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General Education Teachers' Self-Reported Response to Overt Student Problem Behavior in the Classroom

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ABSTRACT

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The need for teachers to respond effectively to student problem behaviors is vital for positive student outcomes. This study examined how general education teachers respond to different problem behaviors, what variables possibly predict those responses, and if dealing with problem behaviors plays a possible role in teacher attrition. Results were reported using descriptive and statistical analyses. Three-hundred sixty-three elementary and secondary teachers in five school districts were invited to participate in a survey. Findings indicate that teachers primarily use individually directed responses to problem behaviors and the responses had little differentiation according to intensity of behavior. The data revealed some statistically significant relationships between type of response with teacher gender and elementary and secondary teachers. A regression model identified four variables that predicted teacher intention of leaving the profession. Conclusions indicate that even though most teachers reported being satisfied with their job, there was still a substantial percentage that reported that they consider leaving the job, and problem behaviors influenced that intention. Further research is needed to make any generalizations.

Keywords: general education, problem behaviors, teacher attrition, classroom management

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Managing student problem behaviors in the classroom is a serious challenge for teachers (Culkin, 2016; Westling, 2010). Ingersoll (2001) and Provasnik and Dorfman (2005) have established that ineffective classroom management practices produce stress, which leads to job dissatisfaction, and ultimately teacher attrition. Evidence of this high attrition trend has been demonstrated over the last several decades (Ingersoll, 2001), and plays out globally and nationally. Teacher attrition rates in Utah are following these trends (Cross, 2016), suggesting there is a degree of job dissatisfaction amongst teachers.

Marzano (2003) and Hattie (2012) assert that the teacher is the most influential factor in student achievement. Research indicates a correlation between effective classroom management and positive student outcomes (Aloe, Amo, & Shanahan., 2014; Carr, 2012). We also know that teachers who skillfully manage challenging behaviors experience less stress due to problem behaviors (Aloe et al., 2014; Carr, 2012). Both underscore the necessity that teachers must attain and continually improve their classroom management skills. Additionally, school leaders should be aware of the impact that behavior management skills play in the quality of student success as well as teacher job satisfaction. A clear response is to assure that teachers are knowledgeable about and feel confident implementing a variety of effective practices that positively respond to and reduce the frequency of problem behaviors that students commonly exhibit in the classroom. Moreover, to respond effectively with targeted professional learning, school leaders need to know what practices teachers use most often, how/if they vary according to severity of problem behaviors, what teacher variables might affect the practices used, and if those practices are

effective. Hence, understanding how teachers manage student problem behaviors is a first step in evaluating if student problem behaviors are a variable in the likelihood of teacher attrition.

Statement of the Problem

Managing student problem behavior is challenging for teachers and contributes to teacher stress and job dissatisfaction, both of which are factors in teacher attrition (Harmsen, Helms-Lorenz, Maulana, & van Veen, 2018). Despite this, it is unclear what practices general education teachers use to address problem behavior. It is also unclear if the practices that teachers most often use produce any pattern that might predict a teacher's intention to leave the profession. This information could serve as a foundation to explore how teacher practices affect the likelihood of teachers leaving the profession.

Statement of Purpose

To address this issue, we conducted an exploratory survey study whose purpose was to evaluate what practices teachers use to address problem behavior and how/if those practices relate to the intentions of teachers leaving the profession. We collected data and used descriptive and statistical analyses to explore what practices teachers use to manage student problem behaviors, based on a self-report measure. This study contributes to the literature regarding the role that problem behaviors may have in the attrition trends that teachers experience in Utah. The findings from this study offer a unique addition to the literature about practices teachers use to respond to common problem behaviors. Insight into the relationships might offer critical knowledge for designing pre-service program development and professional development for teachers in Utah.

Research Questions

This study addressed the following questions:

1. What are teachers' self-reported practices when confronted with student problem-behavior in the classroom?
2. Do teachers report different responses to different types of problem behavior?
3. What variables predict self-reported patterns of responding to problem behavior?
4. Are managing classroom problem behaviors a factor that teachers consider for leaving the profession?

CHAPTER 2

Review of Literature

Student Problem Behavior is an Increasing Challenge in Schools

Student problem behaviors in the classroom have been a topic of research for decades and managing them continues to be one of the top challenges for teachers regardless of the career stage they are in (Culkin, 2016). Some of the problem behaviors exhibited in schools on a daily and/or weekly basis include bullying, cyber bulling, sexual harassment, student disrespect, physical conflicts amongst students, and verbal abuse of teachers, with the most concerning and frequent problem behaviors being externalized, low-intensity behaviors, including disruptive and distractible behaviors such as off-task, talk outs, being out of seat, and widespread disorder in the classroom (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2018; Provasnik et al., 2007). Westling (2010) found common challenging behaviors teachers reported were defiance, non-compliance, and socially inappropriate behaviors. Additionally, violence and aggression directed toward teachers by students has become more common, often when teachers are attempting to discipline students for problem behaviors that are both low-intensity as well as aggressive in nature (Mcmahon et al., 2014). School safety is at the forefront of issues that school administrators must consider as they develop response procedures and policies for a variety of possible scenarios that can pose a safety risk to students and teachers. Indeed, problem behaviors are common and troubling, and without effective strategies or interventions to respond, even low-intensity problem behaviors can lead to more intense and severe behaviors (Walker, Ramsey, & Gresham, 2004). Evidence shows that students with chronic behavior problems are more likely to drop out and develop antisocial patterns of behavior (Walker et al., 2004). Furthermore, research has established that there is a positive association between student

problem behavior and poor academic performance (Algozzine, Wang, & Violette, 2011). Students who exhibit problem behaviors are often difficult to teach and represent a demographic of students who are at a higher risk to school failure (Kauffman, 2001).

Although dealing with problem behaviors has always been something that teachers have had to manage, the frequency and severity of the problem behaviors has become increasingly challenging (Culkin, 2016). The increased inclusion of students with disabilities in the general education setting, including students with emotional and/or behavioral disorders, also presents challenging situations for teachers if they are to successfully deliver effective educational and social experiences for all their students (Carr, 2012). This requires teachers to hold and effectively use a repertoire of strategies not only for academic purposes, but for behavior management as well. This means that *all* teachers need to learn the basic theories of behavior. Still, veteran teachers report that dealing with problem behaviors in the classroom has become increasingly more difficult, stating that misbehaviors students now exhibit are more common than when they first started teaching (Culkin, 2016). One teacher of 24+ years explained "...some behaviors I am seeing now are beyond my teaching education…[they are] time consuming and unnerving" (Culkin, 2016, p. 76).

Problem Behaviors Are a Source of Stress

Within the last 40 years, research indicates that the teaching profession is demanding and stressful, both physically and emotionally (Kyriacou, 2001; Richards, 2012; Sacco, 2011; Travers, 2017). McCarthy and Lambert (2006) assert that teachers in the U.S. experience more stress than former generations of teachers because of the increasing diversity of the students that attend public schools and lack of parent involvement and responsibility. Some sources of stress include workload, time pressure in covering curriculum, lack of administrative support, poor

working conditions, fear of violence, and student discipline problems (Ingersoll, Merrill, & Stuckey, 2014; Kyriacou, 2001; Richards, 2012; Sacco, 2011; Shernoff, Mehta, Atkins, Torf, & Spencer, 2011; Travers, 2017). The impact of teacher stress is far-reaching into several areas of teaching. For example, it negatively impacts both teacher and student performance, and negatively affects teacher-student relationships (Shernoff et al., 2011). Teachers who feel stressed are more likely to criticize students, lose their temper, or resort to punitive discipline practices (Yoon, 2002). Teachers who deliver harsh reprimands report higher rates of emotional exhaustion (Reinke, Herman, & Stormont, 2013). Moreover, the effects of stress may be detrimental to the teacher's physical health, emotional well-being, and work performance (Shernoff et al., 2011).

Having to consistently manage problem behaviors is a significant source of stress on teachers (Clunies-Ross, Little, & Kienhuis, 2008; Shernoff et al., 2011). It disrupts instruction, wastes instructional time (Culkin, 2016; Shernoff et al., 2011), and impedes the learning of both the student who is exhibiting the problematic behavior, as well as other students in the class (Westling, 2010), contributing to the teachers' stress in having to get through the curriculum they are expected to cover. Teachers also report that the lack of administrative support in their efforts to discipline students also causes stress (Culkin, 2016). Unless it is a severe or aggressive behavior, administrators often believe that teachers should be able to manage the common misbehaviors exhibited by students so that effective instruction can occur (Marzano, 2011). In other words, effectively managing classroom routines and behavior is assumed to be part of the teacher's job description, suggesting that teachers should have adequate skills in creating a safe, inviting environment where students are engaged socially and academically.

