TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF A RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING CLASSROOM

MANAGEMENT STYLE AND ITS IMPACT ON STUDENT BEHAVIOR

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Joshua E. Young, May 14th, 2018

Abstract

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to gain research understanding on how teachers' perceptions of relationship-building classroom management impacts student behavior. The research found through this qualitative study will help teachers in their classroom management skills that ultimately affect every student that enters the classroom. The research will enlighten educators, as well as provide differentiated classroom management opportunities for educators to look into or utilize. Students will reap the benefits of the teachers' enlightenment as teachers gain better practice and understanding of student needs (cognitively, emotionally, socially, etc.). This study will explore relationship building classroom management styles impact on student behavior, student behaviors due to emotional development, classroom management's impact on positive emotional development, student socioeconomic status, classroom management beliefs/styles, and school management. The qualitative research data will be based upon a questionnaire, individual teacher interviews and a focus group interview, which will provide input from a variety of educational professionals from School A, a code name used for the high school used for research.

Dedication

This work is dedicated to "Memaw" Charlene Pope, "Papa" R.L. West, and my buddy with Jesus. "Memaw", I married your granddaughter and you treated me no less than your grandson. You valued an education and reminded all of us that no one can take it away from you. I miss you daily and simply thank you for being "Memaw", not only to Leigh Ann, but me as well.

"Papa", you had to quit school after the eighth grade and we lost you when I was in ninth. You shared with us how important it was to finish school because it is something you wish you had got to do. I miss you daily and have thought about you through this whole process.

"My buddy", we never got to hold you, but you are with us at all times. We lost you during this process, but guided us to our rainbow baby coming soon. Words will never express how much I love you, your mama, and your sisters. Thank you for making such an impact on my world and the world never got to see your face! Kiddo, thank you for being one of my three kids and Jesus, thank you for the opportunity we had here on earth with our buddy!

Table of Contents

List of Tables

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

Student behavioral issues have been a part of public education since the beginning of the public-school system (Allman & Slate, 2011). These behavioral issues were addressed through a variety of consequences, systems, and styles. Classroom management is a theme that correlates with student discipline, as it is an implementation of strategies, procedures, and techniques that provide a positive learning environment for students. Many researchers (Akdag, Kaya, & Polat, 2013; Allen, 2010; Bland et al., 2011; Cahill, 2006; Erdogen et al., 2010, Garrett, 2008) outline classroom management as establishing classroom procedures, managing student behavior, developing positive relationships, and implementing a culture/environment for student learning. Classroom management techniques vary from classroom to classroom, but revolve around teachers setting a positive student-learning environment. Classroom management is important in all classrooms including virtual, gyms (physical activity), music rooms, computer-based, and vocational (Erdogan et al., 2010). Classroom management may range from "teacher-centered to student-centered", depending on the teacher within the classroom (Garrett, 2008, p. 35). Some researchers (Desiderio & Mullennix, 2005; Garrett, 2008; Hagen et al., 2007) look into behavioral management systems/plans as quality ways to prepare teachers in setting classroom environments as well as providing structure. Student behavior varies student to student. Some students have good behavior and some do not. Some students' behavior may vary from day to day. Students' behavior are impacted by many aspects that include waking up late in the mornings and negative home live.

Students' socioeconomic status impacts the behaviors that the students' display due to cognitive, emotional, social, and health development (Jensen, 2009). Some teachers tend to teach the way that they understand. Students that have different learning abilities or socio-economic status may be challenging for some teachers. For example, a teacher from a middle-class home may have to learn how to teach a student in poverty due to never experiencing a home life like that student. If teachers do not know how to handle these students' challenges, the teacher's classroom management style may relate to how the teacher expects students to behave rather than getting to know the students and differentiate to accommodate individual student needs.

It is important for school districts to provide outlets for struggling teachers through various classroom management learning opportunities (Bland et al., 2011). Teachers that struggle with classroom management look toward school administration for help (Freiberg, 1998). The school administration sets the tone in each school building whether it is positive or negative. Faculty, staff, students, parents, and the community look toward school administration to lead the school. Baig and Nooruddin (2014) found that "school leaders play a vital role in managing the behavior of the students in a school through development of policies, procedures, rules and regulations" (p. 20). School administration may provide professional development opportunities, classroom management mentors (other teachers), and observation opportunities for teachers that struggle with classroom management just as they do with teachers that struggle instructionally.

As students look toward teachers to set the environments in their classrooms, students, teachers, parents, and staff members look toward school leadership (administration, head teachers, etc.) to implement the school-wide environment, which trickles down to classroom management (Baig & Nooruddin, 2014; Bland et al., 2011). By understanding classroom management aspects, researchers may help provide educators positive implementations in lessening behavioral issues and focusing on student learning (Hindman, Stronge, & Tucker, 2004).

Statement of the Problem

Marge Scherer (2003) stated that, "although 60 percent of 7th graders believe that their teachers care about them, only 45 percent of 9th graders feel that way. Do teachers have the time to build relationships with their students?" (p.5). Building relationships within the classroom help connect teachers/students, enable student learning, help classroom management, and help resolve behavioral issues. Disconnects between students and teachers make classroom management more difficult, setting a positive learning environment harder for all, and helping resolve behavioral issues more challenging.

Student behavioral issues have been a part of public education since the beginning of the public school system (Allman & Slate, 2011). Eric Jensen (2009) stated that, "it is much easier to condemn a student's behavior and demand he or she change it than it is to help the student change it" (p. 19). Understanding of students' behaviors and

socioeconomic status helps teachers set their classroom atmospheres and principals set their schools' environments.

Purpose of the Study

The research found through this qualitative study will help teachers in their classroom management skills that ultimately affect every student that enters the classroom. The research will enlighten educators, as well as provide differentiated classroom management opportunities for educators to look into or utilize. Students will reap the benefits of the teachers' enlightenment as teachers gain better practice and understanding of student needs (cognitively, emotionally, socially, etc.). This study will explore relationship building classroom management styles impact on student behavior, student behaviors due to emotional development, classroom management's impact on positive emotional development, student socioeconomic status, classroom management beliefs/styles, and school management. Classroom relationships essentially mold student learning, what they know, ability to learn, and trust/respect within a school building (Raider-Roth, 2005).

Significance of the Study

The research found through this study will help teachers with their classroom management skills that will positively impact every student that enters the classroom. The research will enlighten educators, as well as provide differentiated classroom management opportunities for educators to look into or utilize. Students will reap the benefits of the teachers' enlightenment as teachers gain better practice and understanding

of student needs (cognitively, emotionally, socially, etc.). Teachers gain beliefs from various practices learned throughout the years. Allen (2010) conducted a study finding three places teachers tend to learn classroom management practices. The first place is in the classrooms "that they inhabited for thirteen or more years as students" (Allen, 2010, p. 3). A second place is in the schools they do field observations and student teaching during their preservice careers. The third place is in college classrooms in which preservice teachers receive their training. Although some may think some teachers' styles need to be updated or changed, these styles are continuing to be implemented because of the teachers' classroom management beliefs. Teachers must see effective classroom management styles that work being implemented to help change these beliefs.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework is focused on Albert Bandura's social learning theory (may also be known as the social cognitive theory). Bandura's social learning theory is "based on the idea that we learn from our interactions with others in a social context. Separately, by observing the behaviors of others, people develop similar behaviors" (Berge & Smith, 2009, p. 439). Bandura found that "cognitive processes mediated social learning" and people are viewed as self-motivating, self-reflective, and proactive" rather than reactive (Owens, 2015, p. 139). According Severin and Tankard (2001), new behavior is often implemented after observing how others behave.

The classroom management concept is based on the educator implementing what he or she visualizes quality learning experiences to look like inside the classroom

(Hindman, Stronge, & Tucker, 2004). This implementation is based on the educator

putting into action what he or she wants the students to observe and do. The social

learning theory does not just pertain to the students observing and implementing a

teacher's actions. Through the social learning theory, a teacher may observe students'

behavior to determine what he or she needs to continue to do or adjust. Also, teachers

may use what is learned through this theoretical outlook and dig deeper with individual

students to differentiate what works with each child.

Research Question

The following question guides the research of this study:

1) What are teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management
   style and its impact on student behavior?

Limitations

Limitations of the research include the research will be focused on the high school

grade levels, ninth through twelfth grades. Elementary and middle school grade levels

will not be focused on during this research, which will result in not having a perspective

from teachers at all grade levels. Another limitation is School A is the only school used

for the research. This limits the generalizability of the study, as the results will be limited

to a specific school versus schools across the state and/or nation. A qualitative survey

will be given to all teachers at School A. A limitation will be that participation is not

required from the teachers only voluntary. Convenience sampling will be used in

choosing research participants. Convenience sampling limitations are that research "may result in homogeneous sampling frame" and "limited generalizability to broader population" (Dennison, et. al., 2016, p. 3).

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used throughout the study and term definitions are provided for understanding:

Classroom Management. This is the strategies, actions, and expectations that teachers implement daily in an educational setting to provide students the opportunity to learn (Hindman, Stronge, & Tucker, 2004).

Student Behavior. Positive or negative actions that are influenced by various elements, such as psychological, social, and environmental factors that impact student learning (Hindman, Stronge, & Tucker, 2004).

Relationship-Building. For the purpose of this study, relationship building is defined as influential relationships built through trust, care, respect, and likeability that influences behavior (Linsin, 2014).

Organization of the Document

This study consists of five chapters. Chapter One provides the introduction, purpose, and significance of the study. The theoretical framework is explained, as well as the research questions that help outline the study. Key terms are defined and limitations/delimitations are explained for the study in this chapter. Chapter Two

consists of the literature review. The literature review consists of the analysis of the literature that is utilized to correlate classroom management and student discipline. Chapter Three explains the research methodology of this study that includes instruments and research measures used to guide the study. This chapter also includes how the data will be analyzed to help answer the study's research questions. Chapter Four focuses on the findings of the data results. Chapter Five, the final chapter, specifies the conclusions and summary of the results of the study. Recommendations are also specified for future research through the results of this study.

CHAPTER 2: Review of Literature

The purpose of this qualitative research study is to gain research understanding that will help teachers in their classroom management skills that ultimately affect every student that enters the classroom. The research will enlighten educators, as well as provide differentiated classroom management opportunities for educators to look into or utilize.

Relationship-Building in the Classroom

Steven Wolk (2003) provided insight on the importance of classroom relationships, interactions, classroom community, and teachers getting to know students. Wolk explained the impact democratic classrooms make on students and teachers. "The underlying principles of a democratic classroom—choice, discourse, social responsibility, community, critical inquiry, authentic learning, and teaching a relevant and creative curriculum—help promote caring relationships between teachers and students" (Wolk, 2003, p. 14). Wolk explained that relationships navigate the direction of the classroom. Relationships impact every aspect of the classroom, including curriculum, as building/lack of building relationships help constitute the learning within a class. Teachers showing interest in students, getting to know students, and expressing care for students enables the establishment of student learning. "The fact that you care makes them see you differently" (Brown, 2002, p. 67). Caring provides stability, structure, setting expectations, setting order, discipline and rewards, as efficient classroom management expresses to students that the teacher values their learning (Gootman, 1997).

Steven Wolk (2002) states that structure and order can mean teachers and students "living

and working in a caring classroom space doing purposeful, meaningful, and thoughtful

learning" (p. 3). A teacher showing care impacts a student's learning academically,

socially, and emotionally as they feel the classroom is supportive/welcoming (Lewis,

Schapps, & Watson, 1996). Connell, Freiberg and Lorentz (2001) focused on how within

the importance of teacher-student relationships, caring is the heart of teaching. Ernest

Mendes (2003) explained, "students must perceive that we care, and even that we like

them deep down, as people" (p. 56). Mendes elaborates that building a rapport is part of

classroom management, caring, and building classrooms and finding student

interests/making student connections are vital. Mendes states "rapport means that two

people are alike physiologically, emotionally, or cognitively, even if the similarity is

temporary" (p. 56).

Building a rapport with students is part of getting to know students. Wolk states,

"when teachers make a regular and focused effort to get to know their students as

individuals, they show students that their teacher sees them not as "5th graders" or

"students" or—even worse—standardized test scores, but as individuals who have

interesting and important lives outside of school" (Wolk, 2003, p. 15). Getting to know

students and their interests individualizes learning for each student. Matthew Perini

Harvey Silver, Richard Strong, and Greg Tuculescu (2003) noted, "research suggests that

students' performance in school depends significantly on their *style of interest*" (p. 25).

Wolk (2003) described the impact getting to know students/interests makes on

classrooms through a teacher that utilized chess as part of teaching:

I was visiting a teacher friend, Erin, at his school on the southwest side of Chicago. We were eating lunch when Carlos, one of his 7th graders, walked up with a small box in his hands. Carlos asked Erin, "Hey, Mr. Roche, you wanna play chess?" Erin did not miss a beat. "Sure," he said. Carlos sat down and opened the weathered box, explaining that he had recently bought the old chess set for $2.

All year, Erin, who primarily teaches reading and math, had been teaching his middle school students how to play chess. His students planned chess moves for homework, shared strategies, studied combination theory and probability, played chess in class, and—in collaboration with the school artist-in-residence—designed and created beautiful personalized chessboards. Although Erin clearly was using chess to help his students develop disciplined thinking, he was also fostering caring and trusting relationships with his students (p. 14).

Ignacio Lopez (2017) stated, "creating successful and equitable learning environments for our students means committing to the fact that every learner has a compelling life story worth getting to know" (p. 1). Getting to know students and utilizing their interests in the classroom/building a relationship allow teachers to understand how to work with/educate individual students each day. If an adolescent is having issues at home or other students, the issue(s) can control the adolescent's thoughts and impact his/her hormones directly impacting his/her moods and behaviors (Amen, 1998). Students want to know that teachers are genuine and truly care.

Carl Rogers (1969) wrote that, "it is quite customary for teachers rather consciously to put on the mask, the role, the façade, of being a teacher, and to wear this façade all day, removing it only when they have left school at night" (p. 107). Wolk (2003) explained that students needed to see teachers as real people as everyone has had successes, failures, dreams, and lives outside of the school building. By allowing students know he/she real life positive/negative appropriate experiences, trust, understanding, and relationships began to grow. Clark Moustakas (1994) shared with student teachers during a research study to remember personal positive experiences with adults to help create positive relationship building with students. Getting to know the adults not just the adults getting to know the student teachers at a younger age played part of those positive experiences. Ernest Mendes (2003) shares that this is one aspect of teachers' learning how to build relationships.

Mendes (2003) shared other examples of how to building relationships in the classroom:

- Acknowledge all responses and questions.
- Mention students' names, skills, ideas, and knowledge in your presentations— without mentioning weaknesses or confidential information.
- Use self-disclosure when appropriate. Be a real person.
- Use responses beginning with "I agree," "I appreciate," and "I respect."
- Ask students about their interests. Collect an information card at the beginning of the year and have students update it regularly. Pay attention to students' nonverbal

responses and make adjustments as you capture their interest or hit neutral ground.

