

8-8-2023

The effectiveness of PBIS for students who have Behavior Interventions Plans

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The effectiveness of PBIS for students who have Behavior Interventions Plans

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A Capstone Project
Submitted to the Faculty of
Mississippi State University
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education
in Educational Leadership
in the Department of Educational Leadership

Mississippi State, Mississippi

August 2023

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2023

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Title of Study: The effectiveness of PBIS for students who have Behavior Interventions Plans

Pages in Study 46

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This qualitative study aimed to investigate the effectiveness of Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS) on students with Behavior Intervention Plans. This study used qualitative research methods to obtain the perspectives of teachers who had implemented PBIS on students with behavior plans. The study relied on semi-structured interviews using questions established by the researcher. The results of the study indicate that most of the teachers interviewed feel that PBIS is effective for students with PBIS because it acts as a motivational tool, gives students something to work towards, decreases negative behaviors, and increases positive behaviors. Additionally, the study indicates that teachers believe PBIS effectively reduces behavior infractions in the classroom.

DEDICATION

I want to dedicate this to my father, Truman Fortune, and my niece, Alivia Fortune who both passed away during this process. I miss them both immeasurably.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to acknowledge my mother, Syliva Fortune, my husband, Mickey Wilson, Sr., my daughter, Sylvanna Wilson, and my sister, Ashley Fortune May, for pushing me and encouraging me. This endeavor would have been impossible had it not been for my family being in the trenches with me and allowing me to take the time I needed to complete this project. I also want to acknowledge Dr. Fred Hickman and Dr. Myron Labat for their unwavering support and guidance. Last but definitely not least, I want to recognize my school district for allowing me to complete my project using the district as the subject of my study. I am Dr. Wilson because of each of you.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Many factors can determine whether a school setting will be conducive to learning. One of these factors is the behavior of the students in the environment. Another factor is the way that the adults in the setting manage behavior. Student behavior and its impact on academic achievement have been highly researched (Smolleck & Duffy, 2017). This research aims to determine how teachers and other stakeholders can manage behavior in a way that is beneficial to the school setting. When student behavior is harmful or undesirable, it can hurt student achievement (Yusuf, 2017). Students are more likely to learn effectively in a setting where the behavior of the students is managed effectively. Many different approaches are used to help manage student behavior. Some of the strategies used in schools are based on the preferences of each teacher. However, other methods are used schoolwide.

One school's comprehensive behavior management approach is Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS). PBIS is a behavior management approach based on creating a positive school environment, distributing leadership throughout the school setting, and using research-based practices to help manage the behavior of students (Malloy et al., 2018). This approach to behavior management is like some academic approaches. PBIS uses tiers and provides students with different levels of help and rigor based on their needs (Malloy et al., 2018). Additionally, this approach is used to help meet all students' emotional and behavioral needs in the school setting (Malloy et al., 2018). Finally, PBIS allows teachers and

administrators to have access to research-based practices and data that can help them to determine the needs of students as well as the effectiveness of the program.

This chapter will provide context and background about PBIS and its history in the school setting. Additionally, this chapter will delve into implementing PBIS and its developments over time. Finally, the chapter concludes by introducing the problem statement and the study's purpose. Additionally, the research questions and the significance of this study are included in this chapter.

Background

Student behavior became a concern of state and federal legislators because behavior can impact student achievement. In addition to the impact that classroom misbehaviors can have on student achievement, there are also more long-term effects that classroom misbehaviors can have on students. There is a connection between classroom misbehavior and the crime rate, which suggest that students who misbehave in class are more likely to become adults who commit crimes (Smolleck & Duffy, 2017). Not only do classroom misbehaviors hurt the students engaging in the misbehaviors, but they also hurt the other students in the learning environment. Smolleck and Duffy (2017) suggested that students who misbehave lack social and emotional skills and tend to distract and interfere with their peers' social and emotional well-being. Because of the grave consequences of classroom disruptions and misbehaviors, there became an evident need for initiatives to fix this nationwide school issue.

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) was implemented to address the issues of student behaviors. This behavior program was developed as a part of the Disabilities Act of 1997 to provide positive interventions for students with behavior disorders (California PBIS Coalition, 2022). As the program continued to be implemented, it became available for

more students, even those who did not have documented behavior disorders. Due to its success with students with behavior disorders, PBIS became a program that could be used schoolwide (California PBIS Coalition, 2022). Increased classroom disruptions and misbehaviors led to the implementation of PBIS in more school settings. Educational legislation pushed for more programs to be implemented that would prevent classroom misbehaviors and stop them before they occurred (Bradshaw et al., 2008). After the push for programs to address behaviors, PBIS became the choice of many school districts. School district decision-makers chose PBIS because research suggests that approximately 90% of the students who receive PBIS services would respond to it in a desirable way (Bradshaw et al., 2008).

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter opens with the history of behavior management in the United States. The focus on classroom management and teachers' ability to manage their classrooms is also introduced. Laws such as the Keeping Students Safe Act and the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) that supports classroom management reform are also discussed. Next, the transition from more aggressive punishment to a call for positive classroom management techniques is discussed. The chapter then introduces PBIS by providing an extensive definition.

Additionally, this chapter provides an explanation of how PBIS is implemented. The chapter also delves into the perspectives that students and adults have on implementing PBIS in the school setting. Finally, the effectiveness of PBIS in improving student behavior, attendance, and academic performance is also addressed in this chapter.

History of Behavior Management in the United States

Managing behavior has been a vital topic in education for some time. Since the mid to late 1980s, teachers and administrators have been trying to manage students' behavior (Robert, 2020). Behavior management aims to teach students to exhibit behaviors that do not interfere with their learning. There was a push to address classroom misbehaviors because of the impact that these misbehaviors had on the student's ability to perform academically. When a student misbehaves in class, the student is limiting the work that he or she can do and the work that other students can do (Alwahbi, 2022). Consequently, misbehaviors cause students to have poor

academic performance and less time on task about instruction (Alwahbi, 2022). Because of the negative impact that misbehaviors can have on the teaching and learning process, it is imperative that there be procedures in place to help teachers prevent misbehaviors from occurring and address them if they do happen.

Before implementing positive behavior interventions, many of the consequences for misbehaving were negative. During this time, zero-tolerance policies were developed that would not allow students disrupting class to remain in the setting (Robert, 2020). In many cases, students were suspended or expelled from school when their behavior could not be managed; however, these practices did not positively impact a student (Robert, 2020). Research has revealed that these long-practiced negative responses to student misbehavior have not only been ineffective but have also been damaging. Students repeatedly suspended from school are more likely to drop out and continue to exhibit troubling behaviors (Lawrence et al., 2022).