Teachers report many causes of stress. One cause that consistently surfaces is dealing with aspects of problem behaviors. Indeed, student misbehavior is one of the most stressful challenges teachers have to navigate, and one of the most significant factors that contributes to teachers leaving the profession (Provasnik & Dorfman, 2005). These authors noted the stress of dealing with problem behaviors was the primary reason that 45% of teachers quit their jobs. Ingersoll (2001) noted that student discipline problems and minimal administrator support were among the top reasons for job dissatisfaction and leaving. Additionally, Clunies-Ross and colleagues (2008) and Culkin (2016) found the largest proportion of teachers leaving the profession was due to job dissatisfaction, and a significant variable of that dissatisfaction was consistently dealing with problem behaviors in the classroom.

Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Attrition

Because of the emotional investment required, professions in the human service organizations are susceptible to stress (Dewe, Cox, & Leiter, 2000). Teaching is amongst this category and is consistently found to be at high-risk for work-related stress (Kyriacou, 2000; Travers, Cooper, & Cary, 1996). Teacher stress has been examined for decades because its implications impact many areas of the teaching profession. Studies consistently agree that when asked to rate stress level on a Likert-type scale, 25% - 80% of teachers self-report that their job is in the "very" or "extremely" stressful range (Kyriacou, 2000). Several sources of stress have been identified in the literature, as already mentioned (i.e., workload, time pressure, student problem behaviors, lack of administrator support, poor working conditions). These sources of stress rarely stand alone, and teachers are required to juggle all of these potential stressors at a time, while also under the expectation to deliver effective instruction and command student engagement.

It is important for education leaders to understand the various aspects of teacher stress and how that stress affects job satisfaction because job satisfaction is a crucial variable in retaining teachers (Ingersoll, 2001; Travers, 2017). The physical and emotional toll of stressful factors negatively impact teacher job satisfaction and performance, and can ultimately lead to teacher attrition (Ingersoll, 2001; Travers, 2017). In fact, there is a body of evidence that indicates a correlation between teacher stress, job satisfaction, and attrition (Ingersoll, 2001; Shernoff et al., 2011; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Harmsen and colleagues (2018) found a significant correlation between teachers who experience occupational stress, discontent (i.e., job dissatisfaction), and attrition. Ingersoll et al. (2014) found that 45% of first year teachers who left teaching cited job dissatisfaction as their reason for leaving. The Teacher Attrition and Mobility Report from the 2012-13 school year noted that half (51%) of teachers who left teaching reported that in their new occupation, the manageability of their workload and general work conditions that they were currently working in were better than when teaching (Goldring, Taie, & Riddles, 2014). These findings are clear; they suggest that teachers experience high rates of stress, which contributes to significant dissatisfaction with their working conditions, and often result in teachers leaving the profession. The correlations between these three factors of stress, job dissatisfaction, and attrition are the impetus of this study and are illustrated in a conceptual model (See Figure 1).

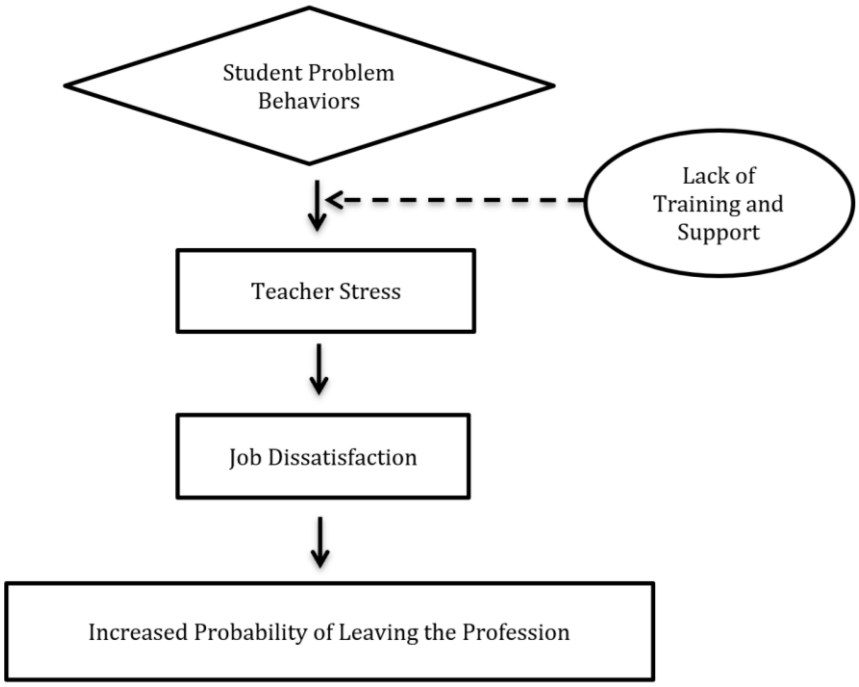

Figure 1. Conceptual model.

Teacher Attrition

Teacher attrition refers to qualified teachers leaving the profession for reasons other than reaching the age of retirement (Kelchtermans, 2017). Teacher attrition trends have been examined globally in developed and underdeveloped countries alike (Barnes & Crowe, 2007; Chan, 2002; Pisanti, Gagliardi, Razzino, & Bertini, 2003; Tsouloupas, Carson, Matthews, Grawitch, & Barber, 2010; Wilson, Mutero, Doolabh, & Herzstein, 1990). These studies conclude that teachers have a high risk of job-related stress and burnout, which leads to job dissatisfaction and higher rates of turnover and attrition, especially amongst new teachers (Aloe et al., 2014; Harmsen et al., 2018; Ingersoll, 2001).

In the United States, teachers comprise one of the largest working forces, and this workforce has steadily become less stable (Ingersoll et al., 2014). The United States has been grappling with the problem of teacher shortage for the last several decades. Using the most comprehensive source of teacher data available gathered by the National Center for Education

Statistics (NCES) over a 25-year period (1987-2012), Ingersoll et al. (2014) established some occurring trends in the teaching workforce of the United States. Their findings reveal that from 1988 to 2009, the teacher workforce attrition rate rose from 6.4% to 9%. Studies estimate that anywhere from 40-50% of new teachers left within their first five years of teaching (Darling-Hammond, 2010; Ingersoll et al., 2014).

Organizational analysts recognize that some employee turnover and attrition is normal, and even beneficial to the productivity and efficiency of a well-managed organization (Ingersoll, 2001). However, the attrition trends in the education organization are worrisome because it produces a demand for teachers. As Ingersoll (2001) noted, the problem is not that there is a shortage of teachers, but the demand for teachers is high due to the large numbers of teachers leaving the field. In other words, there are plenty of professionally qualified teachers, but too many of them are choosing not to work in the field despite their qualification to do so, creating a demand for qualified teachers. He asserts that recruiting more teachers is not going to solve any problems unless the problem of retaining teachers is addressed as well. Nevertheless, nationwide, the number of people who enrolled in education degree paths has been consistently dropping. Numbers from the Learning Policy Institute, a nonprofit organization, reveal that from 2009-2014, enrollment in teacher education dropped 35%. Furthermore, 8% of the teacher workforce leaves yearly, with the majority of these leaving before retirement age.

States' desperate attempts to fill teacher vacancies have resulted in programs and incentives to attract and recruit people interested in teaching. Programs offering loan forgiveness or deferment attempt to attract people to the career (Cross, 2016). In addition, most states offer non-traditional, alternative routes to licensure (ARL) that allow recruits who already have a bachelor's degree in another field, to earn a teaching license in a shorter amount of time while

simultaneously working as a classroom teacher and taking coursework to meet state requirements. These candidates have little, if any classroom experience, and could be deemed unqualified teachers as compared to those seeking licensure on traditional tracks. While these incentives are made with good intentions for both the district and the individual, some argue this option is simply a "quick fix" and in the long run, may exacerbate the problem. ARL candidates enter the teaching workforce with very little, or no vital knowledge in efficient pedagogy models or behavior management techniques (Ingersoll, Merrill, & May, 2012), already weak in pre-service general education programs (Aloe et al., 2014). In fact, lack of adequate training may negatively affect teacher retention (Ingersoll et al., 2012). Attrition rates of teachers in an ARL were found to be higher than teachers who had taken a traditional, comprehensive education program to licensure. Analyzing attrition rates amongst first year math and science teachers, Ingersoll et al. (2012) found that the percentage of teachers who left after one year of teaching was more than twice as likely for teachers who had not gotten a comprehensive package of training; 24.6% compared to 9.8%.