- Build on what you hear from students by sharing stories, interests, and worries.

- Display empathy with individuals and with classes by communicating what you think their needs or feelings might be.

- Listen actively. Match students' expressions and conveyed moods. Paraphrase their message, when appropriate. Know your students' world and go there first to open the relationship door (p. 59).

Relationship building plays a part in student learning, classroom management, and student discipline as well. Wolk (2003) stated that, " teacher-student relationships, classroom management, and how and what we teach—are as interwoven and interdependent as a double-helix strand of DNA. Together they create caring classrooms with a shared intellectual purpose" (p. 14). Wolk (2003) also stated, "strong teacher-student relationships not only reduce discipline problems, but they also connect behavior and decision making—both in and out of the classroom—to the curriculum" (p. 14).

School Discipline Consequential Practices

Discipline ignites the thought of trouble or corrected behavior when mentioned. However, discipline is not focused around the negative. Discipline "means modeling the expected behaviors for students and eliminating the unwanted behaviors, and also using reward and punishment when needed" (Akdag, Kaya, Polat, 2013, p.885). All student aspects are covered when discipline is implemented, ranging from rewarding the positive

to punishing the negative. Discipline is implemented to educate students rather than just punish students (Brazelton, 1992).

Allman and Slate (2011) provided insight in the various consequential practices that occur currently in education. In-School Suspension, out-of-school suspension, zero-tolerance policies, and alternative disciplinary educational settings are implemented practices that occur when negative behavioral issues arise for disciplinary actions. Disciplinary consequences have evolved over time from the total removal of a student from the educational setting (out-of-school suspension) to alternate educational settings, which keeps students in the classroom. Out-of-school suspension has been one of the most commonly used disciplinary consequences for misbehavior. An alternative to the complete removal of the school building has been in-school suspension. In-school suspension may take on various forms, such as classroom separation (within and outside of the classroom) and isolation (takes students out of the classroom into an isolated room). In-school suspension keeps students within the school building, but "one major concern with in-school suspension programs is that students miss educational opportunities for learning because their environment is solitary and isolated" (Allman & Slate, 2011, p. 4). Students that frequent in-school and out-of-school suspension and/or commit major misbehavior offenses (drugs, weapons, etc.) may be moved to an alternative educational setting. Alternative settings offer educational services to disruptive students that keep their education progressing. "Some researchers have reported more optimism for the outcome of students who attend disciplinary alternative education programs because the disciplinary alternative education program provides an

educational environment for learning in which problematic behavior is simultaneously addressed" (Allman & Slate, 2011, p. 5). This is beneficial to entire student bodies by providing educational support for problematic students while removing them from regular education settings, in which many caused distractions for other students.

Behavioral Management Systems. Suspensions and alternate settings are an aspect of consequential discipline, but "researchers began to express concern over the removal of students from the general education classroom because it promoted more poor behavior" (Allman & Slate, 2011, p. 2). "Results from studies in which school suspension was examined provided data revealing that students who were suspended from school were in fact likely to become repeat offenders, receiving additional suspensions over time" (Allman & Slate, 2011, p. 2). Behavioral management systems take a different approach by trying to encourage and acknowledge problematic students and well-behaved students when proper behavior takes place as well as teaching these behaviors. Various behavioral management systems are implemented such as positive behavior systems, assertive discipline plans, and school-wide behavior plans (Desiderio & Mullennix, 2005; Hagen et al., 2007). Desiderio and Mullennix (2005) studied the effect all-encompassing training in assertive discipline benefited preservice teachers at Southeastern Oklahoma State University. Similar to positive behavior systems, "assertive discipline is a behavior management system that emphasizes positive reinforcement as the key to students making appropriate choices regarding classroom behavior. In the study, a preservice student teacher implemented an assertive discipline plan that incorporated rules, consequences, reward system, class-wide reward, and class

procedures. The student teacher's mentor teacher was a well-respected veteran that did not utilize the assertive plan. The student teacher had permission from the teacher and administration to implement this plan. The mentor teacher shared after the student teacher left it did not affect her classroom environment. This was beneficial to the mentor teacher, preservice teacher, and students. Positive behavioral systems allow a change in thinking to take place for everyone involved. It allows positive behavior to be rewarded, expected behavior to be taught, and negative behavior to be handled and hoped to be lessened.

School-wide behavior intervention plans keep entire school buildings on the same page when intervening with behavioral issues and positive behaviors (Hagen et al., 2007). School-wide behavioral intervention plans go along with assertive discipline plans and positive behavioral systems when they are school-wide. The intervention plans allow students to know what they will be getting from all staff members and allows staff members to work together in positively intervening for students. School-wide implementation also helps teachers that have been resistant to change or veterans in need of help to benefit their classrooms (Cahill, 2006). Cahill (2006) researched a veteran teacher that worked with an occupational therapist on implementing a self-regulating classroom management style into her classroom. This was beneficial to students and the teacher by adapting to the needs at hand.

Discipline: Not Just Consequences, Life Lessons. Some believe that the harsher the punishments, the better managed a school is. However, this may not be the

case. A school may have students constantly in and out of ISS, OSS, and Juvenile

Detention, but those behaviors may never be changed and continue being a cycle that

never is addressed. If a student acts out and a consequence is the only thing

administered, the student has been possibly isolated for a time period and/or removed

from the class for a temporary solution. The reality is that in-school suspension keeps

students within the school building, but "one major concern with in-school suspension

programs is that students miss educational opportunities for learning because their

environment is solitary and isolated" (Allman & Slate, 2011, p. 4). ISS needs to be

administered at times, but if it is the focus, consequences have been given with no

discipline.

Discipline is to work toward lifelong solutions rather than temporal. Discipline

"means modeling the expected behaviors for students and eliminating the unwanted

behaviors, and also using reward and punishment when needed" (Akdag, Kaya, Polat,

2013, p. 885). All student aspects are covered when discipline is implemented, ranging

from rewarding the positive to punishing the negative. Kelley Dawson (2002) states that

the, "best discipline is a good curriculum" (p.12). Steven Wolk (2003) elaborated on the

best discipline practice being through building trust and relationships in the classroom

along with classroom management.

Classroom management helps in discipline because discipline is teaching.

Adapting classroom management styles are vital just as adapting instructional styles as

the focus shift from the teacher to the student. Although a teacher' classroom

management style may not always be student-centered, it may be always student-centered if teacher-student relationship is important.

Classroom Management Beliefs/Styles

The classroom management concept is based on the educator implementing what he or she visualizes quality learning experiences to look like inside the classroom (Hindman, Stronge, & Tucker, 2004). This implementation is based on the educator putting into action what he or she wants the students to observe and do. Considerable research has demonstrated that effective teacher classroom management strategies promote student interest in learning (Kunter, Baumert, & Koller, 2007), enhance academic achievement and school readiness (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2004), and prevent and reduce classroom- disruptive behavior (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Kellam, Ling, Merisca, Brown, & Ialongo, 1998; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995). On the other hand, ineffective classroom management practices interfere with students' motivation and on-task learning and contribute to escalating risk for developing disruptive behavior problems (Jones & Jones, 2004; Webster-Stratton, Reid, & Hammond, 2004)" (Herman, Newcomer, Reinke, & Webster-Stratton, 2011, p. 509-510).

Although veteran teachers that are resistant to change may seem obstinate, their classroom management styles derive from their beliefs. Teachers are not fully at fault for ineffective classroom strategies that they may be using. They may not understand that there are classroom management styles that are not meant for the entire class, but

individual students at different times. They may think that these strategies worked when I was a kid on me, so it must work on everyone. Many times teachers have preconceived classroom management beliefs and styles that they have brought with them from over the years. Teachers gain beliefs from various practices learned throughout the years.

Classroom Management Styles. Instructional goals and styles may differ from a teacher's management style within a classroom (Garrett, 2008). Instructional goals are based on a teacher's basis principles of learning, while classroom management is based upon his or her basis of classroom management. Garrett (2008) conducted a case study to see if three elementary teachers at the same school with student-centered instructional classrooms had similar classroom management styles. Garrett broke down classroom management into a continuum containing two styles, teacher-centered and student-centered. Teacher-centered classroom management revolves around the primary importance that the teacher exerts control over the students. Some examples of teacher-centered discipline are that the "teacher is the sole leader, management is a form of oversight, teacher takes responsibility for all the paperwork and organization, discipline comes from the teacher, a few students are the teachers' helpers, teacher makes the rules, consequences are fixed for all students, students are allowed limited responsibilities" (Garrett, 2008, p. 35). Student-centered (person-centered) classroom management revolves around the teacher encouraging students to take responsibility for their own behaviors (learning and actions). Some examples of student-centered discipline is that the "leadership is shared, management is a form of guidance, students are facilitators for the operations of the classroom, discipline comes from the self, all students have the

opportunity to become an integral part of the management of the classroom, rules are developed by the teacher and students in the form of a constitution or compact, consequences reflect individual differences, and students share in classroom responsibilities" (Garrett, 2008, p. 35).

The three teachers involved ranged from male to female in gender and experience of nine to twenty years of teaching. The teachers were given the Pupil Control Ideology (PCI) test that ranged on a continuum of twenty being student-centered (humanistic) to one hundred being teacher-centered (custodial). Two of the three teachers were closer to the student-centered continuum (one being a forty-five and the other being a thirty-seven). The other teacher had a PCI score of fifty being the closest to the teacher-centered continuum. This teacher was also the only male. When the case study began and the teachers were observed, the teachers' classroom management resembled the PCI scores that they acquired. Although the male teacher's score was fifty (in between the student-centered and teacher-centered), his teaching resembled more of the teacher-centered approach than the other twos. The students' desks were aligned in a u-shape that put the teacher as the focal point. His focus, however, was based on developing strong relationships with his students. This intertwined the two classroom management styles. Although all three of the teachers had student-centered instruction, their classroom management styles were different. This also shared that even though the classroom management styles were different, they still produced the results as it showed in each teachers' instruction. Classroom management styles do not have to be the same,

just as instructional styles do not have to be the same. Teachers may adapt their styles to individual student's needs just as they do instruction.

Continuously Changing Classrooms. Most educators and education specialists agree that today's classroom differs in major areas from classrooms of the past bringing forth-greater classroom management trials (Willis, 1996). Conventional classroom management approaches, such as student behavior receiving immediate consequences or rewards as the only way to handle classroom situations, are becoming less successful (Willis, 1996). "Authoritarian approaches may get students to comply, but they don't help students develop self-discipline and responsibility" (Willis, 1996, p. 1). In classrooms of the past, students were more receptive to authoritative classroom management according to Cooperative Discipline Foundation's director, Pete DeSisto (Willis, 1996). Willis (1996) notes DeSisto in stating that, "Today, students are more likely to challenge a teacher's authority. Students' role models from sports and movies promote confrontation, not obedience" (p. 1). Some students either defy against reactive consequences or expect rewards each time they do something they are supposed to or do well in the classroom. Some students' thoughts are that before they do what they are asked something must be in it for them (Willis, 1996).

Teachers are looking for new classroom management styles that will positively impact student learning and relationship building. Intrinsic motivation is an area that teachers seek to use in helping with instilling right learning and behavioral principles into students. "Intrinsic motivation occurs when an activity satisfies basic human needs for

competence, control, and autonomy. This makes the activity interesting and likely to be performed for its own sake rather than as a means to an end" (Hann, Roberts, & Slaughter, 2006, p. 985). Teachers allowing students to invest themselves into the classroom through various decision-making opportunities, such as allowing students to establish rules and provide consequence choices for misbehaviors (Willis, 1996). By allowing students to help establish classroom rules, teachers are removed out of their comfort zones through shared leadership being implemented inside the classrooms. Administrators are moving toward shared leadership styles in school buildings and districts. This allows teachers to be more invested through helping in decision-making and helps administrators to build off of others' strengths. By applying shared leadership principles in classrooms, teachers build off of students' strengths and helps students feels as the classroom is everyone's not just the teacher's. When teachers and students establish goals together, teachers are able to remind students if they break rules that they are breaking the rules they established. This implements student ownership deeper because these are rules that they have to abide to because they are the rules they are told adhere. They are the rules all the students established as what they would adhere. Teachers may begin rule establishing by asking students what an ideal classroom looks like to them. This initiates the rule establishing idea with students by backing the idea of why this type of classroom cannot be that classroom's reality. Students through establishing rules would work with the teacher to establish consequences if the rules got broken (Willis, 1996).

Consequence choices or extensions enable students to connect what they did was wrong and how they can fix the behavior in the future. Willis (1996) stated that, "teachers should let children choose, by saying (for example): "Bill, you can work on the assignment or go to time out.' You decide." If the student is "into power," he is less likely to get angry and "escalate" the situation, because he has been given a choice" (p. 2). When teachers make consequential decisions when they are angered or at a high-emotional state, the student issues do not get resolved or worked on rather escalated due to the engaged battle (both teacher and student at high-emotional states) with the student(s). Consequence consistency is vital for students also. If one student receives a consequence for a misbehavior, another student that has a misbehavior should receive a consequence as well. This does not mean that the consequences are the same every time. With consequence choices, the consequences will align with the students. Teacher-student relationships will also distinguish consequences that are made. Teachers may also implement conflict resolution principles rather than utilize consequences. The purpose for consequences or conflict resolution to help students positively changes their behaviors. Conflict resolution teaches students how to handle difficult situations with others for the moment and throughout life.

Adapting classroom management styles are vital just as adapting instructional styles as the focus shift from the teacher to the student. Although a teacher' classroom management style may not always be student-centered, it may be always student-centered if teacher-student relationship is important.

24

Classroom Consistency

Robert J. Marzano and Jana S. Marzano (2003) stated that, "research has shown us that teachers' actions in their classrooms have twice the impact on student achievement as do school policies regarding curriculum, assessment, staff collegiality, and community involvement" (p. 6). Marzano and Marzano (2003) studied that teachers that utilized research-based classroom management strategies efficiently and consistently along with an awareness of student needs were able to construct positive classroom environments and expectations for student learning. Teachers that set and continuously practice rules and procedures bring consistency into classrooms that in return provide consistency and daily expectations for students. Teachers that invest time teaching and re-teaching routines and procedures at the beginning of the year allow instructional focus to stay consistent throughout the school year (Hindman, Stronge, & Tucker, 2004).