While the goal of zero-tolerance policies was to manage behavior, these policies did not positively impact students' academic performance. Consequently, different classroom management procedures had to be developed and implemented to help decrease misbehaviors and disruptions. Some of these classroom management procedures have been schoolwide, and others have been at the individual teacher's discretion. The goal of these procedures is to prevent students from misbehaving and to help the classroom setting to be a place that is conducive to effective teaching and learning.

The push for behavior management procedures came with teacher accountability. Teachers are evaluated on their ability to provide academic instruction effectively and on their ability to manage classrooms and student behavior (Owens et al., 2018). Teachers are expected to have classroom environments that are not distracted by misbehaviors and disruptions.

Teachers are expected to have plans and procedures to address student behavior. Behavior management techniques must be used as there is a direct link between better behavior and academic achievement (Owens et al., 2018). A teacher unable to manage the behaviors in their classrooms may be seen as an ineffective teacher. Learning environments where behavior is managed correctly are more likely to have students who can reach desired levels of academic achievement.

When students misbehaved and disrupted class, there were a lot of different consequences that the students might face. Some consequences include out-of-school suspension, in-school suspension, and corporal punishment (Yell et al., 2016). Corporal punishment is not being used as much as it was in the past and is even illegal in over half of the states in the nation (Yell et al., 2016). Many of the techniques that were used to address behaviors were not positive in nature. Additionally, some of the techniques used to address behavior were not being used with equity and were adversely impacting some demographics of students more than they were others (Bastable et al., 2021). As a result, there has been a push for a change in classroom management procedures.

There is legislation that gives education stakeholders the right to do what it takes to keep schools safe (Yell et al., 2016)—sometimes, keeping students safe means providing consequences to those disrupting the classroom setting. On the other hand, the legislation also gives all students, even those who are disruptive, the right to be educated in the appropriate school setting (Yell et al., 2016). These laws apply to students regardless of the behavior that they exhibit in the classroom. For example, one law that governs and supports the need for effective classroom management is the Keeping All Students Safe Act of 2013, which limits the amount of physical force teachers and administrators can use when interacting with students

(Yell et al., 2016). Another law that focuses on the fair treatment of all students is the IDEA of 1997 which requires adults who work with disabled students to attempt positive interventions when working to decrease undesired behaviors.

Because of laws such as these, the need for less aggressive, less damaging approaches to classroom management has been established. Students with disabilities as well as students that do not have disabilities, are protected by the law and have the right to be treated in a way that does not violate their constitutional rights (Yell et al., 2016). Education stakeholders must be aware of students' rights and employ methods that will honor state and federal laws as well as students' rights.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support (PBIS)

PBIS is an initiative used in some schools to help decrease the undesirable behaviors seen in these settings. This approach to addressing behavior differs from other approaches because it focuses on the use of positive interventions. PBIS was developed when the IDEA was reauthorized in 1997 to help teachers provide positive support to all their students, including those with disabilities (Sugai & Horner, 2020). In some settings, this approach is used at the classroom level and is referred to as PBIS. However, in other cases, this approach is used at the school level and is referred to as Schoolwide Positive Behavioral Intervention and Support (SWPBIS). Lee and Gage (2019) provided the following definition for SWPBIS.

SWPBIS is a multi-tiered support framework designed to prevent problem behavior from occurring and effectively intervene when it does. Critical features of SWPBIS include school-based teams making data-based decisions and identifying students in need of increased intervention intensity, which is delivered via tiers of prevention and intervention. (p 2)

This approach to behavior management has been adopted by many school districts in the nation as well as worldwide. Positive Behavioral Interventions and Supports (2022) explained that each year since its inception, the use of PBIS in the school setting has increased; currently, most states in the nation are using this program. Additionally, the program has become global. According to Lee and Gage (2019), PBIS is currently used in over 25,000 schools worldwide. The program can be used in the classroom and other settings affiliated with the school. Goldin and McDaniel (2018) explained that PBIS could be used in settings such as the school bus. This program aims to address misbehaviors while using an approach that can be described as optimistic. In addition to addressing behaviors, PBIS can be used in the school setting to identify those students who may have extensive emotional deficits or who may need special education services (Willemse et al., 2022). PBIS requires teachers to keep data on students. These data can be used to help provide the most appropriate services for students.

The overall goals of PBIS are to teach the student how to behave in school, provide students who misbehave with the support they need and make decisions based on data related to their behavior (Freeman et al., 2016). PBIS is an approach that is meant to provide an adequate amount of support for all students; this approach to behavior management is meant for students who have disabilities as well as those that do not (Keller-Bell & Short, 2019). Additionally, this program is meant for students who need various levels of support (Keller-Bell & Short, 2019). This approach to managing student behavior is very similar to Response to Intervention, a research-based approach meant to address academic deficits and meet the academic needs of students.