Cost of Attrition

Teacher attrition comes at a high cost both socially and financially. The attrition trends have negative implications on students, teachers, and school communities. The quality of education students receive is strongly dependent on the quality of teachers, and when teachers, leave at such high rates, it impacts the quality of student achievement (Ingersoll, 2001). For example, if a student gets a series of new teachers several years in a row, that student will not have benefitted from the expertise of a highly qualified, experienced teacher, and may not receive the level of academic achievement that students who have been taught by an experienced teacher have. Furthermore, teacher retention is essential to producing a pool of highly qualified,

experienced teachers, not only in content knowledge, but also in effective classroom management methods that produce better student achievement outcomes (Ingersoll et al., 2012). In addition, most schools put a lot of effort into building a strong sense of community, but the need to train new teachers yearly significantly disrupts instructional programs and the continuity of a school's culture (Synar & Maiden, 2012). Finally, experienced teachers are also needed to mentor new teachers. Evidence indicates that new teachers who receive effective mentoring from an experienced teacher have lower rates of leaving (Gray & Taie, 2015).

Financially, the amount of money that must be allocated into recruiting, hiring, and training new teachers is alarming, and annual estimates for this process range up into the billions of dollars (Synar & Maiden, 2012). Synar and Maiden (2102) explained that the monetary costs incurred for replacing teachers can be calculated more easily by a mathematical formula, but the costs that negatively impact students is incalculable. If teachers are to realize their purpose of educating and preparing youth to be productive citizens in their communities, staffing classrooms with highly qualified and experienced teachers is a top priority for school and district leaders (Synar & Maiden, 2012). Hence, it is in the best interest of schools to examine the variables that affect teacher attrition. One of these variables is stress from dealing with problem behaviors (Provasnik & Dorfman, 2005).

Attrition in Utah

Utah is no exception to the aforementioned trends in teacher attrition. Envision Utah reported that the number of certified teachers entering the workforce in Utah is declining (Envision Utah, 2018). Additionally, the Utah Education Policy Center at the University of Utah, found that 11% of Utah teachers quit within their first three years of teaching, compared to 7% nationally. In the Teacher Shortage Areas of Nationwide Listing published by the U.S.

Department of Education, Utah, like most states in the nation, has reported a shortage of teachers every year since they began tracking these statistics in the 1990-1991 school year through the 2017-2018 school year (Cross, 2016). To better understand how teacher shortages were impacting schools and districts by state, the Learning Policy Institute (2018) distributed a survey developed by the Utah School Superintendents Association to Utah school districts in September 2015 to determine the impact of hiring ARLs due to qualified teacher shortage. This report indicated that for the 2015-16 school year all but one of the districts responded that the pool of qualified teachers was "dramatically" and "substantially" shrinking and on a path of a "crisis"; with many of them expressing concern on the ability to deliver a quality education to students. Some districts noted the concern with those under qualified as not having an adequate grasp on instructional strategies and struggling with classroom management.

Also in line with national trends, teachers in Utah are stressed. The Utah Education Policy Center in conjunction with the Utah State Board of Education developed the Educator Career and Pathway Survey for Teachers to explore the factors that influence Utah teachers who stayed in the profession, and what the reasons were for those who left. In October 2017, the 187 teachers who responded were asked to rank the personal factors that were most influential in leading to their decision to leave. Sixty-two percent reported that emotional exhaustion/stress/burnout was "very" to "extremely" influential in their decision to leave. From the perspective of teachers who chose to stay in the profession from the 2016-17 year to the 2017-18 year, of the 1,686 Utah teachers who responded to the survey, just over 70% of teachers who stayed reported that student discipline and behavior was "somewhat" to "extremely" influential in the satisfaction of their job, with 37% of them saying that it was "very" to "extremely" influential. In short, student behavior is a factor that influences teacher job

satisfaction in Utah. Only 14% rated retirement as "very" to "extremely" influential in leaving (Ni & Rorrer, 2018). All of these findings align with the report Ingersoll (2001) found that indicate how important working conditions play in job satisfaction (or dissatisfaction), and that retirement accounts for a small percentage of teacher attrition.

Need for Effective Classroom Management

Effective classroom management practices promote greater student achievement and less teacher stress (Aloe et al., 2014; Carr, 2012). Teachers who establish positive, well-monitored systems of expectations, procedures, and routines respond better to problem behaviors, thus allowing them to better maintain a positive learning environment in their classrooms that is conducive to learning and motivation (Brophy, 1988). Brophy (1988) asserted that it is critical that teachers have strong classroom management skills to be effective teachers. Hence, it is vital that teachers have the training and confidence to effectively respond to student problem behaviors that arise in their classrooms (Baker, 2005; Jennings & Greenberg, 2009).

The need for teachers who feel confident in reinforcing a strong classroom management system cannot be overstated, yet research finds that teachers do not feel adequately prepared to manage the classroom effectively (Butler, 2015; Tillery, Varjas, Meyers, & Collins, 2010). New teachers entering the field report that managing problem behaviors is a strong predictor of discontent and significantly lowered the efficiency of their class management (Harmsen et al., 2018). They are not adequately prepared to manage the behaviors of a classroom efficiently and do not know effective ways to address problem behaviors (Ellis, 2018). Teachers who do not establish good classroom management techniques may resort to ineffective practices and are at risk for higher rates of quitting (Butler, 2015), and we previously established that ineffective practices lead to stress, job dissatisfaction, and attrition. Evidence indicates that seasoned

teachers are more effective at managing problem behaviors in the classroom (Tsouloupas, Carson, & MacGregor, 2014), but veteran teachers say that the problem behaviors are getting more difficult to manage and are a reason that has made them consider leaving the profession (Culkin, 2016). It is clear that teachers need to have a variety of tools and strategies they feel confident using and that are effective in managing the diverse problem behaviors that are often exhibited in the classroom.

Extensive research demonstrates the necessity of schools and teachers to be able to manage problem behaviors in order to enhance student achievement (Brophy, 1988). Research has produced models of evidence-based practices (EBP), such as Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports (PBIS), that have shown to be effective in systematically dealing with student problem behaviors (Freeman et al., 2016). When implemented correctly with all its components, it proves to be effective in reducing problem behaviors. Implementing positive classroom and behavior expectations provides better academic outcomes for students (Molloy, Moore, Trail, Van Epps, & Hopfer, 2013). Schools benefit in making it a priority to establish, teach, and reinforce behavior expectations through systematic reward and violation consequences linked to the expectations (Molloy et al., 2013). To do this, expectations must be established and reinforced down to the smaller unit of the individual classroom and individual teacher (Kelm & McIntosh, 2012), suggesting teachers need to establish a continuum of strategies and techniques to respond to the various problem behaviors that regularly arise in the classroom (Reinke et al., 2013). These practices are readily available to schools and teachers. Whether they learn about them in their pre-service training or in professional development programs, teachers should be aware that there *are* effective practices and know how to use them so they do not resort to ineffective practices. Despite the literature that has established teacher practices that effectively

prevent problem behaviors, a greater proportion of teachers entering the workforce have not been sufficiently taught or trained on using them effectively (Carr, 2012; Kelchtermans, 2017), and teachers consistently report that they do not feel that they have been adequately prepared to manage the problem behaviors that are commonly exhibited in the classroom (Ellis, 2018).

Addressing the importance of supporting teachers in implementing behaviorally safe environments using EBPs, the Utah State Board of Education (formerly the Utah State Office of Education) has developed the Least Restrictive Behavior Intervention Technical Assistance Manual (LRBI; Utah State Office of Education, 2015). This collaborative work emphasizes practices and interventions teachers can use to establish and implement effective behavior management practices that provide safe and engaging classroom environments for positive student outcomes behaviorally, socially, and academically. This comprehensive guide is readily available to Utah school districts and teachers.

Summary

Marzano (2003) and Hattie (2012) assert that the teacher is the most influential factor in student achievement. Student achievement is largely dependent on how well teachers are able to manage their classrooms, yet student problem behaviors are a consistent and increasing challenge for teachers, and a significant variable to teacher stress. Teacher attrition is also a major concern within the teaching workforce. Evidence has established that teacher stress leads to job dissatisfaction. Job dissatisfaction, in turn, is positively related to teacher attrition. Attrition trends amongst teachers presents a dilemma on how schools are expected to deliver a quality education to its students. To fulfill their mission, school and district leaders need to better understand and address the variables that drive qualified teachers to leave the profession. To lower teacher attrition and improve staffing problems, there must be an improvement of work

conditions, including reduced student discipline problems (Ingersoll, 2001; Synar & Maiden, 2012). Despite the evidence that shows how fundamental classroom management is for positive student outcomes, teachers feel inadequately prepared (Tillery et al., 2010). The aim of this study is to focus on how teachers in Utah's education systems respond to student problem behaviors, based on a self-report measure, and determine if there are any patterns of response that might predict consideration of teacher attrition.