In a prior study, Robert Marzano discovered "that the quality of teacher-student relationships is the keystone for all other aspects of classroom management" (Marzano & Marzano, 2003). According to Robert Marzano's (2003) study, teachers that had high-quality relationships students within their classrooms had 31 percent fewer student disciplinary issues than teachers that did not have high quality teacher-student relationships. Marzano and Marzano (2003) stated that, "effective teacher-student relationships have nothing to do with the teacher's personality or even with whether the students view the teacher as a friend" (p. 7). Precise teacher behaviors, such as appropriate dominance levels, cooperation levels, and student need awareness help drive

effective and positive teacher-student relationships. Dominance is looked at negatively

as a forceful and/or commanding approach to an authoritarian position. Marzano and

Marzano (2003) explain dominance in a classroom as "the teacher's ability to provide

clear purpose and strong guidance regarding both academics and student behavior" (p. 7).

Chiu and Tulley's (1997) explain through studies that a group of students from fourth to

seventh grades preferred teachers that provided clarity in expectations, guidance,

behavior, and dominance rather than teachers that were more lenient on what they

established in the classroom. Cooperation focuses around teachers and students working

together. Cooperation and dominance are different in regards to the teamwork and

teacher's ability to provide. The two, however, are a driving strength in teacher-student

relationships that require appropriate levels to gain effectiveness in the classroom

(Marzano & Marzano, 2003).

Consistency also provides teachers the opportunities to focus on individual

student needs. Student needs range from academic deficits to emotional disorders.

Although classroom teachers may not be qualified to address each need professionally,

relationship building and establishing a consistent classroom environment will help

teachers understand their students' needs more and provide students the support that they

are looking for rather it be understanding a lesson objective or positive adult attention.

Differentiated Instruction. All students are different in their own unique ways.

"When students are diverse, teachers can either "teach to the middle" and hope for the

best, or they can face the challenge of diversifying their instruction" (Mann & Willis,

26

2000, p. 1). Differentiated instruction is an educational philosophy that is based upon

teachers acclimating their instruction to individual students' needs (Mann & Willis,

2000). Carol Ann Tomlinson (1999) dated differentiated instruction back to the multiple

grades in one-room schoolhouse days. A wide range of students from various age groups

in one room being taught, differentiated instruction was the only choice (Tomlinson,

1999).

Many teachers believe that differentiated instruction is vital to classrooms, but the

challenge is taking differentiated instruction from ideas and words to reality (Mann &

Willis, 2000). Differentiated strategies help teachers focus on individual student needs

rather than focusing on a certain ability group or their own. Stations, small groups,

problem-based learning, and flexible grouping are a few differentiated strategies teacher

utilize to accommodate individual student needs (Tomlinson, 1999). Differentiation is

possible at the elementary and secondary levels. The classrooms may look different at

the two levels, but differentiation be implemented. A reality is that differentiation

strategies used in a second grade classroom may still be utilized in an eighth grade

classroom due to a student being at a second grade level in a subject area. Secondary

level differentiation takes place in elementary schools as well through higher ability

students, a fourth grader may read at a seventh grade level which requires differentiation

through higher level extensions.

Teachers are willing to implement differentiated instruction, but bringing it into

reality comes from help from administrators. "An administrator has to become

knowledgeable about differentiation, both the philosophy and the classroom

implications" (Mann & Willis, 2000, p. 3). Administrators may provide teachers with

various differentiation resources through allocating funds and providing staff

development for differentiated instruction (Mann & Willis, 2000). Differentiated

instruction is not developed and learned through one professional development

opportunity. Differentiation takes time, resources, support, and a focused initiative from

administrators to make it a concentration in classrooms throughout school buildings.

When teachers begin to see the results from differentiated instruction, teachers and

students become inspired to meet the challenge that differentiation brings. "Bright

students are no longer bored, and struggling students are finding learning more

accessible—and hence their sense of self-efficacy is rising" (Mann & Willis, 2000, p. 4).

Differentiation allows students to find their places to learn and helps teachers know that

students are learning.

Teachers that are engaged in accommodating individual student needs show

investment in their students' education and future. Teachers that focus on doing

whatever it takes to help students learn, provide consistency in classrooms, and build

relationships:

There are positive examples that tell their own story. The biology teacher who,

spring after spring, tracks the nesting patterns of red-winged blackbirds, dragging

his students before dawn into a mosquito-infested swamp to watch and record the

movements of the birds. The English teacher who writes poetry and shares it with

28

her students, and not only teaches drama, but directs student performances. The

coach who keeps on top of her game, razor-sharp on new rules, plays, and

practices and always ready to share them. The custodian who in his work exhibits

pride of place and insistently, politely, and persuasively expects students to do

likewise. The assistant principal who makes certain he learns the name of every

student within a month of the opening of school and who greets and treats each

student with knowing familiarity (Sizer & Sizer, 1999, p. 11).

School Management

As the correlation between classroom management and student discipline

continues to evolve, teachers, students, parents, and staff members look toward school

leadership (administration, head teachers, etc.) to implement positive school management

and a positive environment (Bland et al., 2011; Baig & Nooruddin, 2014). Baig and

Nooruddin (2014) researched the role of school leader's in student behavior management

in the eyes of teachers and students. Baig and Nooruddin found that "school leaders play

a vital role in managing the behavior of the students in a school through development of

policies, procedures, rules and regulations. According to Baig and Nooruddin's research,

"the majority of teachers (97%) and students (83%) reported that school leadership

influences students' behavior management through policies and procedures" and that "the

majority of the teachers (95%) and students (86%) feel that school leadership influences

students' behavior management through providing awards to the students for good

behavior rather than consequences for misbehavior" (Baig & Nooruddin, 2011, pgs. 20-

21). School leadership's presence in the hallways, classrooms, and throughout the school

buildings help not only the students' behavior, but also safety for students and teachers.

Teacher, students, parents, and staff members look toward school leadership for

guidance, cultivating trust, and protecting instruction/learning time for teachers and

students. School leaders are not only looked at to manage students' behavior, but to help

teachers in their ability to manage students' behavior and classroom management:

> By their actions, principals can help or hinder good classroom management.
>
> Principals need to give new teachers support by assigning them mentor teachers and providing them training in classroom management before the year begins, advises Edmund Emmer of the University of Texas at Austin. Principals also need to supervise struggling teachers, he says, and work with the staff as a whole to develop "a schoolwide sense of community" and "an atmosphere of respect."
>
> Classroom management "has to be discussed openly and up front" with staff members and parents, says Durinda Yates, principal of White Oak Middle School in Silver Spring, Md. "Don't assume others share your expectations." Principals need to convey that the teacher's role in "behavior management and discipline" is as important as her role in academics, she says.
>
> Principals also need to help set "schoolwide parameters" so children are not sent mixed messages, Yates says. Teachers can undermine each other and confuse children if "it's okay to run by Ms. Ward but not Ms. Katz," for example. Such inconsistency "makes a bad guy out of the teacher who's addressing the issue,

when the other teacher is really at fault," Yates says.

Principals also need to collaborate with parents of problem students, Yates says. She says to parents, "Let's work as partners"—let's help each other by upholding common expectations. Parents "really buy into that," she has found, because they hear support for their child; the school is not trying to make their child "the bad guy." This collaborative approach "takes a lot of time initially, but it's like an investment. What happens is, the problems diminish," Yates reports (Willis, 1996, p. 4).

School Climate. School climate helps set the overall tone inside of a school climate. Every school's climate is different, but there are common aspects among schools whose climates are positive and negative. "Positive school climate can yield positive educational outcomes for students and teachers, similarly a negative climate can prevent optimal learning and growth in the institution" (Osman, 2012). Every school wants a positive climate for every stakeholder to walk into, but that is not the case every time. It is the responsibility of the school administration, as leaders of each school, to set the school climate (tone). Todd Whitaker (2003) writes, "when the principal sneezes, the whole school catches a cold. This is neither good nor bad it is just the truth. Our impact is significant; our focus becomes the school's focus". By setting a positive school climate, school leaders pave the way for positive learning environments for every student to walk into.

School climate is generally defined as the total environment of a school building, in which is grouped into one facet being school climate (Owens, 2015). However, school climate cannot be described in one facet rather in multiple dimensions. The National School Climate Center (2014) breaks school climate into twelve dimensions: rules and norms, sense of physical security, sense of emotional security, support for learning, social and civic learning, respect for diversity, social support for adults, social support for students, school connectedness, physical surrounding, leadership, and professional relationships. When all dimensions are pulled together, administrators can pinpoint areas of strengths and weaknesses within the atmosphere of the building. This helps schools grow in all areas and line up with schools' mission/vision. With this, school climate can be defined as the belief system within a school that inspires day to day operations throughout the hallways and each classroom (Osman, 2012).

Dealing with Difficult Teachers. The importance of having effective teachers in a school lies within the role of the school administrator setting the school climate. Sandra Horn, S. Paul Wright, and William Sander's (1997) study involving around sixty thousand students stated:

> The results of this study will document that the most important factor affecting student learning is the teacher. In addition, the results show wide variation in effectiveness among teachers. The immediate and clear implication of this finding is that seemingly more can be done to improve education by improving the effectiveness of teachers than by any other single factor. *Effective teachers appear*

to be effective with students of all achievement levels regardless of the levels of

heterogeneity in their classes. If the teacher is ineffective, students under that

teacher's tutelage will achieve inadequate progress academically, regardless of

how similar or different they are regarding their academic achievement. (p. 63)

Regardless of how some teachers try to set the school tone with negativity, it is

the school leader's responsibility to keep atmosphere positively set. Difficult teachers

tend to maintain the same approaches that they want to use. As a principal, it is your job

to motivate them to utilize different approaches. There are times in which principals

"hide" these teachers for time periods to lessen the negative affect these teachers make on

the schools (Whitaker, 2002, p. 5). Whitaker shares, "If a teacher has approached

students ineffectively for 28 consecutive years, he or she has been *allowed* to do so by

principals for 28 consecutive years" (Whitaker, 2002, p. 5). It is easy to ride a teacher off

regardless of how difficult he/she is. It is the administrator's responsibility to implement

change. Negative teachers (teacher-leaders) do not just put negative vibes into a school's

atmosphere, but also influence some to follow them. This causes more of a problem for

school atmosphere and administrators. It is up to the administrator to reduce the

negativity poured out by difficult teachers and "reduce their negative influence" difficult

teachers have on others and the classroom (Whitaker, 2002, p. 6). These teachers fight

and try their best to cause change to not take place. They are set in their ways and do not

want this to change. Positive school climate is valuable for a school. Difficult teachers

put negativity into the atmosphere through their words and actions. These teachers make

33

the teachers' lounge a place of gossip and make others want to stay away from the area/them.

This negativity also leaks into the community through various forms of conversations. Unfortunately, if the public has knowledge of negatively viewed teachers, they tend to remember these teachers more so and may put a negative perception on the school. Many times parents ask that their children are not place in difficult teachers' rooms due to public talk (Whitaker, 2002, p. 7).

Helping Teachers. Bland, Church, Clayburn, Neill, and Shimeall (2011) researched why teachers' contracts were not renewed. Based on the study, school administrators had classroom management skills, including "creating an environment of respect and rapport, managing student behavior, managing classroom procedures, and establishing a culture for learning", at the top of the list. Kansas principals were given this questionnaire in which they had the opportunity to share why they did not renew teachers. Some principals shared that the teachers had the content knowledge and curriculum down, but could not control the students. Some principals shared that teachers had negative attitudes toward students constantly and there were times in which teachers embarrassed students causing them to cry repeatedly.

Preservice teachers coming out of college have shared that classroom management and discipline is an area in which they need the most help. In Bland et al.'s research, the discussion arose that "clearly, for more of these teachers to experience success, school districts must examine the support they provide regarding classroom

34

management" (Bland et al., 2011, p. 61). School leadership can help with this through quality staff development programs that could be available throughout the school years and/or new teacher orientations. The research also shares that pairing new and/or struggling teachers may be paired with mentor teachers that have a strong skill set in classroom management. Commitment from the mentee and mentor in regards to this is vital in helping the teacher grow in his or her classroom management. The hands-on ability to watch other teacher in their expertise and comfort of their own classrooms is a quality opportunity for teachers in classroom management need due to the mentor teacher being in the same building. If the teacher has any question, he or she may ask the mentor at any time. This allows the teachers to grow, the school environment to grow, and all of this benefits growing the students.

<center>**Conclusion**</center>

Erdogan et al. (2010) study shows that "the reasons of misbehaviors" are attributed "to family related issues and student related issues" (p.883). These misbehaviors can be divided into two categories, internal and external factors. Internal factors are attributes teachers can contribute and external factors are attributes that teachers cannot (home life, family issues, etc.). It has been easy for teachers to blame external factors for students' misbehavior and classroom issues.

Classroom management is a theme that correlates with student discipline, as it accommodates a common thread in which behavioral issues and discipline derive, and the classroom. Many researchers (Akdag, Kaya, & Polat, 2013; Allen, 2010; Bland et al.,

<center>35</center>

2011; Cahill, 2006; Erdogen et al., 2010, Garrett, 2008) outline classroom management as establishing classroom procedures, managing student behavior, developing positive relationships, and implementing a culture/environment for student learning. Classroom management allows teachers to determine that within their classrooms external factors do not matter because the students are in that classroom. Classroom management varies from classroom to classroom with similar characteristics revolving around a positive student-learning environment. As classroom to classroom is different, the same goes for each child that walks through a school's hallways. Classroom management is vital in all classrooms provided in today's world including virtual, gyms (physical activity), music rooms, computer-based, and vocational (Erdogan et al., 2010). Classroom management may range from "teacher-centered to student-centered", depends on the teacher within the classroom (Garrett, 2008, p. 35). Some researchers (Desiderio & Mullennix, 2005; Garrett, 2008; Hagen et al., 2007) look into behavioral management systems/plans as quality ways to prepare teachers in setting classroom environments as well as providing structure.

School leaders also prepare classroom environments by preparing a school's overall environment. This resembles although a family can prepare the environment of their home, it takes city leaders and residents to prepare a city's environment. The correlation between classroom management and student discipline go together. "Discipline is to provide the conditions necessary for expected behavior" (Akdag, Kaya, & Polat, 2013, p. 885). Management is the important part in setting the tone for expected behavior.

36

CHAPTER 3: Methodology

Qualitative Research Design

The basic design element will be a qualitative research study is to gain research understanding on how teachers' perceptions of relationship-building classroom management impacts student behavior. The qualitative research data will be based upon a questionnaire, individual teacher interviews and a focus group interview, which will provide input from a variety of educational professionals from School A, a code name used for the high school used for research. A questionnaire via Survey Monkey (refer to Appendix A) will be given to all teachers at School A using open-ended questions that focuses on how a relationship-building classroom management style impacts positive student behavior. Four individual interviews will be conducted using open-ended questions with four teachers School A. Individual interview participants (refer to Appendix A) will be teachers selected based on the volunteer list from the survey. An open coding system will be used to identify trends within the research. The focus group will consist of four teachers from School A. Focus group participants will be teachers selected based on the volunteer list from the survey that participated in the individual interviews. The focus group protocol questions will be generated from the theme discovered from the short answer questions from the survey and individual interviews. A peer reviewer and member checks will be part of the research process. The qualitative research will be a phenomenological approach. Phenomenology focuses on "what people

experience in regard to some phenomenon or other and how they interpret those experiences" (Van Manen, 1990).

