriented group based on higher scores for behavior control than instructional control.

This study's aim was to inform and improve professional development for teachers of students with EBD in order to improve outcomes for this group of students. The study did find a predictive relationship between the teacher's knowledge of literacy constructs to behavioral and instructional control; however, the findings were counter to the assumption that a lack of knowledge might be related to lack of direct instruction. Instead, the findings suggest an increase in knowledge relates to a decrease in control of instruction and behavior. This finding does align with previous researchers findings that teachers' beliefs impact their methodology more than their knowledge or statement of practice (Anderson & Hendrickson, 2007; Copeland et al., 2011; Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008; Tsai et al., 2013). Nonetheless, this does contradict previous studies which suggest that teachers' practice and beliefs can change as a result of increased disciplinary knowledge (Cunningham et al., 2009; Washburn et al., 2010; White et al., 2010). This contradiction may be attributed to the unique experience of a teacher of students with EBD as compared to other special education groups.

The finding that an increase in knowledge of language constructs led to a reduction in control of both behavior and instruction is further suggestion that teachers' attitudes and beliefs impact their decisions more than their knowledge. It can be assumed that a teacher with higher language

construct scores will have participated in or received intensive training regarding instruction and behavior management; however, the reduction in exercised control suggests a reduced sense of value for such efforts. This reinforces previous researchers findings that teachers' self-efficacy may diminish following a lack of success stories, and teachers who remain in this field typically adopt an attitude of accepting limitations (Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008; Prather-Jones, 2011). There also remains a high level of attrition in the field of teaching students with EBD which is suggestive of the high rate of teacher burnout resulting from lack of effectiveness (Copeland et al., 2011; Prather-Jones, 2011; Scott et al., 2007; Sutherland et al., 2005).

The literature also suggests that special educators with only undergraduate preparation are not prepared with the extensive knowledge required for teaching literacy skills to students with disabilities because of the broad nature of the preparation program (Dingle et al., 2011). Also, beginning teachers are often unprepared for the challenges of classroom management (Oliver & Reschly, 2010; Scott et al., 2007). However, the level of education and experience were not found to have a significant relationship to the classroom management orientation of this population of teachers. The greatest predictor was the score on the survey of language constructs. This seems to suggest it is the degree of knowledge the teacher possesses regardless of how it has been attained (i.e. via undergraduate degree, education level, or experience) that impacts the teacher's practice. It has also been shown that teachers often develop an overestimation of their knowledge which may preclude them from receiving new information (Podhajski et al., 2009). This may also be a factor in the decline in instructional control as the teachers with greater literacy knowledge may feel inclined to utilize more creative methods than the research-based direct instruction suggested.

The results based on the grade level taught reinforce the general body of literature regarding classroom context. High schools often feature greater teacher autonomy and reduced administrator support for instructional methods which naturally corresponds to the teachers of the secondary level reporting decreased levels of control of behavior (Maslow & Kelley, 2012). However, the correlation between grade level taught and instructional control were not significant. While the research suggests that a greater need for explicit literacy instruction occurs at the secondary level, the results of this study do not demonstrate that increased control is occurring. This may also be reflective of previous findings that special educators at the secondary level develop low expectations of the ability of their students to make significant progress (Crawford, 2007). It is also known that rural and urban settings typically face the greatest shortages in supports and resources; yet, the finding that the classroom setting for this sample did not suggest a significant relationship to classroom management orientation (Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008). There appears to a general low degree of supports and resources in a program for students with EBD; these results suggests that may not be impacted by the setting of the classroom (Hagan-Burke et al., 2007; Tsai et al., 2013).

In addition, the response rate to this study survey was markedly low. The literature suggests that the research on effective reading instruction practices have not been well shared with pre-service nor in-service teachers (Cunningham et al., 2009). This may corroborate a lack of value placed upon studies such as this or a misunderstanding regarding the benefit gained by adding to the body of knowledge in this domain. In the same way, the literature regarding the implementation of interventions consistently points to the lack of support and time along with exceeding paperwork demands as barriers to fidelity implementation (Anderson & Hendrickson, 2007; Azano et al., 2011).

Often, once the trial period of a research study or district innovation ends, the intervention ceases to be implemented (Hagan-Burke et al., 2007; McDaniel et al., 2010). The lack of response to the study's request for participation may also be attributed to the sense of excessive demands with minimal supports commonly reported.