CHAPTER 3

Method

The purpose of this study was to explore how general education teachers manage a spectrum of common problem behaviors students exhibit in the classroom, according to teacher self-report. In this chapter we discuss the participants, setting, and measure we used to gather our data. Lastly, we explain how we analyzed the data.

Participants

To participate in this study, participants needed to be the teacher of record in a general education classroom, working in one of the Brigham Young University - Public School Partnership districts or a charter school in the same geographic area. Special education teachers, paraprofessionals, related service providers (e.g., school psychologists, school counselors, speech pathologists) and support staff (e.g., secretaries, custodians) were excluded from this study. The pool from which participants were drawn consisted of approximately 8,720 classroom teachers across five districts plus charter schools (personal communication, May 12-20, 2018).

We received responses from 471 teachers when the survey closed. From this total, we eliminated 71 special education teachers and 37 teachers who started the survey but did not complete more than 50% before it closed. Thus, the final sample consisted of 363 respondents, of whom 12 (3.3%) completed between 54% - 89% of the survey, and 351 who completed 100% of the survey.

Demographic data are presented in Table 1. The majority of the participants in this study were White (93.7%, $n = 340$), female teachers (78.8%, $n = 286$), working in public schools (97.5%, $n = 354$). Most represented were teachers who have been teaching between 4-9 years (31.1%, $n = 113$) and the highest level of education from the sample had a master's degree

(38.6%, *n* = 140). The majority of the sample was traditionally licensed (91.5%, *n* = 332). Teachers from Jordan School District represented almost half of the sample (48.8%, *n* = 177). The sample of elementary (grades K-6) and secondary (grades 7-12) teachers was almost equally represented, with 52% (*n* = 188) and 47% (*n* = 172) respectively.

Table 1

Participant Teacher Demographics

Demographic	Number	%
Gender		
Female	286	78.8
Male	77	21.2
Age		
20-30	108	29.8
31-40	90	24.8
41-50	83	22.9
51-60	62	17.1
60+	20	5.5
Ethnicity		
African American	1	0.3
Asian	5	1.4
Hispanic	10	2.8
Native American	1	0.3
Pacific Islander	0	0
White	340	93.7
Other (Mix)	6	1.7
Years Teaching		
3 or less	70	19.3
4 -9	113	31.1
10 -15	88	24.2
16-20	39	10.7
21-25	24	6.6
25+	29	8
Highest Level of Ed.		
Bachelor's	112	30.9
Post Baccalaureate	100	27.5
Master's	140	38.6
Doctorate	6	1.7
Other	5	1.4

ARL		
Yes	31	8.5
No	332	91.5
Type of School		
Public	354	97.5
Private	0	0
Charter	8	2.2
Other	1	0.3
District		
1	88	24.2
2	177	48.8
3	49	13.5
4	31	8.5
5	10	2.8
Other	8	2.2
Grade/s Taught		
Elementary	188	52
Secondary	172	47
Multiple	3	0.01

Note. n = 363. Ed. = Education. ARL = Alternate Route to Licensure.

Setting

The Brigham Young University - Public School Partnership is a joint effort between three groups. These groups are the McKay School of Education, the arts and science colleges and departments at BYU who play a role in preparing secondary pre-service teachers, and five Utah public school districts: Alpine, Jordan, Nebo, Provo, and Wasatch, hereafter named District 1, District 2, District 3, District 4, and District 5, respectively. The fundamental aim of the partnership is to improve public education through collaboration of institutions that prepare pre-service teachers and public school districts. The mutual interests within the partnership made it a prime setting to solicit participants to take the survey. A brief description of the demographic characteristics of each district is included in Table 2. In addition, 36 charter schools that are within the geographic boundaries of the BYU - Public School Partnership were invited to participate in the survey.

Table 2

Number of Teachers and Schools Per District

District	Elementary	Middle	High	Special	FTLT
1	57	12	9	11	3,660
2	34	10	8	3	2,400
3	28	7	5	6	1,350
4	13	2	3	4	840
5	5	2	2	0	370

Note: FTLT = full time licensed teachers

Measure

Using the LRBI manual, the first author developed an initial list of common problem behaviors. The first and second authors then reviewed the list and compared it to their own professional experience to evaluate how well it represented their experience. The list was shown to eight teachers who provided input on the adequacy of the list. Once the list was fully developed, the first author consulted a document developed by the Los Angeles Unified School District to create operational definitions of the problem behaviors (Los Angeles Unified School District, n.d.).

To improve the quality, flow, and utility of the survey, the survey was pilot tested with 14 teachers, both elementary and secondary, who meet the criteria of target participants who provided feedback concerning the clarity of each question, length of time it took to complete, and other general feedback. From pilot participants' comments and suggestions, revisions were made in wording and response options, order of presentation, and unnecessary questions were removed to decrease the length of the survey. Of the 14 teachers that piloted the survey, the average time to complete the survey was 10 minutes.

The final survey (see Appendix B) included operational definitions of five problem behaviors that are commonly exhibited in classrooms, and presented them in a hierarchy of least

to most severe. These five problem behaviors were off-task, disruptive, non-compliant, verbally aggressive, and physically aggressive. The first three problem behaviors, off-task, disruptive, and non-compliant, are prevalent problem behaviors that are reported to occur frequently across many classrooms (Westling, 2010). Verbally aggressive and physically aggressive behaviors were included because they have also been reported in previous literature as being problematic and of concern to teachers (NCES, 2018; Provasnik et al., 2007).

The survey was 32 questions long with a variety of question types, including open-ended, multiple choice, and sliding scale. The survey was divided into four sections. The first section asked respondents to report demographic information, including gender, age, ethnicity, how many years teaching, highest level of education, if they have taken an ARL, what type of school do they teach, what district they teach in, and what grades they teach. Section one concluded with two opinion questions, the first regarding job satisfaction and the second concerning the most challenging behavior the teachers confront in their classrooms. With exception of the last opinion question, all questions in this section were multiple choice or sliding scale.

Section two included fifteen questions and addressed the five problem behaviors we identified (off-task, disruptive, non-compliant, verbally aggressive, and physically aggressive). Each definition was followed by a sliding scale from one to four and one question stem, "When a student is (defined problem behavior), which behavior management practices do you most often use? Mark two responses", with each of the defined behaviors inserted in the stem. For the sliding scale question, teachers were asked to indicate how serious the problem behavior is by selecting an option on a scale of 1 to 4, with 1 being "Not serious at all" to 4 being "Very Serious." We intentionally left out a "middle" answer so as to deter a neutral response. Teachers were then asked to indicate what practices they use to address each problem behavior

by selecting their two most common practices from a menu of nine possible responses, including an "other" option and a write-in box. The nine provided responses teachers could select from were (a) verbal reprimand, (b) remind class of expectations, (c) remind individual of expectations, (d) remove tokens/privileges, (e) ignore behavior, (f) office disciplinary referral, (g) contact parent or guardian, (h) level system, and (i) reinforce others for appropriate behavior. These responses were collected from a variety of common practices taught within universities and school districts and from the first author's own personal training and experience. For each of the behaviors, respondents were asked to select *two* of nine provided practices that best described how they respond to the defined problem behavior; thus, the results are the two most often used practices that teachers reported they use. A write-in textbox was also provided if none of the options accurately represented their self-reported practice.

The third section had nine questions and asked teachers to report their perspectives on behavior management and the training they have received for managing classroom behaviors. It also asked if their school was implementing PBIS, and if they perceive problem behaviors as a concern within their school. Teachers were also asked how confident they felt with their behavior management skills, how well they were trained to manage problem behaviors in their pre-service experience, where they have received the most behavior management training, how well they felt they have been trained on the job, where they go for help when they need support for behavior management, and their perception on how well administrators support them in managing problem behaviors.

The fourth and final section included two questions. The first asked if the participant would like to receive training on behavior management. If the answer was yes, the participants were asked to specify the topics on which they would like more training.

Procedure

Once the BYU Institutional Review Board approved the study, separate applications to each of the district's research coordinators were submitted via email for approval and acceptance to distribute the survey to principals in their district. Within 4 weeks, each of the districts responded with the approval to proceed with the study, allowing us to contact their school's principals. Each district coordinator clearly articulated that although their district approved this study, each school administrator had the right to decide whether to invite their teachers to participate or not. Thus, it is unclear how many principals in each district distributed the survey, as the contact by the author only went as deep as the school principal and respondents were never asked to indicate in which school they worked. A request for participation was sent to all school principals in each of the districts, except for District 1. District 1 allowed us to send the request to 21 elementary schools, four middle schools, and three high schools. Additionally, 36 charter schools within the BYU – Public School Partnership geographical area were invited with the same email invitation.