Research Participants and Setting for the Study

Population. The population sample for this study was selected from one participating school that will be identified as School A in the sections to follow. The school is located in a school district in Middle Tennessee. The school is a ninth through twelfth grade high school. 38 certified teachers from School A were provided the opportunity to voluntarily participate in the survey. Participants will be selected for the survey and questionnaire once permission is granted from the Institutional Review Board (IRB). Convenience sampling was chosen in administering the questionnaire to enlarge the number of participants. Dennison, et. al (2016) defined convenience sampling as a "strategy uses existing relationships to identify participants" (p. 3). Convenience sampling strengths include "benefits from existing relationships to identify participants, can focus on recruitment from specific locations, settings or activities, efficient and inexpensive, and may complete quickly" (p. 3).

Setting. School A has a student population of 464 students that is made up of 84% White (389 students), 7% Hispanic/Latino Ethnicity (34 students), 3% Black or African-American (13 students), 2% Asian (9 students), and 0.2% American Indian or Alaskan Native (1 student). School A is made up of 251 males (54%) and 213 females (46%). School A has a 49% free and reduced lunch rate. Classroom sizes range between 15 and 30 students per classroom. School A has 38 certified faculty members. School A

offers students 11 athletic programs, a band program, and a variety of service clubs to participate.

School A provides Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, Related Arts, Special Education services, and CTE programs. School A has 50-minute class periods for all classes (Reading/Language Arts, Math, Science, Social Studies, and Related Arts). School A's CTE programs include Agriculture, Business, STEM, Health Science, and Health/Human Services. Each CTE program offers an organizational club, such as FFA, FCCLA, HOSA, FBLA, and TSA.

Description of Instruments

The data will be analyzed through a purposeful sampling survey. Purposeful sampling is a sampling technique that has an objective "to select cases that are likely to be information-rich with respect to the purpose of the study" (Gall et. al., 2007, p. 178). School A teachers will participate in a short-answer questionnaire on relationship building between teachers and students. Purposeful sampling will be used for the short-answer questionnaire that School A teachers participated. School A was chosen also through convenience sampling to enlarge the number of participants in the questionnaire. Dennison, et. al (2016) defined convenience sampling as a "strategy uses existing relationships to identify participants" (p. 3).

Data Collection Procedures. The researcher will send a survey link to certified teachers at School A. The survey will be conducted to gather teachers' general

perceptions on how classroom management styles on student behavior and how relationship-building impacts student behavior short answer questionnaire. The survey will also will be to select volunteers to participate in individual interviews and a focus group. The survey will be conducted via Survey Monkey (refer to Appendix A) and sent to teachers via e-mail. The survey is a qualitative research procedure that all teachers at School A will have the opportunity to participate. Only teachers will be surveyed. Participating teachers will voluntarily take the surveys.

Another data collection procedure will be based upon individual teacher interviews and a focus group interview, which will provide input from a variety of educational professionals from School A. The survey will guide the individual interviews by the selected teachers expanding on survey questions based upon their perceptions on relationship building within the classroom and how it impacts student behavior. Four individual interviews will be conducted using open-ended questions with four teachers School A (refer to Appendix A). Teachers will be selected based on the volunteer list from the survey. Only teachers will be interviewed. An open coding system will be used to identify trends within the research. Individual interviews will provide the participants to go into more depth on the survey questions.

The focus group will consist of four teachers from School A that participated in the individual interviews. The individual interviews will provide the researcher more information when asking questions during the focus group session. The focus group protocol questions (refer to Appendix B will be generated from the theme discovered

from the short answer questions from the survey and individual interviews. The focus

group will allow the researcher to understand how the teachers' perceptions might have

changed throughout the study and what factors contributed to the change/consistency of

perceptions from the survey to the individual interviews to the focus group. Only

teachers will be interviewed. An open coding system will be used to identify trends

within the research. A peer reviewer and member checks will be part of the research

process.

Data Analysis Procedures. The qualitative approach will focus around

phenomenology, "a way to educate our perspective on reality, to reflect on our

relationship with the world, to change and refine our point of view, to build and define

our mental posture, and to broaden the way we look at the world" (Francesconi &

Gallagher, 2012, p. 3). The phenomenological qualitative approach will consist of

individual teachers' interviews and a focus group. This will enable the researcher to

study using responses from participants answering open-ended questions. This approach

will help provide understanding how classroom management beliefs/styles either affected

the classrooms positively, negatively, or not at all. This will also provide insight on the

impact of a relationship building classroom management style on the classroom and

student behavior.

Field notes will be scribed throughout the individual interviews and focus group.

After transcription of the data from the individual interviews and focus group,

positive/negative comments, questions, concerns, ideas, perceptions, solutions, and any

other types of information will be noted and then organized. This information will then be coded and categorized by through an open coding system. The number of codes will then be reduced to a smaller number of abstract categories. The categories will be examined, and themes will be determined. This process will be done with the data from the survey, individual interviews, and focus group.

An open coding system will be used to identify trends within the research, primarily in the individual interviews and focus group. Open coding will allow portions of data to be labeled based upon the summary of what is happening in the research. Examples of participants' words will be used to help guide labeling data portions. Axial and selective coding will occur and further identify trends once open coding takes place. Axial coding helps identify relationships amongst open codes. Selective coding takes the data from the open codes/relationships found in axial coding and determines core variables. "Coding, or the process of inductively locating linkages between data, may occur in myriad ways such as behaviors, events, activities, strategies, states, meanings, participation, relationships, conditions, consequences, and settings, to name a few" (Allen, 2017, p. 1).

Peer Debriefing/Member Checks

Peer debriefing will occur once the data has been gathered and before the open coding process begins. Peer debriefing will occur to check to see if the researcher is on track with the research and not misrepresenting participants through the researcher's interpretations.   An educator licensed by the state of Tennessee will conduct the peer

debriefing. Member checks will occur after the individual interviews, focus group

session, and throughout the research process with the participants by the researcher.

Member checks will occur to conclude that participants were not misrepresented with the

researcher's interpretations.

CHAPTER 4: Presentation of Findings

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study using an open coding system was to gain research understanding on how teachers' perceptions of relationship-building classroom management impacts student behavior. The study will provide insight into how current teachers at the high school perceive relationship-building classroom management and the effectiveness of implementation within the classroom. The study will provide various relationship-building classroom management strategies for student behavior to current teachers at School A for better overall effectiveness in the classroom. An open coding system was used to identify trends within the research, primarily in the individual interviews and focus group. Open coding was administered to assess each teacher's perception of relationship-building classroom management and how it impacts student behavior. Open coding allowed portions of data to be labeled based upon the summary of what is happening in the research. The qualitative research data was based upon a questionnaire, individual teacher interviews and a focus group interview, which will provide input from a variety of educational professionals from School A, a code name used for the high school used for research. A questionnaire was given to all teachers at School A using open-ended questions that focuses on how a relationship-building classroom management style impacts positive student behavior. This enabled the researcher to allow volunteers to share their interest in participating in individual interviews/focus group for further research. Four individual interviews were conducted

using open-ended questions with four teachers School A, who volunteered. The focus group consisted of four teachers from School A. Focus group participants were teachers selected based on the volunteering after the survey and participated in the individual interviews. Data was analyzed to provide answers to the research question, which guided this study:

1) What are teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management style and its impact on student behavior?

This chapter will discuss the findings from the open coding system used for the data analysis of the individual interviews and focus group along with the field notes from the sessions. Examples of the data analysis are provided. The findings are then discussed in relation to teacher perceptions of relationship-building classroom management and its impact on student behavior. A summary of the findings is then provided.

Teacher Initial Questionnaire

Certified teachers from School A participated in an open-ended questionnaire via Survey Monkey voluntarily. Participants remained anonymous, as teachers did not have to put names in regards to filling out the survey. The researcher sent a Survey Monkey link to School A's teachers via e-mail that directed the teachers to the survey (refer to Appendix C). Twenty-Eight certified teachers participated in the research. The teacher feedback from the questionnaire gathered teachers' general perceptions on how classroom management styles impact student behavior, more specifically relationship-building classroom management. The teacher feedback also provided data to develop

focus group questions based on open coding (refer to Appendix B). The questionnaire

consisted of fourteen open-ended questions guided by the research question:

1) What are teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management

   style and its impact on student behavior?

The researcher utilized open coding to help develop categories, break down

concept labels, and find commonalities within the teachers' questionnaire answers

(Khandkar, 2009). The researcher utilized the "Text Analysis" tool under the "Question

Summaries" of "Data Analysis" that was available using Survey Monkey to help find

common word/phrases for open coding. The researcher also utilized reading through the

participants' answers for each question of the questionnaire and writing down reoccurring

word/phrases as part of open coding. Table 4.1 shows participants' word/phrase

examples and open codes from examples from the teacher questionnaire responses for

each question.

Table 4.1- *Participants' Examples/Open Codes for Each Question from Teacher*

Questionnaire (refer to Appendix A)

Question #	Participants' Word/Phrase Examples	Open Codes
1	Clear expectations/procedures; providing safe learning environment; positive relationships with your students/class; presenting positive behavior/redirecting negative behavior	Setting clear expectations/procedures, building positive relationships
2	Build relationships; get to know students; consistent and fair to every student; clear expectations; model and encourage positive interactions; make learning meaningful	Building relationships, getting to know students
3	Knowing and caring about your students; showing respect to your students;	Expressing interest/care into students, learning about

	building a rapport with students; learning about students' interests and lives	students' lives
4	Showing interest and care; being able to relate to students; students feel a connection they will not act out; if a student respects you they are less likely to misbehave; the kids won't care how much a teacher knows until the know how much that teacher cares	Relating and making a connection with students
5	Keep teaching clear expectations/procedures; Greet each student at the door; get to know them; show concern/build trust; listen and watch	Clear expectations, building relationships, listening to students
6	Helping understand why a student acts out or being distant; understand why the behavior exists; gain students' trust	Finding out why a student misbehaves
7	Care about your students; Help them believe they can change/valued; believe that a student can learn as any other; each student has purpose; high expectations for all students	Believe that a student can and has purpose
8	Understand expectations and expectations remain the same throughout the year; being clear, concise, and consistent; consistency breeds respect, the foundation for all relationships; lack of consistency can cause a negative impact on student behavior; basis to all behavior	Be clear and consistent, helps build relationships
9	Gives them confidence; students want to be seen and heard; feel they are important and what they think matters; take ownership; gives students' a voice/gives teachers' insight on their thoughts/ways of learning	Builds student confidence, provides teachers' insight on students
10	Being consistent; set high expectations; treat all students the same; greeting/getting to know students; allow students to express themselves; learn about their cultures/diversity	Building relationships, consistency, learn more about students
11	Help them feel capable, worthy, and successful; show compassion; successful	Students feel capable, gives hope, contagious for

	students lead to successful adults; builds self-esteem; becomes contagious; gives hope; gets them believing in themselves; help them use these experiences in a positive way	students
12	Positive student behavior can encourage student learning/growth; negative student behavior can hinder others from learning/derail a class from learning; make or break a classroom; makes a learning environment or disruption for everyone; negative student behavior little hope for success/positive student behavior from positive relationships has a class that succeeds	Positive/negative student behavior impacts the classroom, teacher-student relationships impact positive/negative student behavior
13	Students will disrupt/disengage; Prevent personal learning and peer learning; not be focused on learning; cold/distant feeling; no connections; disengagement, disruptions, and distractions; uncaring environment; lack of involvement and respect	Student disengagement, lack of classroom connection, more disruptions, prevention of learning for student/other students
14	Began to understand students such as Joe; all students were able to learn; other students began to include him; listened and encouraged him; had an inroad with the student due to knowing interests; talking to the student, "How's your weekend", student shares the teacher cares about me; he knew I cared about him as a person; I took special interest in him, finding out what interests him; students that share that the only reason they came to class was to see a teacher. You can get a kid out of bed, help them to learn, help them go to college, change their life	Understanding students and ability for all students to learn, listening/encouraging students, knowing students' interests/getting to know students

The researcher utilized the data from the questionnaire to begin open coding, axial

coding, and selective coding to determine how the qualitative research correlated to

the research question: What are teacher perceptions of a relationship-building

classroom management style and its impact on student behavior? The researcher

utilized the open coding data organized from Table 4.1 to begin the configuration of

the open, axial, and selective coding table that proceeded after the individual

interviews/focus group sections of the research.

Individual Interviews

The researcher asked for volunteers from School A via e-mail that participated in

the teacher questionnaire who would be interested in participating in individual

interviews and a focus group expanding on the "Relationship-building Classroom

Management and Its Impact on Student Behavior" Survey Monkey questionnaire.

Individual interviews were conducted using the same fourteen questions from the teacher

questionnaire asking participants to elaborate in more detail on their answers. No

participant from the teacher questionnaire declined volunteering in the individual

interviews/focus group. Dr. Joan Sargeant (2012) stated that, "qualitative research is

purposeful; participants are selected who can best inform the research questions and

enhance understanding of the phenomenon under study" (p. 1). Dr. Sargeant also shared

through her research on selecting participants for research studies that, "representative

participants could be considered by role (residents and faculty), perspective (those who

approve/disapprove the intervention), experience level (junior and senior residents),

and/or diversity (gender, ethnicity, other background)" (p. 1). The researcher proceeded

to choose four volunteers to participate in the individual interviews/focus group that

taught different subject areas at School A and a wide-range of teaching experience

ranging from two years to thirty-one years. The researcher talked to the four individual

interview participants in their individual classrooms at School A and had participants e-

mail response aspects of the interview questions (refer to Appendix D) to go along with

notes scribed from the researcher from the interviews.

Participants

Four teacher volunteers whom participated in the teacher questionnaire were

chosen to participate in the individual interviews/focus group. Code names were given to

the four teachers to keep their identity anonymous. The four teachers that participated in

the individual interviews/focus group were referred to as DS, DJ, DR, and SH throughout

the research. The four participants were asked to provide background information about

them including (not limited too) years of teaching experience, college graduation year,

and educational background (grade levels taught, classes, etc.).

DS teaches Algebra II, Geometry A/B, and Senior Math at School A. DS has taught for

thirteen years and has previously taught eighth grade math, Algebra I, Bridge Math, and RTI

Math. Teaching is DS's second career, previously working at various places in Informational

Systems. DS graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in 2001 and received a teaching license as part

of the Teach Tennessee program.