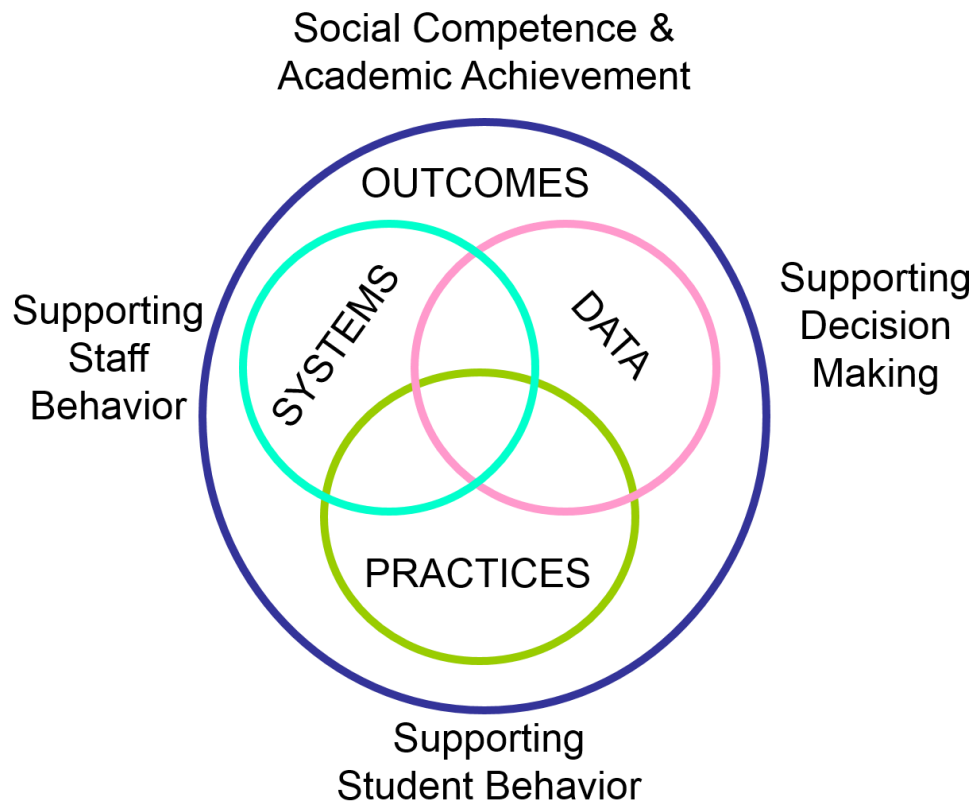
Components of PBIS

Four main components of PBIS must be followed to implement the program with fidelity: outcomes, practices, data, and systems (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). Each of these four components works together to ensure that PBIS is implemented in a way that benefits students. The use of PBIS is intended to provide students with equity, positive interventions, and improved academic performance (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). The practices component of PBIS refers to the strategies used to implement the program. The practices are research-based, based on the goals of the setting, and regularly monitored (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). The practices used to implement PBIS are essential because they determine how the program will be implemented and what strategies will be used.

The data component of PBIS refers to the way teachers will keep data. Data on student progress and how well the program is being implemented must be kept making sure that the program is being implemented effectively (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). Lastly, the systems component refers to the actual implementation of the program. This component includes how teachers will be trained to implement the program, how meetings will be held, how data will be collected, and how decisions will be made (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). Each component of the PBIS framework is vital to ensuring that the implementation is as effective and seamless as possible. Teachers and administrators must use the components to implement PBIS effectively to get the best results. Figure 1 provides a depiction of the components of PBIS.

Figure 1

Components of PBIS



The Implementation of PBIS

PBIS is implemented based on tiers, with three tiers to the program. Tier one includes the regular practices the teacher will use to reach all students (McDaniel et al., 2018). Tier 1 of the program is meant to meet the needs of the largest group of students; however, it will only meet the behavioral needs of some students. According to McDaniel et al. (2018), 15% of students will not benefit from receiving tier 1 intervention (McDaniel et al., 2018). The students who do not benefit from Tier 1 interventions might need Tier 2 support. Tier 2 is meant for students who

are at risk. (McDaniel et al., 2018). The interventions in Tier 2 are more extensive than those in Tier 1. Tier 2 interventions typically occur in small groups (McDaniel et al., 2018). The students who do not respond to Tier 1 or Tier 2 will receive Tier 3 services. Only about 5% of the students in the educational setting will receive tier 3 services; these students need more extensive services and may even need behavior plans (McDaniel et al., 2018). The goals of PBIS are to provide the level of services that each student needs (Scherer et al., 2020). PBIS is designed to change the degree of the interventions based on the needs of each student.

PBIS is being used in a school setting, and each student is placed on either tier 1, tier 2, or tier 3 of the program. The tier the student is placed on will decide what kind of services the student will receive. Tier 1 students make up most of the students in the school. These are the students who respond well to the teachers' everyday practices and procedures. These students can understand what is expected of them and behave in a way that does not disrupt class or result in the need for extensive consequences. Therefore, tier 1 students only need a few extensive interventions and do not need anything different from what the teacher would do for most students in the classroom setting (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022).

The Tier 2 students are those students who could have responded better to the Tier 1 efforts. These students do require more interventions to exhibit the desired behaviors that are expected of them. Tier 2 makes up about 15% of the students in the classroom setting. These students must have more extensive interventions and require more services than tier 1 students. The tier students have interventions that every adult implements in the school setting, and these students' progress is continuously monitored (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). Tier 2 students are identified in many ways. Some ways that tier two students are identified include the number of office referrals, screeners, teacher referrals, and parent referrals

(Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). Students who need tier 2 services will quickly receive these more extensive services.

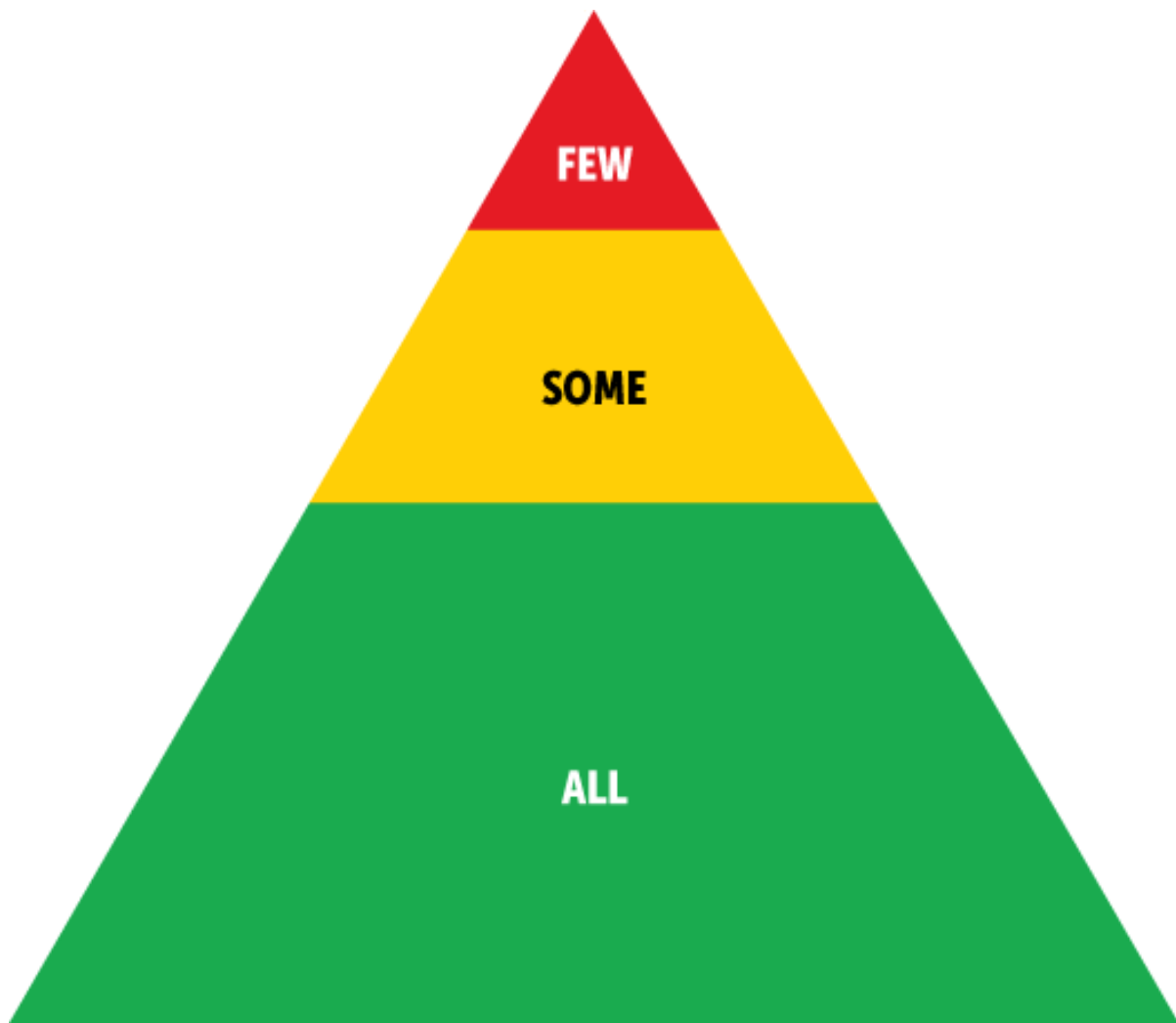
The Tier 3 students are those that need the most additional support. These students need additional support because they have yet to respond to the interventions and support offered in tier 1 or 2. Tier 3 students only comprise about 5% of the entire school population (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). Tier 3 offers the most extensive support and interventions. These students receive research-based strategies that address even the most dangerous or disruptive behaviors (Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). Students who receive Tier 3 services may also need other services. These students may need to have other assessments conducted, such as the Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA), and these students may need to be put on behavior intervention plans (BIPs; Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support, 2022). Tier 3 services are provided when all other options and services have been exhausted, and research indicates that those efforts have been futile.