Via email, a copy of the informed consent letter (Appendix A) was sent along with the letter from the corresponding district, stating that their district had approved this research and principals were allowed to choose whether they wanted to invite their teachers to participate. It was reiterated that their participation was completely voluntary. An anonymous link generated by Qualtrics was sent to each principal, requesting their participation by disseminating it to their teachers. To take the survey, participants were able to access the link on a computer or a mobile device. Participants were assured that we would not ask for or collect information that could be used to identify them personally. No monetary compensation was given to the participants. The survey began with a brief statement encouraging their candid responses and explained the

potential for their voice to provide valuable information for enhancing pre-service programs and professional development topics within their district. In addition, we provided the district administrators the final results and analysis of the survey for their respective districts.

Data were collected via online survey using Qualtrics software (Qualtrics, Provo, UT). We began to distribute the survey on April 15, 2019, and closed it on May 31, 2019. However, due to the timing of each district approval, the survey invitation was not distributed to all districts on the same date. It was impossible to calculate a response rate because we could not track the number of teachers who received the email inviting them to participate in the study. Lastly, participants were not selected randomly, as they self-selected into the study.

Data Analysis

Data collected from the survey were analyzed using both descriptive and nonparametric inferential statistics. Once we summarized the descriptive statistics, we were able to disaggregate the data to look for patterns using a chi-square test of independence and a multiple regression model.

Descriptive analyses. Descriptive statistics (i.e., percentages) were used to summarize the demographic information about the participant sample (e.g., gender, age, ethnicity, number of years teaching, level of education, ARL, type of school, district, and grades taught). For the demographic description, we took the number of responses for each of the questions and divided it by the total number of responses (counts/categories) to give us a percentage, which in the case of the demographic questions, was 363. All 363 participants answered each of the demographic questions.

For the survey questions that addressed our second research question, how teachers respond to the different problem behaviors, we used the same procedure, taking the total number

for each response, and dividing it by the total number of responses that were completed. For these questions, participants marked two of the available responses to indicate their first and second most likely response to the problem behavior. Thus, the total was twice the number of the participants, or 726. However, in the tables that display this information, there are a few participants that did not complete the entire survey, and they were counted as a "no response." These "no response"s were not counted in the total number, thus explaining why the number of participant responses is not exactly the same for each of the five problem behaviors questions. Even so, the percentages were calculated by dividing the self-reported practices by the total number of responses. Finally, to answer our fourth research question we calculated percentages across response categories.

Statistical analyses. To determine if any relationships or predictors emerged from our data, we used chi-square and multiple regression models.

Chi-square. To address question three, we evaluated correlations between demographic variables and response patterns, using chi-square (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011) in SPSS (version 25). The demographic variables we evaluated against each of the five problem behaviors were gender (male, female), age (five response options ranging from 20-60+), number of years teaching (six response options ranging from less than three to 25+), highest level of education (five responses included Bachelor's, Post Baccalaureate, Master's, Doctorate, Other), ARL (yes or no), district (five options), and elementary/secondary (three options, including "other"). If the p-value was $p < .05$, then the variables were considered statistically significant.

Multiple regression. For the fourth question, we used multiple regression analyses using SAS (Version 9.4) to determine the extent to which responses to certain questions predict the likelihood of leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement. These questions included

(a) problem behavior is a serious concern, (b) on-the-job training, (c) years teaching, (d) and confidence in behavior management. In addition, we tested the statistical assumptions of multiple regression to check for linearity, independence of observations, normal distributions of residuals, homoscedasticity, and the absence of multicollinearity. Visual inspection of distributions of residuals as well as residual scatterplots to test these assumptions was conducted. We also checked for multicollinearity using the variance inflation factor (VIF) to ensure that all values for each variable were below 10 (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003). The results show that the VIFs ranged from 1.06 to 1.24, which indicates that all assumptions for multiple regression were met. Finally, we used stepwise regression to determine which variables to include in our model, and alpha was set to .05.

CHAPTER 4

Results

The purpose of this study was to evaluate what practices general education teachers use when responding to certain problem behaviors they encounter in their classrooms, and if problem behavior may affect teacher attrition. The results are presented here, organized by research question.

Research Question 1

Our first research question asked teachers to self-report what practices they most often use when confronted with student problem behaviors in the classroom. Five of the survey questions were used to collect this information, with each question asking teachers to mark the two options that they use most often. The complete set of data relevant to each question, rank-ordered from most frequent to least frequent responses, can be seen in Appendix C. The results of the top two responses for each of the problem behaviors are summarized here in Table 3.

Table 3

Top Two Responses for How Teachers Respond to Problem Behavior

	First Most Endorsed		Second Most Endorsed	
Behavior	Response	%	Response	%
Off-Task	RIOE	32.0	ROFAB	22.5
Disruptive	RIOE	31.2	VR	17.7
Non-Compliant	RIOE	26.2	CPG	15.3
Verbal Aggressive	ODR	24.2	CPG	23.0
Physical Aggressive	ODR	34.4	CPG	31.6

Note. RIOE = remind individual of expectations; ROFAB = reinforce others for appropriate behavior; VR = verbal reprimand; ODR = office disciplinary referral; CPG = contact parent/guardian.

The top two behavior management practices teachers most often reported using for off-task behavior were "remind the individual of expectations" with 32% (n = 232), and "reinforce others for appropriate behavior" with 22.5% (n = 163). Collectively, these two options

comprised over half of the responses (54.5%) for off-task behavior. The two most endorsed responses for disruptive behavior were "remind the individual of expectations" with 31.2% (n = 226). "Verbal reprimand" was the second most selected, with 17.7% (n = 128). Collectively these two practices accounted for 48.9% of the responses. For non-compliant behavior, "Remind the individual of expectations" was the practice with the highest responses with 26.2% (n = 190), followed by "contact parent/guardian" with 15.3% (n = 111). Collectively it was 41.5%. For verbally aggressive behavior results indicated top practice endorsed was an "office disciplinary referral" with 24.2% (n = 173). Close behind was "contact parent/guardian" with 23% (n = 165). Together these two responses accounted for 47.2%. Last, for physically aggressive behavior, the top response was again "office disciplinary referral" with 34.4% (n = 245), followed by "contact parent/guardian" with 31.6% (n = 225), and these two comprising 66% of the responses.

Research Question 2

To address how teachers respond to different types of problem behavior, we examined the data displayed in the tables in Appendix C. The most highly endorsed response for off-task, disruptive, and non-compliant behavior was to remind the student of the expectations. For verbal and physical aggression, teachers reported sending students to the office as the most common response.

For the three behaviors that did not involve some type of aggression (i.e., off-task, disruption, and non-compliance), teachers tended to endorse measures that could be administered in class and did not require outside help. For off-task behavior, 98.2% of responses did not require sending a student out (i.e., office discipline referral) or requesting outside help (i.e., contact parent/guardian). For disruptive behavior the responses were similar at 91.6%.

However, for non-compliant behavior, teachers expressed less willingness to handle the problem in class without outside help (77%).

For behaviors that were characterized as aggression, the two most common responses were sending a student to the office and contacting the parents or guardians. Together these options made up 47.2% of responses for verbal aggression and 66% for physical aggression. This pattern of responding seems to suggest a dichotomy in how teachers view problem behavior. They tend to view non-aggressive behavior as manageable without support and aggressive behavior as requiring additional support.

Across all types of problem behavior, reminding students of the expectations was never ranked lower than third among the 10 response options and garnered an average of 23.2% endorsement. On the whole, this was the most popular response to problem behavior. The next most popular responses were contacting a parent or guardian, giving the student an office discipline referral, and verbal reprimand with an average of 15.72%, 13.54%, and 13.54% endorsement respectively. Ignoring the problem behavior was the least endorsed response with an average of 3.2%.

Research Question 3

The chi-square test identified seven relationships that were statistically significant. One of the tests, District-Off-task behavior, we did not report because almost half (49%) of our participant sample was from District 2 and thus, does not show a fair representation. The remaining six relationships are reported in Table 4. The nature of the chi-square analysis does not account for *why* a relationship exists, simply that there *is* one. However, examining the differences in counts with the expected counts from the model may provide some insight into which teacher practices may be contributing to the relationship. The complete results for the

difference in counts are organized in Appendix D. Here in the narrative, we highlight the differences that were ten or greater with each of the respective chi-square formulas.