Limitations

The main limitation of this study was the sample size and setting. While the convenience sample targeted a sufficiently large pool of teachers, the respondents only totaled 59 and sixteen of those respondents did not complete the survey in its entirety. With this small sample size, it is difficult to generalize any findings to the greater population. In addition, the setting which included only teachers within thirteen counties in Eastern Pennsylvania; thus, the findings can only be generalized to this region.

A secondary limitation is the nature of self-reporting required for this survey. Although both survey instruments have high reported levels of reliability, the BIMS does utilize a Likert scale for self-reporting of the degree of control exercised over behavior and instruction. When completing a survey, there is a risk that the respondent will respond according to what they perceive to be the socially acceptable answer (Gall et al., 2007). Thus, without observation of the teachers' actual classroom management orientation, it is difficult to assert that their self-report is accurate.

In addition, the convenience sampling procedures were a limitation of this study. While the researcher selected and gained permission to conduct the study in a sufficiently large geographic region to ensure variance in the demographics of the population in order to generalize to a larger group, the response rate reduces that assumption (Gall et al., 2007). The respondents were self-

selected due to the voluntary nature of the study. It is therefore quite possible that those that chose to participate in the study are more invested in research and self-education thereby skewing the results. Also, the additional incentive of a raffle for a gift card among the entire group of teachers of EBD if the response rate increased is likely to have influenced some of the participation.

Implications

The results of this study suggest that increasing teacher knowledge of literacy instruction constructs does not yield an increased orientation towards instructional control for the teaching of students with EBD. This finding corroborates previous studies findings that teachers' beliefs rather than knowledge influence practice. It further supports the suggestion that teachers of students with EBD experience repeated failure to change student performance which may lead to increased acceptance that instruction has limited power to change student outcomes (Prather-Jones et al., 2011).

The theoretical framework for this study focused on student intrinsic motivation which is fostered with the accomplishment of challenging feats (Pachtman & Wilson, 2006; Palmer, 2005). The results of the study suggest that the theory may apply equally to the motivation of the teacher of the student with EBD to utilize effective instructional practices with fidelity. The implication of this study's results is that providing teachers of students with EBD training on methodology for literacy instruction is insufficient. In fact, it has been reported that very often special education student teachers fail to implement the techniques taught to full fidelity which diminishes the effectiveness of the procedure (Peck & Scarpati, 2010). Therefore, the training provided must address the teachers' background knowledge and shift their beliefs to increase their sense of efficacy regarding the use of

instructional control practices (Dingle et al., 2011; Leko & Brownell, 2011). This is best accomplished by building successful experiences for the teachers of this challenging population.

Likewise, many beginning teachers report a lack of opportunity to apply classroom knowledge creates a sense of inadequacy in implementing procedures particularly in this domain of special education (Leko & Brownell, 2011; Oliver & Reschly, 2010). The results of this study demonstrate that knowledge of skills for reading instruction does not imply greater control of instruction for students with emotional disorders. This suggests that skills instruction for teachers of this population is insufficient, but rather opportunity to implement with the support of specialists to ensure fidelity and success is necessary. It has been suggested that effective interventions are too often discontinued due to lack of support (McDaniel et al., 2010). In contrast, programs which provide teachers with the opportunity to collaborate among peers for professional learning and growth have been met with zeal (Maslow & Kelly, 2012).

Moreover, the finding that a lack of support is a common challenge to implementation of interventions to fidelity implies a need for greater use of collaboration among professionals to support the teacher and meet the variety of needs presented by the student with EBD. Improving collaboration within a team may also maximize instructional control and opportunities for growth and success for both teacher and students (Causton-Theorharis et al., 2007). While this study demonstrated that teachers' knowledge of literacy concepts lessons control of behavior and instruction within the classroom for students with EBD, it did not examine the knowledge of the supporting classroom staff. The scheduling of multiple groups in need of direct instruction and effective utilization of support staff such as paraprofessionals is an additional concern in this setting

(Causton-Theoharis et al., 2007; McDaniel et al., 2010). This is another skill which is not taught in isolation within a lecture setting, but would be best created with the presence and support of teacher educators in the classroom setting.

Collaboration as professional development among teachers of students with EBD and general education teachers may reduce the autonomy experienced in the setting of a special education classroom thereby reducing the pressures experienced by the teacher of students with EBD (Charles & Dickens, 2012). It is clear that instruction for teachers in isolation is not providing the belief and methodology changing impact desired. Collaboration amongst a multi-disciplinary team in both professional development and implementation of programming for students with EBD may create the stimulating educational environment to change student outcomes.