Regardless of the tier the student is placed in, there are some commonalities in how the program is implemented. All the strategies are research-based, progress is constantly monitored, and the effectiveness of the interventions is continually evaluated. Overall, the goal is to ensure that the services provided to each student are appropriate for each student. The tier of PBIS that the student is placed in may change as the needs of the student change. The services and kinds of interventions that the student receives may also change as the needs of the students change. Consequently, keeping data and monitoring progress is essential to effective program implementation because this information is used to guide the decision-making process and determine the student's needs. Figure 2 depicts PBIS and how the students are typically dispersed in the PBIS model. The green represents tier 1 which accounts for 80% of the students, the yellow

represents tier 2, which accounts for 15% of the students, and the red represents tier 3, which accounts for 5% of the students.

Figure 2

Tiered PBIS



There have been many efforts at educational reform; however, even with these efforts, there are still some areas for improvement in the realm of education. Two significant deficit areas are student behavior and attendance (Tucker et al., 2022). Each deficit area supports the

need for systems such as PBIS to be implemented in the school setting. According to Tucker et al. (2022), programs such as PBIS are used to help decrease student misbehavior and increase student attendance. There is a connection between student attendance and student misbehavior. When students are disruptive in class, a common consequence is suspension (Tucker et al., 2022). When students are suspended, they are not attending school regularly. The purpose of having programs in place, like PBIS, is to prevent students from being suspended or expelled and keep them at school.

Another purpose of PBIS is to address student behavior by providing the services that the student needs (Petrasek et al., 2022). Another goal is to improve the way that students perceive school. PBIS creates positive relationships between teachers and students and between students and their peers (Petrasek et al., 2022). Creating these positive relationships can help the student to like school more. It is also a goal of PBIS to help students to be motivated and engaged in what is taking place at school (Petrasek et al., 2022). These positive interventions and interactions provided by implementing PBIS are meant to help improve the overall experience that students have at school. When students are pleased with what is taking place at school, there is a greater chance that they will have more favorable outcomes, such as higher academic achievement and lower rates of behavior issues (Petrasek et al., 2022). The expected outcomes of PBIS are plentiful and are meant to bring about positive changes in the educational setting.

PBIS for Students with Special Needs

Another purpose of PBIS is to help students with special needs. According to Hannigan and Hannigan (2020), there is a relationship between a student's academic ability and their behavior; some students misbehave in the district from their inability to understand what is being taught. Students with special learning needs or who struggle academically are more likely to

misbehave and be punished than other students (Hannigan & Hannigan, 2020). If these students misbehave and are continually punished, they will never learn at the rates they are expected to. Students who receive special education services may receive their instruction in many different environments. For example, some students may learn in the resource setting, some in the self-contained setting, and others in the general education setting alongside their nondisabled peers. PBIS can be used with special education students regardless of where they receive their instruction (Grasley-Boy et al., 2021). The location of the instruction or academic services is not a factor that determines whether PBIS can be used effectively.

Students with special needs also have behavior deficits because they struggle with social skills. A lack of social skills can cause students with special needs behavior issues mainly because they do not always know how to interact socially with others (Mamta & Ahmad, 2020). Because they lack social skills, they can seem disruptive or do unacceptable things in a classroom setting. The use of PBIS can help students with special needs learn social skills and help them to have the skills to interact with their peers in a positive, acceptable way. In addition to teaching social skills, PBIS can help teachers prepare students with disabilities to function appropriately in the classroom setting (Mamta & Ahmad, 2020). PBIS can benefit students with special needs by equipping them with the skills needed to behave and interact with others in the classroom.

Although PBIS is currently being used with all demographics of students, it was initially developed for students who had disabilities. The reauthorization of IDEA in 1997 required schools to have a plan for special needs students with behavioral deficits (Killu et al., 2006). The goal was for a system to help students with disabilities avoid being suspended or facing other kinds of consequences. When students with disabilities have behavioral deficits that are

extensive, additional assessments and screeners must be done. One assessment given to this demographic of students is the FBA. This assessment is conducted to help teachers and other service providers to develop a BIP that will be appropriate for the students (Killu et al., 2006). One of the aspects of the BIP developed for students is positive intervention; consequently, PBIS is used to provide positive support to students with special needs (Killu et al., 2006). PBIS is embedded into these students' behavior plans to help them have positive outcomes.

PBIS is necessary for students with special learning needs because these students have a greater chance of struggling as they navigate throughout and after school. In addition, Lusk et al. (2022) explained that special needs students are more likely to drop out of school, become incarcerated, have trouble getting a job, and abuse alcohol or drugs. Therefore, these students who receive special education services have a great chance of benefitting from programs like PBIS because the positive interventions can help the students to have a better chance at success.