Table 4

Chi-square Tests with Significant Relationships

Variables	*n*	*df*	Chi-square	*p*
Gender and Off-task	725	8	19.43	< .01
Gender and Non-compliant	724	9	17.07	< .05
Elementary/Secondary and Off-task	725	16	78.62	< .00
Elementary/Secondary and Disruptive	724	18	75.04	< .00
Elementary/Secondary and Non-compliant	724	18	62.70	< .00
Elementary/Secondary and Verbal Aggressive	716	18	53.34	< .00

The chi-square test indicated there was a significant association for Gender and Off-task, χ^2 (8, n = 725) = 19.43, $p < .05$. Verbal reprimands were used less than expected by females (-10.9) and more than expected by males (10.9). For "Reinforcing others for appropriate behavior," females used it less than expected and males used it more than expected, with exact inverse difference of 15.6.

There was a significant relationship between the two variables of elementary/secondary and off-task, χ^2 (16, n = 725) = 78.62, $p < .05$. Differences in actual count and expected count for "Verbal reprimand," revealed that elementary teachers used it less than expected (-14.9), and secondary teachers used it more (15.8). For "Remind individuals of expectations," elementary

teachers used it less than expected (-16.7), and secondary teachers more (15.6). "Reinforce others for appropriate behavior" had the highest difference, with elementary teachers using it more than expected (34.5), and secondary teachers using it less than expected (-34.1).

The relationship between the two variables of Elementary/Secondary and disruptive was significant, χ^2 (18, n = 724) = 75.04, $p < .05$. Counts revealed that "Verbal reprimand" with elementary teachers was used less than expected (-20.5) and secondary teachers used it more than expected (21.5). For "Remind class of expectations," elementary teachers used it less than expected (-10.3) and secondary teachers used it more than expected (10.8). For "Remove tokens/privileges," elementary teachers used it more than expected (16.5) and secondary teachers less than expected (-15.8). Finally, for "Reinforce others for appropriate behaviors," elementary teachers used it more than expected (21.4) and secondary teachers less (-21.7).

The relation between gender and non-compliant was significant, χ^2 (9, n = 724) = 17.07, $p < .05$. The practice of "Verbal Reprimand" was used more than expected by females, and males used it less than expected, with the exact inverse of 9.7.

Elementary/Secondary and non-compliant showed a significant association, χ^2 (18, n = 724) = 62.70, $p < .05$. The difference in counts for "Verbal reprimand," showed that elementary teachers used it less than expected (-11.7) and secondary teachers more (12.4). For "Remove tokens/privileges" elementary teachers used it more than expected (15.6) and secondary teacher less than expected (-15.1). For "Office disciplinary referral" elementary teachers used it less than expected (-10.6) and secondary more (10). For "Contact parent/guardian" elementary used it less than expected (-10.6). For "Reinforce others for appropriate behavior," elementary teachers used it more than expected (15.1) and secondary teachers less (-14.5).

The relationship between elementary/secondary and verbal aggressive was significant, χ^2 (18, n = 716) = 53.34, $p < .05$. Count patterns reveal that for "Verbal reprimand," elementary teachers used it less than expected (-17.6), and secondary teachers more than expected (18.5). For "Remove tokens/privileges," elementary teachers used it more than expected (13.3) and secondary teachers less (-13). For "Office disciplinary referral" elementary teachers used it less than expected (-9.9) and secondary teachers more (-13). For "Contact parent/guardian," secondary teachers used it less than expected (-10.90).

Research Question 4

A particular goal of this study was to examine the relationship between managing problem behaviors and the likelihood that teachers might leave the profession for reasons other than retirement. To address this question, we conducted a multiple regression analysis to evaluate if there were any variables that predicted leaving the profession for reasons other than retirement. The stepwise regression suggested a four-predictor model explaining the variability in why teachers leave. With the dependent variable being *likely to leave* and the four independent variables of *problem behaviors are a serious concern*, *on-the-job training*, *years teaching*, and *behavior management confidence*, this model was statistically significant (F(4, 324) = 15.305, $p < .000$), with an R^2 of .159. These results are displayed in Table 5. The strongest predictor of leaving the profession was the teachers' report of how much they agree that problem behaviors are a serious concern (β = .291). Participants' predicted *how likely to leave the profession for reasons other than retirement* is equal to 1.801 + .344 (problem behaviors are a serious concern) + -.246 (on-the-job training) + -.158 (number of years teaching) + .215 (behavior management confidence), where problem behaviors are a serious concern in my class was coded as 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *somewhat disagree*, 3 = *agree*, 4 = *strongly agree*;

how well have you been trained on the job was coded as 1 = *not well at all*, 2 = *somewhat well*, 3 = *well,* 4 = *very well*; how many years have you been teaching was coded as 1 = *3 or less*, 2 = *4-9*, 3 = *10-15*, 4 = *16-20*, 5 = *21-25*, 6 = *25+*; and how confident do you feel about your behavior management skills was coded as 1 = *not confident at all*, 2 = *somewhat confident*, 3 = *confident*, 4 = *very confident*. *How likely to leave the profession* increased .344 unstandardized units for each unit of *problem behaviors are serious concern* and .215 unstandardized units for each unit of *confidence in behavior management* skills. The other two independent variables of *how well do you feel you have been trained on-the-job* and *how many years have you been teaching* decreased -.246 and -.158 unstandardized units respectively for each unit *of how likely are you to leave the job for reasons other than retirement.*

Table 5

Regression Coefficients of Predictors of Likely to Leave

	Coefficients			
	Unstandardized (*b)*	Standardized (β)	*SE*	*p*
Problem Behaviors Serious Concern	.344	.291	.062	.000
On-the-job Training	-.246	-.206	.063	.000
Years Teaching	-.158	-.217	.040	.000
Behavior Management Confidence	.215	.163	.075	.004

Note. SE = Standard Error.

To summarize, the stronger the teacher agreed that problem behaviors are a concern, the more likely they were to leave. The better they had been trained on-the-job, the less likely they were to leave. As the number of years teaching increased, the less likely teachers reported to leaving. The last predictor in the model indicated that beta is not as strong as the others, but it suggested that the more confident teachers were in their behavior management skills, the more likely they were to leave.

Descriptive results related to job satisfaction and perception on how concerning problem behaviors are displayed in Appendix E. When asked to what extent teachers agreed that problem behaviors are a serious concern in their class, 26.8% strongly disagreed with the statement, and 38.7% somewhat disagreed. Those who somewhat disagreed was greater than the collective responses of those who agreed and strongly agreed, which combined was 34.4% (Table E1). Regarding job satisfaction, those who were not at all satisfied or somewhat satisfied combined, were 22% of our sample (Table E2). This percentage relatively aligns with the 34.4% teacher perception that problem behaviors are a concern. In other words, the percentage of teachers who were not satisfied with their jobs (Table E2) aligned with two other variables: teacher perception that problem behaviors are a serious concern in their class (Table E1) and the percent that said they were likely or very likely to leave (Table E3).

To evaluate if job satisfaction was related to teacher attrition, over half of the sample (78%) said that they were *satisfied* or *very satisfied* with their job; but even so, 69% reported that they were at least *somewhat likely* to leave for reasons other than retirement, indicating that despite reporting a degree of job satisfaction, there is still close to an equal percentage of teachers that consider leaving before qualifying for retirement (Tables E2 and E3). Furthermore, of the teachers that responded that there was some likelihood of leaving, 40.4% reported that dealing with problem behaviors was a *significant* or *very significant* reason for consideration of leaving. Not all teachers that answered the job satisfaction question answered the "likely to leave" question; but over one quarter did find problem behavior to be distressing enough to consider it a factor in leaving the teaching profession.

Another relationship that emerged was between *problem behaviors are a serious concern in my class* and *how likely to leave for reasons other than retirement*. Teachers who *somewhat*

disagreed, agreed, and *strongly agreed* that problem behaviors are a concern was 73.1%. This related with 69% who reported that they were *somewhat likely, likely,* and *very likely* to leave for reasons other than retirement. Comparing the descriptive data with the results of the regression model, they appear to agree on the variable that teachers' perception of *problem behaviors are a serious concern in my class* may be an indicator of likelihood of leaving for reasons other than retirement.

Contrasting the percentage of teachers who reported that they were *not at all satisfied* with their job (1.9%) and teachers who reported that they *strongly agreed* that *problem behaviors are a serious concern in my class* (6.2%) with those who were *very likely* to leave for reasons other than retirement (14.9%) indicates that there are teachers who are very likely to leave even though they do not think that problem behaviors are serious concern and are at least somewhat satisfied with their job.

Finally, the responses between the question of "how likely to leave" and if "dealing with problem behavior is a significant reason for leaving" aligned with the respective level; that is those who reported that they were very likely of leaving related with problem behaviors being a significant consideration for leaving, and so on (Tables E3 and E4).