Recommendations for Further Research

The results of this research revealed that there is a significant relationship between teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction and behavior management orientation. As a result of these findings, it is suggested that professional development for teachers of students with EBD be characterized by collaborative experiences, including increased support by a well-trained team of professionals, in order to create successful experiences for the teacher of this population. The use of progress monitoring to demonstrate success rates as well as more effective sharing of research in this area is also recommended.

The findings from this study suggest that there is a need for further investigation of this topic. The low response rate makes it difficult to find all of the differences that may exist among this sample. The study should be replicated with a broader range of respondents over a longer period of

time in order to attain a larger sample as well as with a larger geographic region in order to better generalize to the entire population of teachers of students with EBD.

The ultimate purpose of improving professional development methods for teachers of students with EBD is to improve the outcomes of students in this category. Thus, an examination of how the teachers' reported control of instruction and behavior relates to the academic and behavioral performance of their students would be beneficial. This information may lend itself both to improved professional development as well as improved screening procedures for hiring of teachers in this domain.

An additional point of interest is to understand whether teachers' reported control of behavior and instruction does change with increased opportunity to view success and utilization of collaborative professional teams. An investigation of the teachers' orientation for classroom management over a length of time to determine the contextual factors which may shift attitudes and beliefs should be conducted. This would provide further insight as to the ideal means of supporting and preparing teachers of students with EBD to provide quality explicit literacy instruction. There remains a significant need to bridge the gap between knowledge and practice in order to improve outcomes for this group of students.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

November 1, 2013

Emily Kleintop

IRB Exemption 1628.110113: The Relationship Between Knowledge of Literacy Instruction, Experience and Education, Classroom Setting and Grade Level, and Classroom Management Orientation of Teachers of Students with Emotional Disorders

Dear Emily,

The Liberty University Institutional Review Board has reviewed your application in accordance with the Office for Human Research Protections (OHRP) and Food and Drug Administration (FDA) regulations and finds your study to be exempt from further IRB review. This means you may begin your research with the data safeguarding methods mentioned in your approved application, and that no further IRB oversight is required.

Your study falls under exemption category 46.101 (b)(2), which identifies specific situations in which human participants research is exempt from the policy set forth in 45 CFR 46:

(2) Research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: (i) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (ii) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

Please note that this exemption only applies to your current research application, and that any changes to your protocol must be reported to the Liberty IRB for verification of continued exemption status. You may report these changes by submitting a change in protocol form or a new application to the IRB and referencing the above IRB Exemption number.

If you have any questions about this exemption, or need assistance in determining whether possible changes to your protocol would change your exemption status, please email us at irb@liberty.edu.

Sincerely,

Fernando Garzon, Psy.D. *Professor, IRB Chair*

Counseling (434) 592-4054

APPENDIX B

LETTER REQUESTING PERMISSION TO CONDUCT STUDY

July 31, 2013

Dear Director of Special Education:

I realize that I am contacting you at an extremely busy time as we prepare to kick off the 2013-14 school year. If you could find a moment to review this request, I do believe you will find this study to prove valuable to the field of special education.

My name is Emily J. Kleintop. I am a teacher at the Carbon-Lehigh Intermediate Unit and a doctoral student at Liberty University. I am conducting research for my dissertation on the classroom management orientation of teachers of students with emotional disorders. I will be examining whether there is a correlation between the teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction, years of experience, education level, or the grade level they teach and the amount of emphasis on instructional versus behavioral control. In order to measure these variables, I will survey teachers of students with emotional disorders to report their knowledge of literacy instruction as well as their orientation towards classroom management along with basic demographic information. The teachers and their schools will remain anonymous. An overview presentation of my study is attached for your review. Please contact me for further information.

If granted permission to conduct this study, I will disseminate the survey instrument via email for anonymous electronic completion. The teachers will be provided a cover letter explaining the study along with a link to the online survey. In order to reach the greatest amount of participants fitting the sample criteria, I would like to contact the Supervisors of Special Education who oversee programs for students with emotional disorders. Tentatively, the months of September through November are targeted for this process.