Perspectives of PBIS

Student Perspectives

A study by Cox (2019) investigated the effectiveness of PBIS as perceived by middle school students. This study aimed to determine if PBIS is an appropriate strategy to use at the middle school level. To gather data for this study, the researchers created two focus groups which consisted of eighth-grade students. In addition to the focus groups, the researchers conducted interviews with the members of the focus groups. The purpose of the study was to obtain the students' feelings about using PBIS in their school setting. The study's results revealed that the students found PBIS compelling only if the teachers implementing it had a positive outlook on the system and used positive strategies. The results of this study indicate that the

effectiveness of PBIS and how students receive it could be widely dependent on how individual teachers implement it.

Another research study was conducted to investigate student perspectives of PBIS. The purpose of this study was to determine if students believed that PBIS was effective. This study also sought to determine if students felt they were an integral part of implementing PBIS. The researchers created a focus group of 45 students to gather data for this study. These students were in middle school. The discussion in the focus groups revealed that students felt they needed to be more actively involved in implementing PBIS. The students also felt that there needed to be more open lines of communication between students and teachers. The students revealed that they believed PBIS would have a more positive impact if they had a more active role in the process. The students also revealed that having candid, honest conversations with their teachers and positive interactions with other students might also help improve the effectiveness of PBIS.

Teacher and Administrator Perspectives

A study by Pinckelman et al. (2015) was conducted to determine if any common barriers existed that would prevent PBIS from positively impacting student behavior and academic achievement. The purpose of this research was to identify the things that teachers felt helped PBIS be implemented effectively and the things that prevented PBIS from being implemented effectively. The participants in this study were 860 teachers that represented 14 states in the United States. The teachers taught in a variety of disciplines and grade levels. These teachers completed a survey that prompted them to express what barriers and enablers of the PBIS program were.

The results of the program revealed that there were a lot of common answers among the teachers who participated in the study. The participants reported that the common barriers that

prevent PBIS from being implemented effectively are staff engagement, lack of time, and lack of money. The participants believe that if they had the engagement and resources they needed, they could do a better job at effectively implementing PBIS. The participants also reported that the factors that allowed the program to be implemented effectively were teacher engagement, administrator engagement, and consistency. The extent to which teachers and administrators buy into the program has a lot to do with how well the program will be implemented (Pinkelman et al., 2015). This research study indicates that the effectiveness of implementation relies on many critical factors.

Feuerborn et al. (2016) conducted a similar study to determine if there were any commonalities in teachers' perspectives on the success and implementation of PBIS. The participants for this study were middle school and high school teachers. To gather information for the study, the teachers were asked a series of questions to find themes related to their feelings about PBIS. The study's results indicated that teachers believe that PBIS could be effective if all teachers worked together and collaborated. Teachers indicated in their responses that a barrier to PBIS is not all teachers investing in effectively implementing the programs. Other responses for the teachers indicated that factors like stress and lack of resources could harm the way PBIS is implemented. Overall, this study revealed that teachers believe that the interventions and support provided by PBIS could be effective if the barriers preventing effectiveness were addressed.

Houchens et al. (2017) conducted a qualitative study investigating teachers' perspectives on using PBIS in their school settings. The teachers in this study had previously worked at schools where PBIS was not used. The purpose of the study was to compare the teachers' experiences in settings that used PBIS to their experience in settings that did not use PBIS. To gather data for the study, a survey was used. This survey required the teachers to provide

information about their thoughts on the effectiveness of the programs. The results of the study revealed that teachers believe that when the program is implemented effectively, there is a positive impact on student behavior as well as the academic performance of students. In addition, the study results indicated that teachers believe that the effectiveness or ineffectiveness of PBIS is contingent upon how the program is implemented.

James et al. (2018) also conducted a qualitative research study to obtain the perspectives that various stakeholders of education had about the effectiveness of PBIS. Teachers and administrators participated in this study. This research study aimed to determine what stakeholders felt was going well and what stakeholders felt could be going better regarding PBIS. The purpose of the study was to provide insight that might help educational stakeholders improve the implementation of PBIS. The teachers and administrators who participated in the study completed a survey. The study's results indicated that the stakeholder perceived student and parent involvement as an area in which PBIS could be better. The stakeholders also perceived that PBIS was causing the school to be safer. Overall, this study indicates some areas in which the implementation of PBIS was helping the school meet its behavioral and academic goals. However, there are also some areas where the school could benefit from changes to how the program is implemented. The participants believe that these changes would allow the implementation of the program to yield more positive outcomes.

McDaniel et al. (2018) conducted a study to find common perspectives among the stakeholders of the educational setting. The participants for this research study were administrators and teachers who work in settings where PBIS is being implemented. The researchers administered a survey to the participants to gather data for this study. The survey aimed to determine what factors the stockholders believed impacted how PBIS was implemented

in the school setting. The researchers analyzed the data to determine if any themes or common answers could be identified. The study's results revealed five factors that the participants felt impacted the success of the implementation of PBIS. The factors were support from the administration, the needs of the school setting, whether the student is living in poverty, the grade level of the school, and collaboration between stakeholders. These factors were the most common ones that the participants in the study mentioned.

The results of this study indicated that stakeholders believe that precipitating factors will determine the effectiveness of PBIS. These factors can change the program's effectiveness if they are not mitigated effectively. More research may need to be done on how stakeholders of education can effectively address factors such as the ones identified in this research study.

A study by Wienen et al. (2019) was conducted to determine how teachers perceive the impact of PBIS on student behavior. The participants in this study were over 3,000 teachers. To gather data for this study, these teachers completed an instrument called the Strengths and Difficulties Questionnaire. The study results reveal that teachers perceive PBIS to be more effective in managing girls' behavior than it is in managing boys' behavior. Teachers were able to get girls to respond better to PBIS than boys. The results of the study also indicate that the teachers perceive PBIS to be more effective in general education settings than in settings with special needs students. Finally, the results of this study indicate that teachers perceive the effectiveness of PBIS to be dependent upon the demographics of the students receiving the support.

Lawrence et al. (2022) conducted a study to obtain the perspectives teachers in Illinois had about implementing PBIS on student behavior. The participants of this study were 12 high school teachers who worked in schools that implemented PBIS. The teachers reported that PBIS

had a positive impact on student behavior. Furthermore, the teachers also reported that PBIS helped teachers to use more effective classroom management strategies. Lastly, the teachers indicated that the use of PBIS positively impacted the school's overall climate. The results of this study indicate that PBIS might be effective in the secondary school setting.

Overall, students, teachers, and other adult education stakeholders' perspectives on PBIS show that the perceived effectiveness is dependent upon different factors. Some of the factors identified in the literature review include student engagement, teacher collaboration, poverty, gender, and academic ability, the relationships between teachers and students, and administrator support. Each of the studies reviewed above shows that the way the stakeholders perceive the effectiveness of PBIS depends on their experience with the program. These collective results show that perspectives of PBIS and its effectiveness are highly situational and vary from setting to setting.