CHAPTER 5

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to evaluate how general education teachers respond to problem behaviors, based on self-report, and how problem behavior might contribute to teacher attrition. In the following sections, we discuss findings that either align with or challenge the literature we have reviewed, findings that were unexpected, and findings that can be helpful in better understanding the present practices of teachers within the participating districts. Additionally, we address some of the limitations of this study, implications for practice, and propose future research. For ease of discussion, we categorized our five defined problem behaviors into two categories: low-intensity/high-frequency behaviors (off-task, disruptive, and non-compliant) and high-intensity/low frequency behaviors (verbal and physical aggression).

Self-Reported Responses to Problem Behavior

We predicted that teachers would rely heavily on verbal reprimands to address problem behavior. However, the survey results did not bear this out, as teachers did not endorse *verbal reprimand* as the most popular choice for any of the problem behaviors. Although it was not the most popular response, it was within the top four across all problem behaviors, suggesting it is an approach many teachers rely on. Both *verbal reprimand* and *remind the individual of expectations* were relatively popular options. This may be due to the relatively low response effort; that is they are easy to deliver, well in control of the teacher, and don't require any kind of cost or special training to implement.

Considering how teachers responded within the context of foundational principles of applied behavior analysis may help us understand why teachers struggle to manage problem behavior. Basic behavior principles assert that behaviors occur because they are reinforced. The

reinforcing consequence of a behavior is known as its function (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2020). Two common functions of behavior include attention and escape/avoidance (Cooper et al., 2020). If the function of a behavior is to gain attention, then ignoring the behavior will eliminate the reinforcer and produce a decrease in that behavior. Conversely, attending to a student whose behavior is the function of attention will result in more of that behavior. Given that teachers reported giving attention to problem behaviors in the form of reminders and reprimands, they may unwittingly be reinforcing the very behaviors they are trying to suppress. Reliance on a strategy without understanding the function of a behavior could potentially present a problem in instances where a student is exhibiting a problem behavior for attention or escape. In such cases, these reported practices are counterproductive attempts to minimize a problem behavior, where ignoring an attention maintained behavior could possibly be more effective. To this point, ignoring problem behavior was rarely endorsed for the high-frequency problem behaviors, with no more than 5% of the responses. Teachers are not likely to ignore verbal or physical aggressive behavior against another student or teacher, but for purposes of replacing functions of high-incident attention-seeking/escape behaviors, teachers' efforts may be counterproductive. Likewise, these teacher responses may negatively reinforce the teachers in that the aversive problem behavior that the student is exhibiting may stop for a period of time. As *verbal reprimand* and *remind the individual of expectations* were highly endorsed for the high-frequency problem behaviors, these responses may be an indicator that general education teachers may not be very knowledgeable about functions of behavior and may highlight concern about the training that general education teachers may be lacking (Tillery et al., 2010; Westling, 2010). Youngblom and Filter (2013) assert that teachers must have a basic understanding of how students behave so they can effectively respond and resolve problem behaviors that arise in the

classroom. This could promote awareness of the practices they use and help them better determine if they are, in fact, effective. If they are not effective, it could help them adjust their responses to achieve more desirable outcomes. Yet, many teachers report that they do not feel they have adequate training and knowledge when first entering the teacher workforce (Ellis, 2018). This illustrates how vital it is for school leaders to provide the training teachers need to feel successful, especially in their first years of teaching.

The need for teachers to respond effectively to problem behavior also has implications that refer to the law. The Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA, 2015) took effect in 2017, and is supposed to ensure a quality education to all students. One of its improvement indicators is improving school climate and safety. In order to do this, ESSA cites the need for evidence-based practices to be used and delivered through a multi-tiered framework, such as Response to Intervention and PBIS, for improving both academic and school climate and safety (Sugai, Simonsen, Freeman, & La Salle, 2016). This proactive approach means all students should be getting behavior support, and those who exhibit persistent problem behaviors need extra support and should be systematically identified and receive interventions. We have already cited the connection between effective classroom management and student achievement (Brophy, 1988). Thus, addressing and improving problem behaviors will improves academic achievement. As such, ESSA implies that all teachers need to have effective classroom management practices to ensure quality student outcomes, preferably through proactive strategies. Many schools have adopted a PBIS, yet Tillery et al. (2010) found that many teachers, when asked specifically, were not familiar with PBIS even though training efforts were occurring in their schools at the time. Here again, the need for teachers to both know and implement strong classroom management strategies is evident.

Response Differentiation to Problem Behaviors

The data indicate that teachers differentiate their responses to problem behaviors into two classes: teacher-managed practices and out-of-class sourcing. Most of the options we provided in the survey were teacher-managed practices, with the exception of *contact parent/guardian* and *office disciplinary referral.* The survey presented the problem behaviors in a spectrum of frequency and severity: off-task, disruptive, non-compliant, verbal aggressive, and physical aggressive. With non-compliant sitting in the middle, the top two practices endorsed for non-compliant behavior indicated a split between teacher managed practices and out-of-class practices. In contrast, the most endorsed practices for the problem behaviors on either side of non-compliant, fully endorsed one or the other (Appendix C). This pattern of responses may suggest that non-compliant behavior may be a sort of "threshold" between low-intensity and high-intensity behaviors.

For the high-intensity problem behaviors (i.e. verbal and physical aggression), there could be several possible reasons teachers were inclined to endorse out-of-class practices. The most obvious is these behaviors present a higher risk of harm to themselves or to others. It could also be that teachers lack confidence and/or training in how to respond to different types of behaviors, including high-intensity behaviors (Ellis, 2018). Another possible explanation is school policy dictates that high-intensity problem behavior be reported. Often, office referrals are a source of data that many schools are required to keep, to monitor the effectiveness of their discipline policies. Research indicates, however, that office discipline referrals as a stand-alone response to problem behavior are not effective in changing and improving behavior, but when they are used as a metric to examine discipline patterns, they can be useful by leaders to improve school-wide discipline policies (Sugai, Sprague, Horner, & Walker, 2000). A PBIS model, in

contrast, promotes that teachers know and use interventions that support students in changing problem behaviors, which points to the advantage of understanding the function of a problem behavior when responding to it.

Working with the idea of a "threshold behavior," and the use of office disciplinary referrals, we can draw some interesting findings from the work of Cavanaugh (2016), who found that using a combination of minor and major office discipline referrals can be an accurate predictor of behavioral risk as the school year progressed. The logic is that minor problem behaviors (i.e., high-frequency problem behaviors) occur more often than major problem behaviors (i.e., low-frequency problem behaviors) and the frequency at which they are reported can serve as a more accurate predictor of students that may be on a path of antisocial behaviors. It allows school leaders to consider interventions sooner than the "wait to fail" model where students begin receiving intervention only after several major infractions have occurred. This sits well with Walker et al. (2004) who argue that in some cases, low-frequency problem behaviors that receive no intervention can become increasingly more intense and resistant to it. In this light, the implications of effective response to high-frequency problem behaviors cannot be overstated and again leads back to the necessity that all teachers must attain knowledge and confidence about basic behavior theory because how they respond impacts how/if the problem behaviors are maintained or intensified. It also highlights the importance of establishing operationalized definitions within a school that teachers and staff agree on so that the quality of office referrals is similar in intensity. Agreement on definition of problem behaviors can calibrate the differences in how teacher gender might affect perception, toleration, and response to problem behaviors.

In summary, our teacher sample primarily endorsed the same practice to manage low-intensity problem behaviors (i.e. off-task, disruptive, non-compliant), and the two high-intensity behaviors (i.e. verbal and physical aggressive) were managed using the same out-of-class practices.

Variables that Predicted Patterns of Response to Problem Behavior

Consistent with findings of Culkin (2016) that teachers become more effective in managing behavior with experience, we expected that variables such as age of the teacher and number of years teaching might have produced significant relationships. We also know that ARLs often enter the profession without having any foundational training on behavior and classroom (Ingersoll et al., 2012); yet there was no significant association with this variable either; however, this may be because there were relatively few ARLs that participated. Finally, had our sample had more variance in ethnic background of teachers, it too, may have produced an association. In this study, however, these variables did not reveal any associations, indicating that the teachers in our sample primarily respond to problem behaviors as expected by the model, regardless of age and/or experience.