DJ went more in-depth about her background. DJ shared before answering

interview questions:

This is my second year teaching freshman English, and I am learning, reflecting, and changing my perspective on a continual basis; my classroom management style is constantly evolving, and I honestly have a long way to go before I will be content with my understanding of this foundational skill. I taught junior English as an interim teacher for four months prior to finding my home at (School A). I graduated from college in December of 2009. Prior to teaching, I worked in various positions in the medical field ranging from direct patient care to the business side, including supply management, scheduling for multiple disciplines, and billing. Most of those years were spent in the home health side of the medical field, and I interacted on a daily basis with a very diverse patient population. This experience was beneficial as I moved into the teaching world since our student population comes from very diverse backgrounds as well. My greatest strength in these 30 years was always said to be my customer service skills because of my love for people and a desire to serve them well. I still believe this to be my greatest gift, and I feel this is the foundation of my classroom management style.

DR currently teaches Personal Finance at School A and has taught general business/computer-related courses grades eight to twelve in previous years. DR has thirty-one years of teaching experience. DR graduated college in 1982 with a Bachelor's Degree in Business Management and received a teaching certification in 1987.

SH teaches Chemistry at School A and has taught Algebra I/II and Geometry in previous years. Teaching is SH's second career as previously SH was an Aquarist, taking care of sharks/stingrays while educating guests about them. SH has three years of

teaching experience teaching. SH graduated with a Bachelor's Degree in 2004 and

graduated with a Master's Degree in Education in 2015.

Interview Questions/Answers

Table 4.2 shows the questions asked from Appendix A and question code names.

Questions will be referenced by question code names in regards to individual interview

data.

Table 4.2- *Questions for Individual Interviews/Question Code Names*

Question Code Names	Question
Q1	Describe effective classroom management.
Q2	Describe how to impact student behavior positively.
Q3	What is relationship-building classroom management?
Q4	Is a teacher's ability to build relationships an important part of classroom management? Explain.
Q5	How do you establish and foster relationships with students, especially those with challenging behaviors?
Q6	Is knowing about a student's home life important to classroom management/student behavior? Why or why not?
Q7	What does it mean to value a student and how does it impact

	student behavior?
Q8	How is staying consistent in addressing student behavior important to teacher-student relationships?
Q9	Is allowing a student to speak and share ideas in class important to affecting student behavior positively? Why or why not?
Q10	What are ways to build relationships with a diverse population of students?
Q11	How does helping students experience success impact student behavior?
Q12	How does student behavior impact a classroom?
Q13	How does a lack of teacher/student relationships impact a classroom?
Q14	Give an example of how relationship building impacted a student's behavior.

Q1. The researcher interviewed the participants individually in the following order: SH interviewed first, DJ interviewed second, DS interviewed third, and DR interviewed. Participants' interview order was based on participants' availability and convenience. The researcher asked the four participants the questions in the same order beginning with Q1 and ending with Q4. The researcher began by asking each participant Q1.

SH focused on utilizing effective teaching strategies/differentiating instruction for student learning and sustaining student attention. DJ focused on creating a safe and comfortable classroom environment as well as getting to know one's students. DS focused on having a proactive classroom being organized within classroom management, such as proper seating arrangements and clear routines/procedures. DR focused on providing an environment for students wanting to learn the opportunity as well as a classroom with respect/minimal classroom disruptions. Each participant's response to Q1 had differences, but related to participants' answers and open codes from the teacher questionnaire in Table 4.1.

Q2. Once the participants finished a question, the researcher followed with the next question. Q2 responses from the four participants' coincided with one another. The Q2 responses had the commonalities of caring about the students, loving the students, being positive, and showing respect. SH stated, "I try to impact student behavior by having a positive attitude and instilling a can do attitude towards life. Giving students chances to fail and succeed is all part of this". DS responded to Q2:

> I believe the most important thing students need to know is that you love them, even when you are applying discipline of some kind, it is for their good and never out of anger or frustration (easier said than done!) If students are unable to understand that "I love them" when discipline is occurring, I do my best to go back in the near future and remind them of this.

Q3. Q3 provided the participants to share their thoughts on relationship-based classroom management. All fours participants' answers were based upon caring about the students, connecting with the students, working with the students and getting to know the students. SH stated that, "relationship building classroom management is connecting to your students through their everyday lives". DJ stated, "it is getting to know your students, finding connections within your learning community (students with students and teacher with students), and building a community invested in mutually agreed upon goals". DS shared that, "relationship-building classroom management finds the teacher working with the students". DR stated that, "the instructor cares about and knows each student well enough to make them part of the learning team".

Q4. All participants' answers in their individual interviews agreed that teachers building relationships with students were important to classroom management as DJ and DR initially responded the same. DJ stated, "Absolutely! If students do not believe you care and value them as individuals, they are not likely to respect you and participate in the learning process". DR stated, "Absolutely! If there is no relationship, learning doesn't take place very easily". However, DS's response differed from the other three responses, although agreeing with relationship building being important to classroom management. DS stated:

> I believe the ability to build relationships is important, but that teachers must also be willing to "not be liked" by all students also. The truth is, students will work harder for you if they like you, but if that "like" comes at a cost to other students,

55

or classroom management, or discipline, it's not productive. So you must be willing to be "unliked" by some to reach most.

Q5. Q5 focused on students with challenging behaviors and how to foster relationships with those students. The commonalities between the four interviews focused on the words/phrases: student interests, student passions, expecting the best from the students, and demonstrating true love. DJ went into significant detail on how this has been a struggle and how DJ continues to grow in this area:

This has been a real struggle for me. I honestly have students right now that are breaking my heart because I can't find a way in. On the other hand, most respond to sincere honesty and an obvious desire to know more about them. First, I try to find things we have in common. I watch and listen as they come to class to see what they are discussing, what books they are reading, music they are listening to, or what kind of stickers they may have on their binders. If I can find one thing where we can connect, whether it be a game they love that my own children loved or perhaps a genre of literature or music that we both like, then I have an open door. They love hearing about me and my own children. I've told them that my three children were like a mini version of many of my classes. My children were all very different in their learning styles and in how they responded to life. I may tell a student that he/she reminds me of my son. I tell them about a positive attribute they share, then I may say something about a struggle he faced and how he overcame it. This is a way of showing them that I love something I see in them, but also understand that they struggle in areas. By talking about how my

child overcame a struggle they may have, they see that they aren't stuck because they now have heard how someone much like them has overcome the same issue. There is so much power in hope, and I believe hearing stories like this gives them hope. So many students choose to act out in class as a diversion; they feel completely lost, and sometimes being the class clown is safer than chancing being called on to contribute and having no idea what to say. No one wants to feel inadequate and exposed. They also like to know what kind of student I was in school. I am very honest about my struggles as a learner. So many students claim they aren't smart so why bother because they will fail anyway. I don't allow this kind of thinking. I tell them that I was not the most intelligent person in my classes, but I still graduated with honors due to my stubborn resolve, a desire to learn, and a strong work ethic. I tell them I have attention problems like many of them, I am not naturally organized, and it takes a lot of repetition before things stick in my brain. I then tell them the strategies I have developed to help me overcome these struggles. I tell them to try mine, or try lots of different ways until they find the ones that work for them. They need to know that teachers are humans too, and often have similar struggles. Finally, I sometimes pull very challenging students aside and sit down with them for a chat. It may not seem like a big deal, but it is important that teachers physically be at the same level when you speak. If a student is sitting and the teacher is standing, this can put the student on the defensive because the teacher is in a position of power or control (towering over the student). When you both sit side-by-side or face-to-face, it

sends the message that we are talking as a team trying to find a solution, not like the student is being lectured. I begin the chat by telling the student what I like about him or her and explaining how these traits can help with the student's success in class and in the future. Then I talk about the negative behavior and explain how that is sabotaging success. I ask why the student continues this behavior knowing it only causes trouble and hinders the ability to succeed. Often, they don't have an answer. I then ask what they want to do after school. When they tell me a goal they have, I ask questions about why this is what they want (motivations are important) and what they are doing now to reach that goal. I tell them the positive attributes I've noticed and how these will be helpful in reaching the goal, and then I explain how their current behavior choices will make reaching the goal more difficult. At the end, I ask two final questions: Is there anything I can do to help you reach your goal and what kind of plan can we set up to help you. I tell the student I am not perfect and am also learning to be a good teacher. I ask the student to let me know if there is anything I need to do differently to help him or her be successful. The answers I get aren't always comfortable to hear, but they provide an opportunity for me to see myself from the students' point of view. When I promise to work on my weak areas and they see me follow through, I believe this often motivates change in them as well. Sadly, I often repeat these conversations several times with either no change or times of growth followed by backsliding. This is incredibly frustrating, but then I remember how it always takes multiple times for me to cement information in my brain. I remind myself

that unlike my mature brain, theirs is not fully developed. I resolve to be patient and tenacious in helping them grow because without constant nurturing of these relationships, classroom management will be impossible.

Q6. All four participants believe that knowing about students home life is important as SH, DJ, and DR responded similarly with an empathetic "Yes". SH responded:

Yes! This can help us understand what they are going through. If they do not have ideal living conditions this is evident in class and how they behave in class.

DJ responded:

Yes! It is crucial because what happens at home affects their mood, their focus, their desire to learn, and their physical ability to participate in class.

DR responded:

Yes! Knowing what the student is dealing with at home often leads to understanding why the student behaves the way they do in the classroom.

However, DS's answer did agree that there is importance, but did not agree that it is absolutely necessary. DS responded:

I think it can be but it's not necessarily that important. I attempt to treat all students the same no matter who they are or what they come from. If a student is particularly difficult, at that point I might delve into their background to look for ways to reach them.

Q7. Words and phrase examples from the four individual interviews related to each other's responses. Common words and phrases spoke in the four individual interviews were showing care for students, recognizing students, loving students, building relationships with students, building upon students' strengths, not giving up on students, and allowing students' to make connections with them as teachers through valuing the whole child. SH elaborated on these commonalities stating:

> Valuing a student means valuing every aspect of them. When we show students we value them as they are it allows the student to make a connection with us. Teachers who value their students usually build positive relationships. Positive relationships allow learning to occur.

Q8. In all four individual interviews, the participants agreed that consistency in addressing student behavior is important for teacher-student relationships. The participants' responses revolved around trust, respect, maintaining positive relationships, and the loss of positive relationships when inconsistency addressing student behavior occurs due to the perception of not being fair. DR stated:

> Students who know how a teacher will respond are more likely to trust that teacher. A teacher who is inconsistent cannot be trusted to respond a certain way and is less likely to be able to foster positive relationships.

DS stated, "Students notice if one person is treated differently, so treating everyone the same reaches that "fair" place that everyone desires".

Q9. The four participants' answers were in agreement for Q9 when the researcher asked during the individual interviews. The four participants strongly agreed that students should share/speak their views during class, as this is part of contributing to a respectful, positive, and safe learning environment. DR shared that, "mutual respect is the foundation of positive student behavior". SH shared that, "students sharing their ideas allows them to connect to the class and take ownership of their learning". DS shared that by, "allowing students to speak and express themselves appropriately in the classroom makes it more "their" space which is important". DJ shared, " I often ask students what we can do to make the class better. They are more likely to uphold expectations they have a role in creating".

Q10. Making connections and student interests were the commonalities between the participants' responses for Q10. DJ shared a personal experience of having a diverse background that helped connect with students:

Find ways to connect. I lived in a foreign country for four years and have visited others. I share my experiences; sometimes these experiences include the amazing customs or traditions I found fascinating, while others relate the struggles I had while trying to adapt to a different culture. I always tell the class that perspective is important in how we view the world. Just because we do things differently or value different things in our culture, does not make others cultures weird or wrong just different. We can't always understand why a person acts or thinks as they do until we understand the culture where they were raised. This also applies to

61

diverse groups of people here in our own country, whether the differences are in

race, religion, economic status, or learning ability.

Q11. The participants' responses built upon each other's about student success.

DS shared the shortest answer stating exuberantly, "Everyone likes to win". DR shared

that, "students who succeed are more likely to be interested in the subject matter and to

be on task. That being said, the success must be earned and not given". DJ shared:

Every little success chips away at that wall of resistance to learning, and builds

confidence and hope in a student. If a student sees they can succeed, it makes

them wonder what else they can do. We can remind them of past successes when

they are having a rough day and want to give up. When they remember how far

they have come, it gives them the drive to keep trying.

SH shared, "when students feel successful, they want to do more. If they don't feel

successful, it works against you because they do not look forward to the task".

Q12. SH and DR focused on how negative or "bad" behavior when asked Q12

about student behavior. However, the two participants agreed that student behavior

impacts all aspects of the classroom. SH stated, "misbehavior deters learning therefore

creating frustration for the teacher and other students". DR stated:

A much greater amount of learning takes place in the well-managed classroom.

Less time is spent on behavioral issues and more time on instruction. Poor student

behavior takes time away from instruction and creates an environment that is less

focused and cooperative.

DJ and DS's responses agreed with the commonality of SH and DR's responses of student behavior impacting all aspects of the classroom, but focused on positive student behavior. DJ stated that, "effective/ respectful communication with fellow students and the teacher create an atmosphere where growth and wonderful discussions abound. Dedication to doing their best work and helping other students thrive creates an environment of cooperation and growth where students feel comfortable stretching their minds through productive struggle". DS stated that "student behavior sets the tone for a classroom to a large part, so positive behavior and outcomes go a long way to set up a positive learning environment".

Q13. All four participants' responses shared that a lack of teacher-student relationships is detrimental to a classroom. DJ stated that, "relationships are a priority to me, so I don't have personal experiences in a classroom without relationships". DS focused on a lack of teacher-student relationships impacts discipline negatively in the classroom and the teacher comes across to students as "mean". SH's response built upon DS's student perception of a "mean" teacher focusing on students not believing the teacher cares about them inside/outside of school. DR elaborated in more detail:

> Learning is a group effort between the teacher and the student. They must have the shared goal of learning. If students do not have a positive relationship with the teacher, they are less likely to be willing to get "on board" and cooperate. The best relationships lead to a student wanting to succeed for the teacher.

Q14. Q14 allowed the four participants to share personal examples of how relationship building impacted a student's behavior. All fours gave examples of how they built relationships with a particular student or class and how the impact was positive on the student, class, and them as the teacher. DS provided an example that did not state a student's name:

> I recently had a student who had difficulty with an assignment, and in fact, refused to do it. At the end of class, I attempted to have her stay so that I could encourage her, but she was too frustrated to hear me (and rolled her eyes… and was rude). So I just asked her to go and said we would talk later. The next day I tried again at the end of class. She was calmed down, apologized, got the help she needed and I was able to tell her. I love her even when she thinks I don't. It was a good ending!