Effectiveness of Academic Achievement and Behavior

To investigate the effectiveness of PBIS as it relates to academic achievement and behavior, it was necessary to look at behavior and achievement data. These data will help determine if PBIS has impacted the areas in which the program was intended to target. A study was conducted by Freeman et al. (2016) to investigate the effectiveness of PBIS on academic achievement, behavior, and attendance in middle schools and high schools. This was a quantitative study conducted using archival data from middle schools and high schools in 37 states within the nation. The quantitative data used in this research study were available for public use and were reviewed by the researchers.

The results of the study indicated that students' academic achievement in schools where PBIS was used was similar. However, there was a difference in the attendance and the behavior

of the students who attended a school where PBIS was being used. The results of this research study indicate that PBIS can positively impact the rates at which students attend school as well as the rates at which students misbehave or cause disruptions during the school day. However, the study does not support the notion that PBIS is effective in helping students achieve higher academic achievement. This study supports the need for additional research on how the effective implementation of PBIS can impact academic achievement.

Similar results were found in a study by Noltemeyer et al. (2019) that investigated the impact PBIS had on student achievement and behavior in the classroom setting. This study was conducted in elementary and middle school settings. The purpose of the study was to determine if the implementation of PBIS had a positive impact on the way students behave in class as well as their academic performance of students. The data for this study were quantitative data reports such as attendance and academic performance records. The researchers were able to retrieve the data because it was public. The researchers analyzed the quantitative data to determine the impact, if any, that PBIS had on behavior and academic performance.

The research study indicated that there was a positive connection between the implementation of PBIS and student behavior. The data revealed a significant decline in student misbehaviors, office referrals, and suspensions. However, the data did not show a connection between student achievement and the use of PBIS. Academic performance was not elevated or decreased in schools that used PBIS as its comprehensive initiative.

One of the goals of PBIS is to provide equitable interventions to students and not leave specific demographics of students at a disadvantage. Currently, there are disparities between African American students and their white counterparts in many schools. These disparities are evident because African American students are punished for misbehaviors and suspended at

much higher rates than students of other races in the school setting (Baule, 2019). PBIS was implemented partly to eliminate these kinds of disparities in how student behavior is managed. Baule (2019) conducted a research study to determine if the use of PBIS would address student behavior effectively; additionally, this study sought to determine whether PBIS would help address the racial disparity between African American and white students.

The results of the study revealed that the implementation of PBIS did lead to higher academic achievement and lower rates of truancy; however, the implementation of the program did not have a positive or negative impact on the racial disparities that exist in the school setting. According to Baule (2019), African American students were still suspended and facing other consequences at disproportionate rates. The result of this study reveals that additional research may need to be conducted on how PBIS can be used to address the disparities in the school setting.

Pas et al. (2019) also conducted a study to investigate the impact that PBIS had on student behavior and academic performance. The participants for this study were students from elementary, middle, and high school. The researchers reviewed quantitative data for this study by obtaining student achievement data and administrators' discipline data. The study's results indicated that PBIS positively impacted student behavior as the number of office referrals and suspensions decreased. Additionally, the study's results revealed that PBIS had a positive impact on student achievement. For example, students' reading and math scores were higher than before the implementation of PBIS (Pas et al., 2018). The results of this study support the use of PBIS to improve student behavior and academic performance.

Elrod et al. (2020) conducted a mixed methods research study to investigate the impact that PBIS had on school climate and student discipline. To gather qualitative data, the

researchers interviewed middle and high school students. The researchers reviewed data from office referrals in a middle and high school setting to obtain quantitative data. These office referral data after PBIS had been implemented were compared to data collected before PBIS was implemented. The purpose of comparing these data was to determine whether PBIS had an impact on the number of office referrals in each school setting. The participants of this research study were 204,701 middle and high school students. These teachers work in settings where PBIS is regarded as being implemented effectively (Elrod et al., 2020). Therefore, the schools' use of PBIS was evaluated to determine if it was being used effectively enough to participate in the study. According to the researchers, the schools had to meet a specific criterion to be eligible to participate in the study (Elrod et al., 2020).

The results of this study indicate that PBIS positively impacted the school climate and the rate of student misbehavior. The students reported that the school climate was much more positive after implementing PBIS. The study's results also revealed that implementing PBIS positively impacted student behavior, as there were fewer office referrals after the start of PBIS.

Collectively, the literature that investigates the effectiveness of PBIS on student achievement and behavior has consistent results. The research indicates that PBIS has decreased student absences and improved student behavior effectively. However, the research does not show a direct relationship between students' academic performance and the implementation of PBIS. This research does support the need for more research on the impact that PBIS has on students' academic achievement.

Summary

This chapter provided a background of behavior management in the United States. A definition and the components of PBIS were included in this chapter. Additionally, an

explanation of the implementation of PBIS was also provided. A review of the literature regarding the perspectives of students, teachers, and administrators about PBIS was also included in this chapter. Lastly, an overview of the effectiveness of PBIS on student behavior, academic performance, and attendance was addressed. The next chapter will provide an overview of the methodology used to complete the research study.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

The purpose of this chapter is to introduce the research methodology for this qualitative study that addressed the effectiveness of PBIS for students who have BIPs. The qualitative approach allowed teachers who use PBIS with students on behavior plans to provide insight into their experiences. The research plan, including the methodology, study participants, procedures, analysis method, and ethical concerns, are also primary components of this chapter.

Research Questions

The questions that guided the research for this study are as follows.

RQ1: Do teachers perceive PBIS to be an effective program for students with BIPs?

RQ2: Does the use of PBIS decrease the occurrences of behavior infractions for students with BIPs?

Methodology Selected

Because this study relied on the perspectives of teachers, a qualitative approach were appropriate. The use of a qualitative approach allows the researcher to gain insight from participants based on their experiences with a particular topic (Busetto et al., 2020). Qualitative methods were chosen for this study because the goal of the study is to obtain perceived effectiveness. A quantitative approach would not be ideal for this study because it does not rely on the use of numbers or statistics (Busetto et al., 2020). Before for any research or data

collection began, the researcher applied for and was granted approval from the Institutional Review Board to begin the study (Appendix I).

Grounded Theory Methodology

A grounded theory methodology was used for this qualitative study. Grounded theory is a type of qualitative research design that is used when the researcher uses the data that have been collected to develop a theory (Charmaz & Thornberg, 2021). The theory that was developed is based on the trends that have been found in the data. The participant's responses have been categorized and coded so that a theory can be developed. For purposes of this study, the researcher used grounded theory methodology to come up with a theory about the effectiveness of PBIS for students with BIPs.