I am requesting your permission to conduct this study within your Intermediate Unit. Please indicate your permission through a letter which includes your letterhead and signature. I have attached a sample letter for your convenience. I look forward to hearing from you in the near future.

Sincerely,

Emily J. Kleintop

APPENDIX C

TEACHER EMAIL LETTER

November 5, 2013

Dear Teacher:

My name is Emily J. Kleintop, and I am a graduate student at Liberty University. I am conducting research for my dissertation on the relationships between the teachers' knowledge of literacy instruction, experience level, education level, undergraduate degree, grade level taught, classroom setting and classroom management orientation for teachers of students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders. My study focuses on teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders and aims to improve what is known about the professional development needs of this group. Full details of the study including the dissertation will be available upon request. The district and teachers will remain anonymous as all responses will be collected without requesting identifying information.

I am requesting that you complete an online survey by clicking the following link:

<https://www.rationalsurvey.com/s/10279>

The statement of informed consent to utilize your responses for the study is provided at the beginning of the survey. Please contact me with any questions prior to completing the survey. The survey will be available online for one month and will take no more than 60 minutes to complete as there is a time limit, but most likely will not require that length of time. Please do not share or discuss the questions with other teachers until after the deadline.

If you have questions about this study, you may contact the researcher, Emily Kleintop, at ekleintop@liberty.edu, or the research advisor Dr. Bobby Dodd at doddr@cliu.org. The results of this study will be available to you upon request.

Sincerely,

Emily J. Kleintop
Liberty University

APPENDIX D

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

You are invited to be in a research study of teachers' classroom management practices. You were selected as a possible participant because you are a teacher of students with emotional behavioral disorders. I ask that you read this form and ask any questions you may have before agreeing to be in the study. This research is being conducted by Emily J. Kleintop, a doctoral student (under the direction of Dr. Beth Ackerman) at Liberty University, within the School of Education.

Background Information:

The purpose of this study is to examine the preparation and behavior management style of teachers of students with emotional behavioral disorders (EBD). The study aims to answer the questions related to whether the teacher's knowledge of literacy instruction has a relationship to the teacher's orientation towards classroom management. In addition, the study will examine whether the years of experience, education level, and the grade level taught of the teacher impact the classroom management orientation of the teacher.

Description of Study: As a participant, you are being asked to complete a questionnaire designed specifically to evaluate your attitudes and beliefs about behavior and instructional management techniques and your knowledge and confidence in providing literacy instruction, as well as several demographic questions. Completing the questionnaire will take no longer than 60 minutes. Once you begin, the questionnaire is timed and you cannot return to it. Overall, results of this study will be reported to those interested parties when the study is complete by contacting the researcher using the provided contact information.

Risks and Benefits of being in the Study:

The study has minimal risks. The risks are no more than you typically encounter in your professional day. The survey will not require reporting of any identifying information. The results will be reported only in aggregate form so that no individual can be identified. Online questionnaires will be collected via a survey tool and collected by researcher upon completion and no other identifiable information (IP address) will be obtained in the process.

The benefits to participation may not be of direct benefit to you; however; your responses may help us better understand teachers' classroom management practices for students with emotional behavioral disorders. The information gleaned from this study may help to improve the professional development practices to support teachers in this area.

Compensation: You will not receive payment or direct compensation.

Confidentiality: Completed questionnaires will be kept secure in the researcher's office. All information gained from individual questionnaires will be kept confidential, seen by no one other than the researcher and Dr. Beth Ackerman, the faculty advisor to the researcher.

Voluntary Nature of the Study: Participation in this study is voluntary. Your decision whether or not to participate will not affect your current or future relations with Liberty University or your Local Education Agency. If you decide to participate, you are free to not answer any question or withdraw at any time without affecting those relationships.

Contacts and Questions: If you have questions about this study, you may contact the researcher, Emily J. Kleintop, at ekleintop@liberty.edu, or Dr. Beth Ackerman at mackerman@liberty.edu. The results of this study will be available to you after December 2013 upon request. If you have questions later, you are encouraged to contact the researcher or research faculty advisor.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study and would like to talk to someone other than the researcher(s), you are encouraged to contact the Institutional Review Board, 1971 University Blvd, Suite 1837, Lynchburg, VA 24515 or email at irb@liberty.edu.

By completing the online questionnaire, you are indicating your consent to participate. The consent form is yours to keep for future reference.

Thank you,
Emily J. Kleintop
IRB Code Numbers: 1628.110113