Peer Debriefing/Member Checks

Peer debriefing occurred once the data had been gathered and before the open coding process begun. An educator with a state of Tennessee teaching license in Elementary education K-6 peer debriefed the participants' information and researchers' interpretations by reviewing participants' responses and the researcher's scribed notes. The educator concluded that the researcher was on track with the research and interpreted the four participants accurately. Member checks occurred after the individual interviews. The researcher allowed the individual interview participants to view responses and notes

to check for misrepresentation. Member checks concluded that participants were not misrepresented with the researcher's interpretations.

Individual Interviews' Summary

The participants' answers provided many similarities and differences throughout the interviews. The participants' answers shared many similarities as the open coding from the teacher questionnaire and Table 4.1. The researcher utilized the participants' e-mailed responses of aspects of the interview questions (refer to Appendix D) to go along with notes scribed from the researcher from the interviews to breakdown each participant's responses to the fourteen questions. The researcher was able to find commonalities and differences between the four interviews and open coding from the teacher questionnaire.

The researcher utilized the data from the teacher questionnaire, word/phrase examples/open codes from Table 4.1, and commonalities from the individual interviews to guide the creation of the focus group questions.

<div align="center">

Focus Group

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The researcher asked the individual interview participants (DS, DJ, DR, and SH) if they were willing to participate in a focus group session, in which they would answer more detailed questions based on the data collected from the teacher questionnaire and individual interviews. "Focus groups provide insights into how people think and provide a deeper understanding of the phenomena being studied" (Nagle & Williams, 2013, p. 2).

<div align="center">65</div>

All four individual interview participants agreed to participate in the focus group when they agreed upon the individual interviews (refer to Appendix D).

The focus group session took place in the summer after school was out. The researcher's original plan was for the four focus group participants and the researcher to meet in a classroom at School A for the focus group session. The participants were unable to find a time during the summer to meet in person due to varying schedules. The researcher held the focus group electronically sending ten questions to the four participants via e-mail (refer to Appendix E). The participants answered the ten focus group questions and sent their answers to all participants/researcher. The participants were encouraged by the researcher to respond, elaborate, ask questions about, agree/disagree, and/or build upon the other participants' answers to the ten questions.

Focus Group Questions/Answers

The researcher utilized the data from the teacher questionnaire, word/phrase examples/open codes from Table 4.1, and commonalities from the individual interviews to guide the creation of the focus group questions. Table 4.3 shows how the focus group questions (refer to Appendix B) were created based upon the word/phrase examples and open codes (refer to Table 4.1) from the teacher questionnaire and individual interviews.

Table 4.3- *Participants' Examples/Open Codes from Teacher Questionnaire/Individual Interviews in Creation of Focus Group Questions (refer to Appendix B)*

Participants' Word/Phrase Examples	Open Codes	Focus Group Questions (with Question #)

Clear expectations/procedures; providing safe learning environment; positive relationships with your students/class; presenting positive behavior/redirecting negative behavior	Setting clear expectations/procedures, building positive relationships	4) Why are clear expectations and procedures important for positive student behavior? 8) What does classroom management look like in your classroom?
Build relationships; get to know students; consistent and fair to every student; clear expectations; model and encourage positive interactions; make learning meaningful	Building relationships, getting to know students	7) What do building relationships look like in your classroom?
Knowing and caring about your students; showing respect to your students; building a rapport with students; learning about students' interests and lives	Expressing interest/care into students, learning about students' lives	3) How does utilizing students' interests help build relationships and impact classroom management? 9) What impact does caring make on student behavior and the classroom?
Showing interest and care; being able to relate to students; students feel a connection they will not act out; if a student respects you they are less likely to misbehave; the kids won't care how much a teacher knows until the know how much that teacher cares	Relating and making a connection with students	3) How does utilizing students' interests help build relationships and impact classroom management? 9) What impact does caring make on student behavior and the classroom?
Keep teaching clear expectations/procedures;	Clear expectations, building relationships, listening to	4) Why are clear expectations and

Greet each student at the door; get to know them; show concern/build trust; listen and watch	students	procedures important for positive student behavior? 6) Why is listening to students important in building relationships and classroom management? 7) What do building relationships look like in your classroom? 8) What does classroom management look like in your classroom?
Helping understand why a student acts out or being distant; understand why the behavior exists; gain students' trust	Finding out why a student misbehaves	1) Define student behavior.
Care about your students; Help them believe they can change/valued; believe that a student can learn as any other; each student has purpose; high expectations for all students	Believe that a student can and has purpose	7) What do building relationships look like in your classroom? 9) What impact does caring make on student behavior and the classroom?
Understand expectations and expectations remain the same throughout the year; being clear, concise, and consistent; consistency breeds respect, the foundation for all relationships; lack of consistency can cause a negative impact on student	Be clear and consistent, helps build relationships	5) Why is consistency important in a classroom?

behavior; basis to all behavior		
Gives them confidence; students want to be seen and heard; feel they are important and what they think matters; take ownership; gives students' a voice/gives teachers' insight on their thoughts/ways of learning	Builds student confidence, provides teachers' insight on students	2) How does allowing students to share ideas and speak in class build students' confidence? 6) Why is listening to students important in building relationships and classroom management? 10) How are students experiencing success contagious?
Being consistent; set high expectations; treat all students the same; greeting/getting to know students; allow students to express themselves; learn about their cultures/diversity	Building relationships, consistency, learn more about students	5) Why is consistency important in a classroom? 7) What do building relationships look like in your classroom?
Help them feel capable, worthy, and successful; show compassion; successful students lead to successful adults; builds self-esteem; becomes contagious; gives hope; gets them believing in themselves; help them use these experiences in a positive way	Students feel capable, gives hope, contagious for students	2) How does allowing students to share ideas and speak in class build students' confidence? 10) How are students experiencing success contagious?
Positive student behavior can encourage student learning/growth; negative student behavior can hinder others from learning/derail a class from learning; make	Positive/negative student behavior impacts the classroom, teacher-student relationships impact positive/negative student behavior	1) Define student behavior.

or break a classroom; makes a learning environment or disruption for everyone; negative student behavior little hope for success/positive student behavior from positive relationships has a class that succeeds		
Students will disrupt/disengage; Prevent personal learning and peer learning; not be focused on learning; cold/distant feeling; no connections; disengagement, disruptions, and distractions; uncaring environment; lack of involvement and respect	Student disengagement, lack of classroom connection, more disruptions, prevention of learning for student/other students	1) Define student behavior.
Began to understand students such as Joe; all students were able to learn; other students began to include him; listened and encouraged him; had an inroad with the student due to knowing interests; talking to the student, "How's your weekend", student shares the teacher cares about me; he knew I cared about him as a person; I took special interest in him, finding out what interests him; students that share that the only reason they came to class was to see a teacher. You can get a kid out of bed, help them to learn, help them go to college, change their life	Understanding students and ability for all students to learn, listening/encouraging students, knowing students' interests/getting to know students	2) How does allowing students to share ideas and speak in class build students' confidence? 3) How does utilizing students' interests help build relationships and impact classroom management? 6) Why is listening to students important in building relationships and classroom management? 10) How are students experiencing success contagious?

The participants answered the ten focus group questions (refer to Appendix B) at different times, but were able to respond to other participants' responses when each participant completed the questions from the first to respond to the last to respond. DS was the first participant to answer all the questions, but was able to respond to others' responses/change, elaborate on, or defend answers given. DJ, DR, and SH had the same opportunities to respond, elaborate on, or defend answers as well.

Table 4.4 shows the questions asked from Appendix B and question code names. Questions will be referenced by question code names in regards to focus group data.

Table 4.4- *Questions for Focus Group/Question Code Names*

Question Code Names	Question
FG1	Define student behavior.
FG2	How do allowing students to share ideas and speak in class build students' confidence?
FG3	How does utilizing students' interests help build relationships and impact classroom management?
FG4	Why are clear expectations and procedures important for positive student behavior?
FG5	Why is consistency important in a classroom?
FG6	Why is listening to students important in building relationships and classroom management?
FG7	What do building relationships look like in your classroom?

FG8	What does classroom management look like in your classroom?
FG9	What impact does caring make on student behavior and the classroom?
FG10	How are students experiencing success contagious?

FG1. DS began by sharing, "student behavior encompasses anything a student does while at school, from how a student carries themself down the hallway and through a crowd to how they respond to positive and negative stimuli". DR, SH, and DJ all agreed that student behavior consists of everything a student does at school either positive or negative. DJ elaborated on DS's comments stating, "student behavior is the way a student chooses to act in a variety of circumstances, the way students react to a situation, and the way students interact with teachers, administration, visitors, and other students. This can also include the way students view and treat themselves".

FG2. All participants agreed that allowing students' opportunities to speak and share were important to the classroom/students' personally. SH stated that, "allowing students to collaborate in class builds confidence through taking ownership for their learning. Students see learning as more meaningful when their voice is allowed to be heard and valued by others". DS added to SH's comments stating "in every case, people are more likely to be involved and take ownership when they get their 'say' and sharing ideas in the classroom is imperative. It is also good practice for the future, and helps build communication skills in a generation that is sadly lacking in them".

FG3. DS began by sharing, "building genuine relationships allows students to see that they are cared for and their best interest is at the basis of all workings in the classroom. It also helps teachers understand what types of things motivate and demotivate students". DJ's comments aligned directly with DS:

> I feel building relationships and consistency are the two biggest factors in successful classroom management. I can't build relationships if I don't know my kids. Trust is the foundation in relationships, so students need to know that we care about all aspects of their lives. When they know this, students will respect the teacher more, and will likely work harder. If students feel a teacher doesn't care about them as an individual, it is unlikely they will care about the teacher or the expectations in the classroom.

DR focused more on the student interest side of the question relating to building relationships stating, "when a student's interests are used/respected in the classroom, the student is more likely to see the relevance of the subject matter, be involved in the educational process, and exhibit positive behavior". SH followed with examples of recognizing student interests stating, "simply asking a student how their day is or how the game went, band concert shows students you do care. When students genuinely feel we care about what they do, they open up to us as teachers and allow us to connect with them in ways that builds a trusting relationship and usually contributes to them attempting to be the best they can be".

FG4. DS started the conversation by sharing an analogy:

> Providing students with expectations and consequences is like putting up sturdy

73

tall railings across a bridge. If you have those in place you feel safe and comfortable on the bridge. But if there aren't any railings or if they move and change then sometimes the bridge is wide and sometimes narrow you don't feel comfortable on the bridge. You are scared and tense and nervous... not a good environment for a bridge or a classroom where students should understand their boundaries.

DJ was in full agreement with DS stating:

I love what "DS" said about the railings on the bridge! Students have often told me they like consistency. Specifically, students like knowing what I expect during each section of class-time, having clear boundaries, and having a regular routine. Students feel like they are set up to fail when they are not clear on what it takes to be successful in any given class as many instances of inappropriate behavior stem from a student being confused about what should be done. Rather than look "dumb" to others, the student may act out to make others laugh, etc.

DR and SH agreed with the other two. SH added that, "Students crave stability. They hate it when things are not consistent. If my expectations are clear and enforced consistently then they know what to expect and feel comfortable in my room".

FG5. As DS referred to previous answers on question 4, DR started the conversation about FG5 stating:

Consistency goes hand-in-hand with clear expectations and procedures. If the

teacher is consistent in their expectations and procedures, the student will know

what to expect each day. Students, like most of us, are more comfortable (whether

they will admit it or not) in an environment that is consistent, organized, and

orderly.

SH and DJ agreed with DR adding to DR's comments, "once again consistency is needed

because humans are creatures of habit".

FG6. DS referred to a sign that is posted in the classroom to start FG6. DS said,

" I have a sign beside my desk that's says something like... students may not remember

everything you teach them but they will always remember how you make them feel. If

you listen to students and they know you genuinely care for their well being (not just

teaching your subject), they are much more likely to give you their best effort both

academically and behaviorally." DJ, SH, and DR all stated that listening exemplifies to

students that a teacher wants to know their interest and cares about them. DR added,

"Listening to students exhibits a respect for and an interest in a student's ideas and

thoughts. The student is more likely to be positively involved in the educational process

if they perceive this respect and interest".

FG7. All four participants provided examples of how they build relationships

within their classrooms. DR shared, "asking questions and engaging in conversation

before or after class and in the hallways. Being present at ball games, concerts, plays, etc.

will be noticed. If possible, it also includes relating those interests to the subject matter of

the course within the class environment". DJ shared, "I keep track of school activities and write messages such as "good luck" or "I'm proud of y'all" on my board. I ask them about the games and competitions, and seek my students out at these events to let them know I am cheering them on. I also write a letter to students about myself, and have students write a letter about themselves to me at the beginning of the year, in which allows me a glimpse into their family life, hobbies, and other interests". DS shared, " asking questions about jobs, sports, band, Ag, etc., addressing students outside of classroom in hallway in cafeteria, even at Kroger or Walmart by just saying hello and calling them by name". SH concluded, "Students are greeted everyday they walk in, asked about their day, sports, extracurriculars, etc. I tell jokes and do everything possible to show them I care for their well being and learning".

FG8. All four participants shared that classroom management revolves around respect for all in the classrooms. As all comments related, SH and DJ's related more to each others as DS and DR differed and focused more on "old school" styles as DS stated. DS shared:

> I am old school in the fact that I demand respect but I do so by attempting to earn their respect... showing them respect at the same Time. I don't have rules listed anywhere in the room (although I will temporarily post them if problems arise... I had to do this with cell phones last year when students kept trying to listen to ear buds during class).

DR shared, "Classroom management means the class is engaged from bell to bell. If at all

possible, there is no "down time" because that is when behavioral problems or lack of focus on the task at hand may occur".

As SH and DJ's responses focused more on giving students opportunities within the classroom, SH shared, " I do like to give them freedom to participate in class and explore the content at their pace. I push them everyday to do their best and if they have an off day encourage them to come back tomorrow better". DJ elaborated on how growth continues taking place in classroom management, as it has been a struggle in the past. DJ shared:

> I model kindness and respect, and make it clear that this is the way we all treat one another in my class. Everyone has a voice and the right to agree or disagree respectfully. In the past, I have struggled with consistency, and this made managing some classes quite frustrating. I am currently working on a better-structured classroom (both in the way the room is set up and how class time is used) for the coming year. I've realized I cannot have the learning environment I desire without consistency in every area and a clear plan for organization of time and resources.

FG9. DJ and DS shared that they have definitely answered this question in other questions throughout, but agreed with DR and SH's responses. DR stated, "When the teacher cares about his students both in his desire to teach and his desire to make their lives better, it will show and students will respond positively". SH summed the question

up with all participants agreeing by stating, "I believe when students know you care they will do just about anything for you".

   FG10. DS started by sharing that, "success breeds success... this can and should bleed over from different aspects of school life from sports to band to Ag to the classroom it all goes into school pride". SH responded, "I agree with "DS" here. When students feel successful it trickles down in all aspects of their life".