The Researcher

The researcher currently works as a Behavior Specialist in the Special Education department of a public school district. The researcher works to support teachers in implementing PBIS in the school setting. Additionally, the researcher conducts FBAs and writes BIPs for students in the district. The researcher has an interest in the effectiveness of PBIS as it is an intervention used in her school district regularly. Also, to limit researcher bias, the researcher only asked questions that are developed before the start of the study. Writing the questions in advance ensured that the interviewer stays on topic and does not influence responses in any way.

Study Participants

The participants were teachers who work in schools that use PBIS. These teachers must also teach students who have BIPs. Teachers whose schools do not use PBIS were excluded. Additionally, teachers who do not have students with BIPs were excluded. The researcher has

obtained permission from the superintendent and principals of prospective schools/districts. The superintendent or his/her designee has been asked to share information on the proposed study and invite those who meet the qualifications to participate. Those who met the qualifications and wanted to participate in the study were asked to contact the researcher. The researcher verified their qualifications before finalizing the participants for the study. It was anticipated that there would be 30 participants in this study.

The participants in this study were selected using convenience sampling. Convenience sampling is done when participants who are readily available to participate in the study are chosen (Stratton, 2021). For this study, the participants who meet the requirement and have the desire to participate in the study were selected. Convenience sampling is appropriate for this study because it allowed the researcher to have participants who use PBIS and can provide their perspective on its effectiveness.

Data Collection

Data for this study were collected using semi-structured interviews. A semi-structured interview is one that has established questions that were used to guide the interview (Ruslin et al., 2022). The purpose of using a semi-structured interview is to make sure that the data collected helped to answer the research questions. The questions for the interview were based on an interview guide developed by the researcher. The researcher conducted the interviews using video conferencing. The participants were provided with the necessary information to access the video conference prior to the meeting. The researcher only needed to have one interview per participant, and there was not a need for further interactions with the participants.

Data Analysis

Each of the interviews were recorded and transcribed so that the data could be more easily analyzed. Because a grounded theory approach was used, the data were collected using open coding. Open coding takes place when data are categorized into different codes, and these codes are used to help develop the theory (Taherdoost, 2022). To help identify the codes in the data, the researcher ran the transcriptions through coding software. This coding software showed trends in the data that could be used to help answer the research questions.

Trustworthiness

When conducting a qualitative study, trustworthiness is imperative. A credible study is a study where the researcher's interpretation of the results is consistent with the perspective of the participants (Stahl & King, 2020). To ensure the credibility of this study, member checking was used. Member checking is done when participants of the study are given a copy of the study to provide feedback about the accuracy of the results (Stahl & King, 2020). The purpose of member checking is to make sure that the themes and conclusions are credible.

Ethical Concerns

The participants of this study were teachers who work in a school setting, so it is necessary that the information given does not cause any harm to the school, the school district, or the students. To ensure that the study has minimal risk of harm, several ethical considerations have been considered. First, the teachers who participate in the study remained anonymous. The researcher did not share the teacher's name or the teachers' place of employment. Secondly, the teacher were never be asked to provide the name or any other identifying information about any students who may be referenced in interviews. Also, the researcher ensured that the teachers

understood that their participation in the study was strictly voluntary and that they can discontinue participation in the study at any time.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this qualitative grounded theory study was to investigate the effectiveness of Positive Behavior and Interventions (PBIS) for students who have BIPs. This chapter includes a discussion of significant findings related to the perspectives that teachers have the majority of teachers (71%) The chapter concludes with a discussion of the limitations of the study, opportunities for future research, and a summary.

The research questions that guided the research for this study are as follows.

RQ1: Do teachers perceive PBIS to be an effective program for students with BIPs?

RQ2: Does the use of PBIS decrease the occurrences of behavior infractions for students with BIPs?

Description of Sample

Thirty-five teachers participated in the study. 6% of those teachers were male, and 94% of the teachers were female (n=35). The participants had various levels of teaching experience; 60% of the participants had been teaching for less than 20 years, and 40% of the teachers had been teaching for more than 20 years (n=35). The participants taught various grades ranging from Pre-Kindergarten to 12th grade. The teachers had also been asked how long they had been using PBIS. Table 1 shows the number of years the participants had been using PBIS. The participants were also asked how many students in their classrooms had BIPs. Table 2 shows the number of students each teacher had on BIPs.

Table 1

Length of Time Using PBIS

	Frequency	Percentage
1-5 Years	20	58%
6-10 Years	9	28%
11-15 Years	2	7%
16-20 Years	2	7%
20 or More Years	0	0%

Note. N = 35

Table 2

Number of Students with Behavior Intervention Plans

	Frequency	Percentage
1	16	46%
2	6	17%
3	4	11%
4	5	11%
5	4	15%

Note. N = 3

Interpretation of Findings

Effectiveness of PBIS

To address the perceived effectiveness of PBIS for students with BIPs, the teachers were asked if they believe that PBIS is effective for students who have BIPs. The purpose of asking teachers to share their perceptions was to determine whether teachers felt that using PBIS for students with BIPs was an effective way to help these students to improve their classroom behavior. To determine the perceived effectiveness of PBIS, the researcher reviewed the

responses of the participants. Seventy-one percent (71%) of the participants provided answers that indicate that they believe that PBIS is effective.

Teachers responded that PBIS was effective because it served as a motivational tool, gave students something to work towards, decreased negative behaviors, and increased positive behaviors. One participant stated, “PBIS is effective because teachers can use the incentives and positive interventions to motivate students. When students are motivated they are more likely to behave appropriately.” Another participant stated, “I believe that PBIS is effective because I have seen it be used to decrease the number of times that students are sent to the offices. These interventions make students want to behave better.” There were 29% of the participants who believe that PBIS was not effective for students who have BIPs. A teacher who did not believe that PBIS was effective for students with BIPs stated, “Students with behavioral issues need more extensive interventions than what is offered with PBIS. These students do not have the same needs as the other students in the classroom.” Another participant stated, “PBIS is not effective for students with BIPs because many of these students are special education students and they need different kinds of interventions.” Many of the participants who responded that the program was ineffective did not provide reasons as to why it was ineffective. However, one participant did respond that it was ineffective for students with BIPs because their level of need as it relates to their behavior was more significant than the average student. Based on this qualitative data provided by the teachers, it was determined that those overall teachers do believe that PBIS is effective for students who have BIPs.

Impact on Behavior Infractions

To address the impact on behavior infractions, the teachers were asked if they perceived PBIS as an effective way to decrease students' misbehavior. The purpose of asking teachers this

question was to determine whether teachers perceived that the use of PBIS was an effective way to decrease students' behavior infractions. To determine the perceived effectiveness on decreasing behavior infractions, the researcher reviewed the responses by the participants. Seventy-eight percent of the participants provided responses that indicate that PBIS has helped to decrease the number of behaviors infractions that students have in their classrooms. One of the participants who believe that the use of PBIS decrease behavior infraction stated, "Since using PBIS, I have found that I am sending less students to the office. This includes the students who have BIPs." Teachers responded that PBIS was effective because it decreased students' behavior infractions causing an improvement in student behavior. Some of the common responses from the teachers were that using PBIS helped students to display better behavior, and they did not have to spend as much time correcting misbehavior. Another participant stated, "The use of PBIS helps me to have a more productive learning session because less students are disrupting class or getting in trouble." Many of the participants also indicated that the number of office referrals for students who have BIPs decreased because of using PBIS in the classrooms. Based on this qualitative data provided by the teachers, it was determined that the majority of teachers do believe that PBIS is effective at reducing behavior infractions for students who have BIPs.

The remaining 22% of the teachers who participated in the study did not perceive PBIS to be an effective way to decrease behavior infractions. One of the participants stated, "I did not see a difference in office referrals or behavior infractions with the use of PBIS." Another participant stated, "PBIS is not effective because it does not stop students from misbehaving in class."

Implications for Practice

Student behavior is a very crucial part of the teaching and learning process. When students are behaving appropriately, they are more likely to have higher levels of student

achievement. It is necessary for teachers and administrators to have systems in place that can proactively and reactively address student behavior so that academic performance is not compromised. In many school settings, PBIS is used to help improve students' behavior using positive interventions. It is necessary for the educational stakeholders to know whether the interventions that they are using are effective at accomplishing their intended purpose in the classroom setting. The results of this study suggest that the use of PBIS for students with BIPs is effective as reported by the seventy-one percent of the participants in this study.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

There were several limitations to this study. The first limitation is that the research was conducted with participants from only one school district. Having participants from other school districts may have provided different insights about the effectiveness of PBIS. Another limitation of this study was the use of only qualitative methods. The use of qualitative methods did not allow the researcher to conduct statistical analysis on the responses of the participants or to review archival data. Using quantitative data would have allowed the researcher to review discipline data or teacher data based on the students' day-to-day behavior. Another limitation of this study is that administrators were not included. Because administrators handle discipline issues, it may have been insightful to obtain the perceptions of building principals as they relate to the effectiveness of PBIS.

The findings of this study support the need for future research. This study was limited to teachers in a specific school district who indicated that the use of PBIS is effective. However, future research that includes participants from across the state of Mississippi or teachers across the nation would be beneficial because it would help to determine whether the results of this study would be consistent with the results of a more extensive study.

Future research using quantitative research methods might also be beneficial as it would help to show the effectiveness of PBIS using statistical analysis and a larger sample size. For example, research could be conducted to investigate the number of behavior infractions before the use of PBIS and compare it to data after the use of PBIS. Similarly, quantitative data could be used to compare the effectiveness of PBIS with students who have BIPs and compare it to data for students who do not have BIPs. Other quantitative factors that could be used to investigate the effectiveness of the program include suspensions and expulsions. These quantitative data could be used to supplement the qualitative data that has been collected for this study.

Future research which address the barriers preventing effective use of PBIS might also be beneficial. A study that ensures that PBIS is being used effectively and consistently across for all of the participants could possibly provide more insight to the effectiveness of the program or to what is causing the ineffectiveness. It may also be necessary to conduct future research on the amount of training that teachers who are required to use PBIS get. This study could delve into the barriers caused by a lack of training that adversely impacts the implementation of the program.

Summary

This qualitative study investigated the effectiveness of Positive Behavior Supports and Intervention when used with students who have BIPs. This study used the perspectives of teachers to gain insight into the effectiveness of PBIS. The findings of the study reveal that the majority of teachers (71%) do perceive PBIS as an effective program to use with students who have BIPs. The study also revealed that 29% of the teachers believe that the use of PBIS is effective in decreasing behavior infractions for students who have BIPs. It is recommended that future research is conducted, including more school districts, as well as using different research

methods. Future research will help educational stakeholders to have a better idea of what is effective as it relates to regulating the behavior of students who have BIPs.

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APPENDIX A
IRB APPROVAL LETTER



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Office of Research Compliance

Institutional Review Board for the Protection of
Human Subjects in Research
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P. 662.325.3294

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NOTICE OF DETERMINATION FROM THE HUMAN RESEARCH PROTECTION PROGRAM

DATE: April 26, 2023
TO: Labat, Myron, PhD, Educational Leadership, McMullan, Leigh Ann;Tharp, Paula
PROTOCOL TITLE: The Effectiveness of Positive Behavior Interventions and Strategies for Students With Behavior
Intervention Plans
FUNDING SOURCE: None
PROTOCOL NUMBER: IRB-23-062
Approval Date: April 26, 2023 Expiration Date: April 25, 2028

EXEMPTION DETERMINATION

The review of your research study referenced above has been completed. The HRPP had made an Exemption Determination as defined by 45 CFR 46.104(d)1, 2. Based on this determination, and in accordance with Federal Regulations, your research does not require further oversight by the HRPP.

Employing best practices for Exempt studies is strongly encouraged such as adherence to the ethical principles articulated in the Belmont Report, found at www.hhs.gov/ohrp/regulations-and-policy/belmont-report/# as well as the MSU HRPP Operations Manual, found at www.orc.msstate.edu/humansubjects. As part of best practices in research, it is the responsibility of the Principal Investigator to ensure that personnel added after this Exemption Determination notice have completed IRB training prior to their involvement in the research study. Additionally, to protect the confidentiality of research participants, we encourage you to destroy private information which can be linked to the identities of individuals as soon as it is reasonable to do so.

Based on this determination, this study has been inactivated in our system. This means that recruitment, enrollment, data collection, and/or data analysis **CAN** continue, yet personnel and procedural amendments to this study are no longer required. **If at any point, however, the risk to participants increases, you must contact the HRPP immediately. If you are unsure if your proposed change would increase the risk, please call the HRPP office and they can guide you.**

If this research is for a thesis or dissertation, this notification is your official documentation that the HRPP has made this determination.

If you have any questions relating to the protection of human research participants, please contact the HRPP Office at irb@research.msstate.edu. We wish you success in carrying out your research project.

Review Type: EXEMPT
IRB Number: IORG0000467