   DR shared with the researcher, "I'm not sure what you may be looking for in this question". The researcher elaborated on the question relating to DS and SH's answers by sharing with DR and the other participants why is success important for students to experience. DR stated after the clarification:

   Students who excel in the classroom will experience success as they always do
   and it probably will not affect other students who don't normally excel. Students
   who experience success in a particular classroom who don't normally experience
   success may show other students that success is possible and encourage them to
   make the same effort.

DJ shared in response that all students experiencing success is important and it impacts other students. DJ also stated:

   When students taste success, they want more. They begin to believe in
   themselves. They see they have conquered something they previously believed to
   be impossible; therefore, now all sorts of possibilities are opening up in their

minds. Also, when other students witness success of a peer, they too begin to

believe in the possibility of their own success.

After the participants shared their thoughts on FG10, the researcher thanked each

participant individually and as a group concluding the focus group session.

Peer Debriefing/Member Checks

Peer debriefing occurred once the data had been gathered and before the open

coding process begun. An educator with a state of Tennessee teaching license in

Elementary education K-6 peer debriefed the participants' information and researchers'

interpretations by reviewing participants' responses and the researcher's scribed notes.

The educator concluded that the researcher was on track with the research and interpreted

the four participants accurately. Member checks occurred after the individual interviews.

The researcher allowed the individual interview participants to view responses and notes

to check for misrepresentation. Member checks concluded that participants were not

misrepresented with the researcher's interpretations.

Focus Group Open Coding

The researcher utilized open coding, as utilized in Table 4.1 for the teacher

questionnaire, to help develop categories, break down concept labels, and find

commonalities within the focus group questions' answers (Khandkar, 2009). The

researcher utilized reading through the participants' answers for each question of the

focus group and writing down reoccurring word/phrases as part of open coding. Table

4.5 shows participants' word/phrase examples and open codes from examples from the

focus group responses for each question.

Table 4.5- *Participants' Examples/Open Codes for Each Question from Focus Group*

(refer to Appendix B)

Question #	Participants' Word/Phrase Examples	Open Codes
1	How students choose to act in a variety of circumstances; how students act in a school environment; how students behave in school; anything a student does while at school	Students' actions during school, students' responses in a school environment, Positive/negative student behavior impacts the classroom, teacher-student relationships impact positive/negative student behavior
2	Knowing their (students) teacher respects and shows interest; taking ownership for their learning; students see learning more meaningful when their voices are heard; buy in is important, builds good communication skills	Students feel respected and interest taken in them, learning seems more meaningful for students
3	Trust is the foundation for relationships, must know the kids; students see the relevance more in the subject matter; students feel genuine care from teachers allows us to connect with them; helps teachers find what motivates students	Expressing interest/care into students, learning about students' lives, trust between students and teachers
4	Students like to know what is expected out of them; students crave stability; consistency; helps students	Being clear and consistent, providing students stability, consistency, and safety

	feel safe and comfortable	
5	Provides students comfort, helps teachers/students with time management; clear expectations/procedures; humans are creatures of habit and consistency provides familiarity	Clear expectations, provides comfort and stability for students
6	Listening shows students respect and care; helps build trust; students may not remember everything you teach them but they will always remember how you make them feel	Listening/encouraging students, knowing students' interests/getting to know students, making students feel important
7	Make students feel valued and worthy of my time/attention; telling students "I am proud of you"; keeping up with school activities students are in; talking to students at Kroger/Walmart (outside of school); greeting students and asking about their lives	Listening/encouraging students, building relationships, expressing interest/care about students
8	Model kindness/respect and set up structure in the classroom; the class is engaged from bell to bell; give students freedom to learn; earn and show respect	Be clear and consistent, set up structure, class engagement, mutual respect throughout the class from teacher and students
9	Desire to teach and make students' lives better; if we don't care, they (students) will care very little what we have to say; when students know you care, they will do just about anything for you	Builds student confidence, Building relationships, consistency, learn more about students
10	Students taste success, they want more of it; students begin to believe in	Students feel capable, gives hope, students' confidence grows within themselves

	themselves; success breeds success; students that feel success in school it bleeds over into life	

Open, Axial, and Selective Coding based upon Teacher Questionnaire, Individual

Interviews, and Focus Group Data

Open coding was found in Table 4.1, Table 4.3, and Table 4.5 through the teacher questionnaire, individual interviews, and focus group. Examples of participants' words were used to help guide labeling data portions. The researcher used the open codes compiled from the teacher questionnaire, individual interviews, and focus group data to find trends utilizing axial and selective coding. Axial coding helped identify relationships amongst open codes. Selective coding took the data from the open codes/relationships found in axial coding and determined core variables.

Table 4.6 shows open codes, axial codes, and selective codes based upon the teacher questionnaires, individual interviews, and focus group data to help provide answers guided by the research question:

1) What are teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management style and its impact on student behavior?

Table 4.6- *Open Codes, Axial Codes, and Selective Codes Found Based Upon Teacher Questionnaires, Individual Interviews, and Focus Group Data*

Open Codes	Axial Codes	Selective Codes
Positive/negative student behavior impacts the classroom; Teacher-student relationships impact	Understanding Student Behavior	Building teacher-student relationships to set a positive classroom environment to enable

positive/negative student behavior; students' actions during school; Students' responses in a school environment; Student disengagement, lack of classroom connection, more disruptions, prevention of learning for student/other students; Finding out why a student misbehaves; Understanding students and ability for all students to learn		learning for all students
Set up structure, class engagement, mutual respect throughout the class from teacher and students; Providing students stability, consistency, and safety; Setting clear expectations/procedures; Being clear and consistent	Understanding Classroom Management	
Building positive relationships; Getting to know students; Expressing interest/care into students, learning about students' lives; Relating and making a connection with students; Believe that a student can and has purpose; Builds student confidence, provides teachers' insight on students; Students feel capable, gives hope, contagious for students; Listening/encouraging students, knowing students' interests/getting to know students; Students feel	Understanding Teacher to Student Relationship Building	

respected and interest taken in them, learning seems more meaningful for students; Trust between students and teachers; Making students feel important		

The researcher took the data from the open codes/relationships found in axial coding and determined that the selective code/core variable of the data was building teacher-student relationships to set a positive classroom environment to enable learning for all students, in which helped answer the research question:

What are teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management style and its impact on student behavior?

Summary of the Findings

The purpose of this study was to determine teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management style and its impact on student behavior. The results of this study were discussed throughout chapter four. The data provided information that allowed the researcher to characterize between open, axial, and selective codes based upon the teacher questionnaire, individual interviews, and focus group. Chapter five will present a summary, interpretation and implications of the findings in relation to the research question and literature review, further research recommendations, and a researcher reflection.

CHAPTER 5: Conclusion

Introduction

The purpose of this phenomenological qualitative study using an open coding system was to gain research understanding on how teachers' perceptions of relationship-building classroom management impacts student behavior. The qualitative research data was based upon a questionnaire, individual teacher interviews and a focus group interview, which provided input from a variety of educational professionals from the high school known as School A for the research. The researcher utilized open, axial, and selective coding to find trends and themes amongst the research. Open coding was administered to assess each teacher's perception of relationship-building classroom management and how it impacts student behavior. A questionnaire was given to all teachers at School A using open-ended questions that focused on how a relationship-building classroom management style impacts positive student behavior. This enabled the researcher to allow volunteers to share their interest in participating in individual interviews/focus group for further research. Four individual interviews were conducted using open-ended questions with four teachers School A, who volunteered. The focus group consisted of four teachers from School A. Focus group participants were teachers selected based on the volunteering after the survey and participated in the individual interviews. Data was analyzed through the questionnaire, interviews, and focus group given answers, researcher field notes, and Survey Monkey "Data Analysis" tool to provide answers to the research question, which guided this study:

1) What are teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management style and its impact on student behavior?

This chapter provides a summary of the findings based on the research, in-depth discussion as the findings are interpreted according to the research question and literature review, and implications of the findings are discussed for School A based on the research. The researcher provides recommendations for future research related to the current study. The chapter concludes with the researcher's reflections of the study.

Summary/Implications of the Findings

The research investigated one research question and how the literature review either related or did not relate to the research. The researcher utilized a teacher questionnaire answered by teachers at School A and individual interviews/focus group session that consisted of four volunteer certified teachers from School A. All four individual interview/focus participants and teacher questionnaire participants agreed that relationship-building classroom management has a positive impact on student behavior. The participants shared their agreements throughout the research.

Literature Review Overview

The findings of this research study contributed to the literature review. This research study examined how teachers' perceptions of relationship-building classroom management impacts student behavior. This study provided insight into how current teachers at the high school perceive relationship-building classroom management and the effectiveness of implementation within the classroom and various relationship-building classroom management strategies for student behavior to current teachers at School A for

better overall effectiveness in the classroom. The findings from the teacher questionnaire

and participants' answers from the individual interviews/focus group agreed on how

relationship building is important to classroom management.

   Relationship-Building in the Classroom. An axial coding finding from Table

4.6 based upon the focus group agreed with the literature and focused on "Understanding

Teacher to Student Relationship Building". Classroom relationships essentially mold

student learning, what they know, ability to learn, and trust/respect within a school

building (Raider-Roth, 2005). Wolk (2003) provided insight on the importance of

classroom relationships, interactions, classroom community, and teachers getting to know

students. Wolk explained that relationships navigate the direction of the classroom.

Tables 4.1, 4.5, and 4.6 are in relation to the teacher questionnaire findings, individual

interview answers, and focus group findings that connect to teachers' caring about

students, getting to know students, and connecting student interests from the literature

review.

  Ernest Mendes (2003) explained, "students must perceive that we care, and even

that we like them deep down, as people" (p. 56). Mendes elaborates that building a

rapport is part of classroom management, caring, and building classrooms and finding

student interests/making student connections are vital. Mendes states "rapport means that

two people are alike physiologically, emotionally, or cognitively, even if the similarity is

temporary" (p. 56).

Ignacio Lopez (2017) stated, "creating successful and equitable learning environments for our students means committing to the fact that every learner has a compelling life story worth getting to know" (p. 1). The four individual interview/focus group participants agreed along with the literature review that getting to know students and utilizing their interests in the classroom/building a relationship allow teachers to understand how to work with/educate individual students each day.

School Discipline Consequential Practices. The four participants all agreed that structure and consistency are important aspects of classroom management/relationship building. Discipline is part of the structure and management of the classroom. Discipline is implemented to educate students rather than just punish students (Brazelton, 1992). All student aspects are covered when discipline is implemented, ranging from rewarding the positive, such as positive behavior systems, to punishing the negative.

The four participants did not all acknowledge positive behavior systems, but SH commented on how acknowledge/reward positive behavior consistently encourages students. Behavioral management systems take a different approach by trying to encourage and acknowledge problematic students and well-behaved students when proper behavior takes place as well as teaching these behaviors. Various behavioral management systems are implemented such as positive behavior systems, assertive discipline plans, and school-wide behavior plans (Desiderio & Mullennix, 2005; Hagen et al., 2007). Behavioral consequences may result from behavioral management system implementation helping develop how, what, and why consequences are administered.

88

Specific behavioral consequences were not discussed thoroughly by the four individual interview/focus group participants or teacher questionnaire participants, but some participants agreed that consequences may cause students to miss learning opportunities or a lack of consequences may cause other students in a classroom to miss learning opportunities. For instance, the reality is that in-school suspension keeps students within the school building, but "one major concern with in-school suspension programs is that students miss educational opportunities for learning because their environment is solitary and isolated" (Allman & Slate, 2011, p. 4). DS, DJ, DR, and SH agreed that discipline is part of relationship building. The four participants agreed that effective discipline that helps build relationships mean "modeling the expected behaviors for students and eliminating the unwanted behaviors, and also using reward and punishment when needed" (Akdag, Kaya, Polat, 2013, p. 885).

Classroom Management Beliefs/Styles. Considerable research has demonstrated that effective teacher classroom management strategies promote student interest in learning (Kunter, Baumert, & Koller, 2007), enhance academic achievement and school readiness (Webster-Stratton & Reid, 2004), and prevent and reduce classroom- disruptive behavior (Hawkins, Catalano, Kosterman, Abbott, & Hill, 1999; Kellam, Ling, Merisca, Brown, & Ialongo, 1998; Walker, Colvin, & Ramsey, 1995). The four participants agreed that effective classroom management enables student learning. They also agreed throughout the individual interviews and focus group that ineffective classroom management negatively impacts student learning as ineffectiveness will interfere with students' motivation and on-task learning and contribute to escalating risk

89

for developing disruptive behavior problems (Jones & Jones, 2004; Webster-Stratton,

Reid, & Hammond, 2004)" (Herman, Newcomer, Reinke, & Webster-Stratton, 2011, p.

509-510). DJ explained how classroom management has been a weakness and how it has

impacted the classroom when it has been a weakness and continues to grow/getting better

throughout the individual interview.

The four participants agreed throughout the interviews/focus group as well as the

teacher questionnaire participants that student-centered management and discipline

effectively impacts students as "management is a form of guidance, students are

facilitators for the operations of the classroom, discipline comes from the self, all

students have the opportunity to become an integral part of the management of the

classroom, rules are developed by the teacher and students in the form of a constitution or

compact, consequences reflect individual differences, and students share in classroom

responsibilities" (Garrett, 2008, p. 35). Research participants agreed that classroom

management styles do not have to be the same; just as instructional styles do not have to

be the same as teachers may adapt their styles to individual student's needs just as they

do instruction.

Classroom Consistency. The open coding findings acknowledged in Tables 4.1,

4.5, and 4.6 discovered from the teacher questionnaire, individual interview, and focus

group data/participants agreed that classroom consistency is important in building

classroom relationships. DR stated in regards to question FG5 from the focus group

session that:

90

Consistency goes hand-in-hand with clear expectations and procedures. If the

teacher is consistent in their expectations and procedures, the student will know

what to expect each day. Students, like most of us, are more comfortable (whether

they will admit it or not) in an environment that is consistent, organized, and

orderly.

Robert J. Marzano and Jana S. Marzano (2003) stated that, "research has shown us that

teachers' actions in their classrooms have twice the impact on student achievement as do

school policies regarding curriculum, assessment, staff collegiality, and community

involvement" (p. 6). Teachers that invest time teaching and re-teaching routines and

procedures at the beginning of the year allow instructional focus to stay consistent

throughout the school year (Hindman, Stronge, & Tucker, 2004).

Consistency and dominance intertwine with dominance having a negative

viewpoint at times. Marzano and Marzano (2003) explain dominance in a classroom as

"the teacher's ability to provide clear purpose and strong guidance regarding both

academics and student behavior" (p. 7). Research participants did not acknowledge

dominance as relating to consistency, but agreed on clear purpose/guidance as Marzano

and Marzano addressed.

Consistency also provides teachers the opportunities to focus on individual

student needs. Student needs range from academic deficits to emotional disorders.

Although classroom teachers may not be qualified to address each need professionally,

relationship building and establishing a consistent classroom environment will help

teachers understand their students' needs more and provide students the support that they are looking for rather it be understanding a lesson objective or positive adult attention.

The research participants all agreed that every student is different. They all agreed that finding and utilizing student interests are important to a classroom. Differentiated instruction is an educational philosophy that is based upon teachers acclimating their instruction to individual students' needs (Mann & Willis, 2000).

Many teachers believe that differentiated instruction is vital to classrooms, but the challenge is taking differentiated instruction from ideas and words to reality (Mann & Willis, 2000). Differentiated strategies help teachers focus on individual student needs rather than focusing on a certain ability group or their own. As the research participants acknowledged, classroom management is an important aspect of differentiated instruction. Research participants agreed that building relationships, getting to know students, and classroom management has to be established and takes time as it is differentiated. Differentiation takes time, resources, support, and a focused initiative from administrators to make it a concentration in classrooms throughout school buildings. When teachers begin to see the results from differentiated instruction, teachers and students become inspired to meet the challenge that differentiation brings. "Bright students are no longer bored, and struggling students are finding learning more accessible—and hence their sense of self-efficacy is rising" (Mann & Willis, 2000, p. 4). Differentiation allows students to find their places to learn and helps teachers know that students are learning.

92

School Management. Throughout the research, there were not any direct questions about school management to the participants. However, some teacher questionnaire and individual interview/focus group participants did allude to the school climate impacting classrooms and students either positively or negatively. School climate is setting the overall tone inside of a school. Every school's climate is different, but there are common aspects among schools whose climates are positive and negative. "Positive school climate can yield positive educational outcomes for students and teachers, similarly a negative climate can prevent optimal learning and growth in the institution" (Osman, 2012). School climate is generally defined as the total environment of a school building, in which is grouped into one facet being school climate (Owens, 2015). School administrators help depict the school climate through leadership style, care, vision, supporting teachers/students, and equipping effective teachers.

Multiple research participants agreed that effective teachers build positive classroom relationships, are consistent, have good classroom management, and genuinely care about students. The importance of having effective teachers in a school lies within the role of the school administrator setting the school climate. Whitaker shares, "If a teacher has approached students ineffectively for 28 consecutive years, he or she has been *allowed* to do so by principals for 28 consecutive years" (Whitaker, 2002, p. 5). It is the administrator's responsibility to implement change. Negative teachers (teacher-leaders) do not just put negative vibes into a school's atmosphere, but also influence some to follow them. Research participant responses to question 13 (refer to Tables 4.1 & 4.2) state that a lack of teacher to student connection results in lack of student engagement,

93

negative relationships, negative student behavior, disruptions, lack of student learning, et cetera. During the individual interviews, DS focused on a lack of teacher-student relationships impacts discipline negatively in the classroom and the teacher comes across to students as "mean".

Research Question One

The following question guided the research of this study along with data to answer:

1) What are teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management style and its impact on student behavior?

The qualitative research data was based upon a questionnaire, individual teacher interviews and a focus group interview, which will provide input from a variety of educational professionals from School A, a code name used for the high school used for research. A questionnaire was given to all teachers at School A using open-ended questions that focuses on how a relationship-building classroom management style impacts positive student behavior. This enabled the researcher to allow volunteers to share their interest in participating in individual interviews/focus group for further research. Four individual interviews were conducted using open-ended questions with four teachers School A, who volunteered. The focus group consisted of four teachers from School A. Focus group participants were teachers selected based on the volunteering after the survey and participated in the individual interviews.

An open coding system was used to identify trends within the research, primarily in the individual interviews and focus group. Open coding was administered to assess each teacher's perception of relationship-building classroom management and how it impacts student behavior. Open coding allowed portions of data to be labeled based upon the summary of what is happening in the research. Examples of participants' words were used to help guide labeling data portions. Axial and selective coding occurred to help further identify trends once open coding took place. Axial coding helped identify relationships amongst open codes. Selective coding took the data from the open codes/relationships found in axial coding and determines core variables.

Twenty-eight volunteer certified teachers participated in the teacher questionnaire via Survey Monkey. The researcher based fourteen questions (refer to Appendix A) upon research question one. Four volunteer School A teachers were selected to participate in individual interviews as the researcher asked the same fourteen questions (refer to Appendix A). Open coding was utilized using answers from the teacher questionnaire/individual interviews to develop questions for the focus group session with the four volunteer participants from the individual interviews (refer to Appendix B). Once the focus group session concluded, the researcher utilized open, axial, and selective coding to find core variables to answer the research question.

Conclusions. The researcher developed open codes from participants' word examples in Tables 4.1 and 4.5 were further translated into three axial coded trends in Table 4.6: understanding student behavior, understanding classroom management, and

95

understanding teacher to student relationship building. Synthesis from the participants'

responses, that guided axial coding, agreed with research question one as it elaborated on

understanding of three aspects of the question: relationship building, classroom

management, and student behavior. Results of the axial coding supports Raider-Roth's

(2005) research accessed in the literature review focused on how classroom relationships

essentially mold student learning, what they know, ability to learn, and trust/respect

within a school building.

The researcher utilized the data collected from the teacher questionnaire,

individual interviews, and focus group to find open and axial codes. The researcher

utilized the open and axial codes to find the theme/core principles to answer research

question one based upon the data gathered throughout the research.   As the axial coding

agreed and elaborated on research question one, the selective coding concluded and

found in Table 4.6 that the core principle/theme of the research/research question one is

"building teacher-student relationships to set a positive classroom environment to enable

learning for all students". This selective coding conclusion was based on the data

conducted from the participants' answers for the teacher questionnaire, individual

interviews, and focus group. Results of research question one conclude that teachers'

perceptions of relationship-building classroom management is positive for both

teachers/students and it directly positively impacts improving student behavior/student

learning. There no participant that stated that teachers have negative perceptions of

relationship building and that it does not impact student behavior positively. All

participants agreed that positive perceptions and impacts were based upon relationship building classroom management.

Research Recommendations

Research concluded that School A teachers believe that relationship-building classroom management is positive and important for positively impacting student behavior. The researcher stated that a limitation of the study was that School A was a high school and the only school that participated. Allowing multiple school to participate in the teacher questionnaire, individual interviews, and focus group from the elementary and middle school levels would allow the research to expand to grades Kindergarten to Twelfth grades with a variety of input from teachers of a variety of ages not only the teenage age range.

A future recommended extension of this study would be to research the impact of relationship-building classroom management on student growth/learning. As this study concluded a positive impact on student behavior, developing a study focused on the impact of student growth/learning would allow the researcher to continue the study on relationship-building classroom management and utilize qualitative and quantitative data from School A as School A was the focus of this study. If this study is expanded to elementary and middle schools in the future, all grades would be able to be utilized in a future extension of this research.

Researcher's Reflection

This research study has enhanced the researcher's knowledge on the importance of relationship building in the classroom and school as well as the varying perceptions of teachers although they may be in agreement on a topic. All participants agreed that relationship-building classroom management makes a direct positive impact on student behavior. However, every teacher's answers differed even in similarities. For example, the four focus group participants' answers for question 1 (FG1):

> DS began by sharing, "student behavior encompasses anything a student does while at school, from how a student carries themself down the hallway and through a crowd to how they respond to positive and negative stimuli". DR, SH, and DJ all agreed that student behavior consists of everything a student does at school either positive or negative. DJ elaborated on DS's comments stating, "student behavior is the way a student chooses to act in a variety of circumstances, the way students react to a situation, and the way students interact with teachers, administration, visitors, and other students. This can also include the way students view and treat themselves".

Although all four teachers agreed on the concept of the question, there were differences and expansions of thinking as DJ added to DS's answer. This concept informed the researcher that teachers not only teach students rather they teach each other as well. A valuable resource in education is teachers that educate students throughout school buildings. Teachers learning from one another are based around relationship building, as

98

the research concluded is important and positive within a classroom. Relationship building is also important throughout a school building.

This research study has been a positive experience for the researcher. The researcher feels that the study was a success from the participation and input from the teachers at School A. This will allow the researcher to grow as an educator and help other educators grow also.

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Appendices

APPENDIX A

Survey/Individual Interview Qualitative Questions

1) Describe effective classroom management.

2) Describe how to impact student behavior positively.

3) What is relationship-building classroom management?

4) Is a teacher's ability to build relationships an important part of classroom management? Explain.

5) How do you establish and foster relationships with students, especially those with challenging behaviors?

6) Is knowing about a student's home life important to classroom management/student behavior? Why or why not?

7) What does it mean to value a student and how does it impact student behavior?

8) How is staying consistent in addressing student behavior important to teacher-student relationships?

9) Is allowing a student to speak and share ideas in class important to affecting student behavior positively? Why or why not?

10) What are ways to build relationships with a diverse population of students?

11) How does helping students experience success impact student behavior?

12) How does student behavior impact a classroom?

13) How does a lack of teacher/student relationships impact a classroom?

14) Give an example of how relationship building impacted a student's behavior.

Appendix B

Focus Group Qualitative Questions

1) Define student behavior.

2) How do allowing students to share ideas and speak in class build students' confidence?

3) How does utilizing students' interests help build relationships and impact classroom management?

4) Why are clear expectations and procedures important for positive student behavior?

5) Why is consistency important in a classroom?

6) Why is listening to students important in building relationships and classroom management?

7) What do building relationships look like in your classroom?

8) What does classroom management look like in your classroom?

9) What impact does caring make on student behavior and the classroom?

10) How are students experiencing success contagious?

Appendix C

Teacher Participation/Survey Link E-mail

Teachers,

I have attached a link below for a questionnaire in regards to "relationship-building classroom management and its impact on student behavior". Your input will be greatly appreciated to help guide my research for my dissertation. The deadline for completion of this survey is this Friday, April 20th. Thank you all again for your input and participation!

https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/youngdissertation

Relationship-Building Classroom Management and its

Impact on Student Behavior Questionnaire Survey

www.surveymonkey.com

Web survey powered by SurveyMonkey.com. Create your own online survey now with SurveyMonkey's expert certified FREE templates.

Josh Young

Principal

Cascade High School

Wartrace, TN 37183

Appendix D

Individual Interview Participants' E-mail

Thank you all for considering and choosing to be part of the individual interviews and focus group for my research based upon teacher perceptions of a relationship-building classroom management style and its impact on student behavior! Below are fourteen interview questions. Your names will not be used in the research. Thank you again for your participation!

1) Describe effective classroom management.

2) Describe how to impact student behavior positively.

3) What is relationship-building classroom management?

4) Is a teacher's ability to build relationships an important part of classroom management? Explain.

5) How do you establish and foster relationships with students, especially those with challenging behaviors?

6) Is knowing about a student's home life important to classroom management/student behavior? Why or why not?

7) What does it mean to value a student and how does it impact student behavior?

8) How is staying consistent in addressing student behavior important to teacher-student relationships?

9) Is allowing a student to speak and share ideas in class important to affecting student behavior positively? Why or why not?

10) What are ways to build relationships with a diverse population of students?

11) How does helping students experience success impact student behavior?

12) How does student behavior impact a classroom?

13) How does a lack of teacher/student relationships impact a classroom?

14) Give an example of how relationship building impacted a student's behavior.

**Josh Young
Principal
Cascade High School
Wartrace, TN 37183**

Appendix E

Focus Group Participants' E-mail

Good afternoon,

I hope your summer is going great! I am working on the final part of my dissertation research and as the four of you have participated in the individual interviews/focus group, I have ten final questions if you all would be willing to answer. I broke down the data from the initial survey and utilized terminology that was consistently used to dive deeper into the questions asked before. If you all are willing to answer these final set of questions as soon as you are able, I would greatly appreciate it! When you do answer them, please reply all (that will include the five of us). Once you send your answers and if you see something that one of the others wrote that may change one of your answers or you would like to elaborate, please feel free to respond/reply. Again, I do greatly appreciate the four of you taking time out to help me with this research!! Questions are below:

1)   Define student behavior.

2)   How does allowing students to share ideas and speak in class build students' confidence?

3)   How do utilizing students' interests help build relationships and impact classroom management?

4)   Why are clear expectations and procedures important for positive student behavior?

5)   Why is consistency important in a classroom?

6)   Why is listening to students important in building relationships and classroom management?

7)   What do building relationships look like in your classroom?

8)   What does classroom management look like in your classroom?

9)   What impact does caring make on student behavior and the classroom?

10) How are students experiencing success contagious?

Josh Young
Principal
Cascade High School
Wartrace, TN 37183

Appendix F

IRB Approval

From: IRB <irb@cn.edu>

Date: April 11, 2018 at 3:16:15 PM CDT

To: Mark Gonzales <mgonzales@cn.edu>

Subject: RE: IRB for Joshua Young

This request has been approved

In His service,

Gregory A. Casalenuovo, PhD, APRN, FNP-BC, FNP-C

Professor of Nursing

Carson-Newman University

C-N Box 71883

Jefferson City, TN 37760

Office: Heritage Hall #11

Phones: (865) 471-3236, office; (865) 471-4574, fax

"Our prayers may be awkward. Our attempts may be feeble. But since the power of prayer is in the One who hears it and not in the one who says it, our prayers do make a difference." –

Max Lucado

From: Mark Gonzales

Sent: Wednesday, April 11, 2018 11:09 AM

To: IRB <irb@cn.edu>

Cc: Joshua E Young <jeyoung2@cn.edu>

Subject: IRB for Joshua Young

Dear IRB Committee,

Attached is an application and permission letter for Joshua Young's dissertation for consideration for approval.

Mark Gonzales, Ed.D.

Assistant Professor of Education

Carson-Newman University

Appendix G

School Research Permission Letter

Cascade High School

Carson Newman University Institutional Review Board
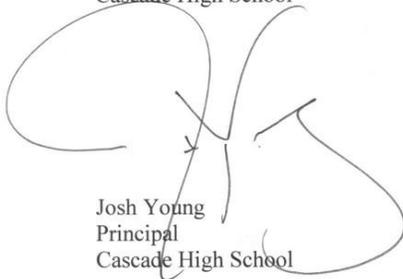1646 Russell Avenue
Jefferson City, TN 37760

April 3, 2018

Dear Carson Newman IRB:

On behalf of Cascade High School, I am writing to grant permission for Joshua Young, a graduate student at Carson Newman, to conduct his/her research titled, Teacher Perceptions of a Relationship-Building Classroom Management Style and its Impact on Student Behavior. I understand that Joshua Young will be looking at data (explanation of data collected – survey data, pre/post test, observations, interviews, etc) for # grade students at Cascade High School and determining the results of the intervention. The data used is a part of the regular education program and the participants will remain anonymous. We are happy to participate in this study and contribute to this important research.

Sincerely,

Tracy Watson
Assistant Principal
Cascade High School

Josh Young
Principal
Cascade High School