Each of the six chi-square tests that revealed significant associations included one of two variables: teacher gender or elementary/secondary teacher. Closer examinations of the count differences (Appendix D) may help address what these associations mean. The significant associations with gender indicate that female teachers endorsed *verbal reprimand* less then their male counterparts but used *reinforce others for appropriate behavior* more than them. Although both of these responses are reactive, females responded indirectly to the off-task and non-compliant behaviors through positive reinforcement directed toward other students. This practice of "praising around," works as a reminder to students of what behavior the teacher is

looking for; by giving attention to it, the teacher is reinforcing the appropriate behaviors he/she expects from his/her students. This is a positive reinforcement technique that most likely required some training, as the response effort is more intentional than a verbal reprimand. For both the off-task and non-compliant behaviors, this pattern was the same between female and male teachers. Noteworthy, however, the difference in the non-compliant model, *reinforce others for appropriate behavior* was not greater than ten.

The differences in counts that emerged from the chi-square relationships for elementary/secondary teachers produced a similar pattern. For the low-intensity problem behaviors of off-task and disruptive, the counts show that elementary teachers use less individual confrontation (i.e., *verbal reprimand* and *remind the individual of expectations*) than secondary teachers did. Also, elementary teachers endorsed more of the indirect way of *reinforcing others for appropriate behavior* than secondary teachers. This pattern holds for disruptive and non-compliant behaviors as well. As the behaviors moved higher in intensity, secondary teachers reported using out-of-class practices of *office disciplinary referral* or *contact parent/guardian* more often than elementary teachers did. Instead, elementary teachers appeared to *remove tokens/privileges*. This pattern held true for both non-compliant and verbal aggressive behavior as well.

In summary, it appears that female elementary teachers use less individual confrontation responses with students when responding to problem behavior, and instead use tactics that address the behavior in a roundabout way, such as "praising around." As problem behaviors get more intense, secondary teachers responded more often with out-of-class practices of *office disciplinary referral* and *contact parent/guardian*, whereas elementary teachers reported *remove*

tokens/privileges instead. It appears that elementary teachers attempt to use teacher-managed behaviors more often than secondary teachers do.

Our results add some further perspective when compared with other research findings that involve gender and grade level taught. For example, Alter, Walker, and Landers (2013) found that elementary and secondary teachers' perceptions of challenging behaviors that were most problematic and prevalent differed. Elementary teachers ranked challenging behaviors more prevalent and problematic than secondary teachers did. Female teachers identified high-frequency behaviors more prevalent and problematic than male teachers did. Aloe et al. (2014) found that grade level was significantly related to the correlation between a teacher's classroom management self-efficacy and emotional exhaustion. In terms of readiness, Baker (2005) found that secondary teachers were less able, willing, and ready to manage problem behaviors than elementary teachers. Still another interesting relationship indicated that as grade level increased, the use of evidence-based practices decreased (Carr, 2012). The associations from this study add interesting variables to previous literature and may warrant further investigation into how gender and grade level play into prevalence of behavior management practices as well as teacher stress. Issues such as how teachers and staff respond to the intensity of problem behavior with similar tolerance levels, regardless of teacher gender and/or grade level, can be highlighted here as well. Understanding these associations with more clarity can help arm *all* teachers with effective practices in managing problem behaviors, and possibly reduce some of the stress that managing problem behaviors incurs on teachers.

Problem Behaviors and Attrition

To evaluate the extent to which teachers perceive problem behavior as a reason to leave the profession, the greatest positive indicator of the regression model was the extent to which

teachers endorsed the statement that *problem behaviors are a serious concern* (β = .291). The descriptive data corroborate this finding in that one-third of teachers reported they were *likely/very likely* to leave for reasons other than retirement, and relates to one-third of teachers reported that they *agree/strongly agree* that problem behaviors were a concern. Our study did not address how many of these teachers actually leave the profession, but the prospect of losing one-third of the teacher workforce can cause major disruptions in the quality of student outcomes, not to mention the taxing expense and investment that districts pay out in compensation packages and recruiting efforts. Our findings align with Ingersoll's (2001) and Provasnik and Dorfman's (2005) report that student discipline problems are a substantial contributor to teacher attrition. Our results were also similar to Ni and Rorrer's (2018) report that 70% of their Utah teacher sample said that student discipline and behavior is an influential factor in job satisfaction. In our sample, 78% reported that they were *satisfied/very satisfied* with their job, yet only 26.8% *strongly disagreed* that problem behaviors were a serious concern, indicating that the remaining 73% of teachers have somewhat level of concern about problem behaviors.

In our regression model, the variable of *behavior management confidence* is a predictor of *likely to leave* the profession. This seems counter-intuitive. To possibly explain this, we can cite a body of research that addresses teacher self-efficacy in managing classroom behaviors. Aloe et al. (2014) established a significant relationship between a teacher's classroom management self-efficacy and burnout, but the nature of their analyses did not infer causality of the relationship. With this in mind, a few scenarios could possibly apply to this relationship. First, a teacher may feel confident with his classroom and behavior management skills, but despite everything that he tries, problem behaviors persist. This line of thinking is similar to

what Andreou and Rapti (2010) found that sometimes teachers perceived some students' problem behaviors as out of their control and beyond helping. This perception of "I've done everything but nothing works," could possibly be a source of stress and job dissatisfaction and thus, increase likelihood of leaving. Another possible scenario teachers might report is to present themselves in a better light, when in fact, they may be struggling to manage problem behaviors but don't want to admit it as they may appear incompetent. Still, another scenario may be they are indeed effective at behavior management but other stress factors of the job, such as the perception of little administrator support, heavy workload, low salary, and/or time constraints are stronger factors that fuel teachers intention to leave. These possible scenarios highlight the limitations of this study, but this predictor could be a worthwhile topic that could warrant further investigation to better understand the teacher retention rates that schools so desperately need.

In line with what Ingersoll (2001) observed of the teacher workforce, the results of this study indicate that our teacher sample may not be very stable. Even though most teachers were satisfied with their job, roughly the same percentage reported that they were *somewhat likely, likely,* or *very likely to leave for reasons other than retirement*. Although our data indicate that a little more than a third of the teachers reported that problem behaviors would be a *significant* or *very significant* reason for leaving, problem behaviors do not account for the two-thirds of our sample who reported likelihood of leaving the profession. Nevertheless, for the purposes of this study, the indications that teachers would consider leaving the profession relate to teacher perceptions of *problem behaviors are a serious concern*, and *dealing with problem behavior is a significant reason you would consider leaving the profession*, and align with the conceptual model we introduced at the beginning of the study (Figure 1).

Limitations

The results of this study need to be interpreted in the context of certain limitations. First, nearly half of the responses came from one school district. District 2 gave us the strongest response. This is very likely because an Instradistrict Communication memo from the Associate Superintendent and the Director of Evaluation, Research, and Accountability was sent to all the principals in the district preceding our contact with principals. The memo contained a brief explanation of what the research study was about and explained that the district had approved for us to contact them. Consequently, the results should not be taken as a representative sample, even among the districts included in the study. Second, the sample was overwhelmingly white and female; so, the generality of the findings should not be inferred for other race/ethnicities or genders. Third, our sample was geographically limited to districts that participate in the BYU - Public School Partnership. These districts are found primarily in suburban and rural areas. It is unclear how teachers in urban settings may have responded to these same survey questions. Fourth, the data need to be interpreted in the context of when the survey was administered. The survey was distributed at the end of the academic school year, when teacher motivation and enthusiasm might be considerably lower than when teachers are fresh and eager to start a new year.

Using surveys to collect data also introduces certain limitations worth considering. For example, the forced-choice format we used for several of the questions required respondents to select from options that we provided, even if those choices did not represent how they actually respond to problem behavior. Although we endeavored to mitigate the problem by providing an *Other* option for each question, few respondents selected this option.

Finally, self-reports are susceptible to biases that can compromise the accuracy of the results. For example, respondents may be inclined to represent themselves in a more charitable light then their actual performance merits. They may report using more effective strategies, more positive strategies, and more ethical strategies, even when such is not actually the case. The self-reports of their behavior may be more closely aligned with their intentions than with their performance. Consequently, the results of this study ought to be considered in light of the ways that respondents might have systematically misrepresented their behavior. However, even with these limitations, the data provide a starting point in learning how general education teachers address problem behavior in their classes.

Implications for Future Research

This study aligned with existing research relating student problem behavior and teacher attrition (Ingersoll, 2001; Ni & Rorrer, 2018) and presented new facts on how teachers in our targeted area respond to student problem behaviors. The exploratory nature of this study should be emphasized, as it exposes a number of related avenues for future research. This study simply asked teachers *what* practices were used, but did not examine the effectiveness of the practices on a short-term or long-term basis. Further research could explore how teachers perceive the effectiveness of the practices they use most often to respond to problem behaviors, whether they are teacher-managed or out-of-class practices, and/or if the practices are evidence based.

As this was a study that utilized self-reporting with its inherent limitations, a next step could be to determine if they are accurate self-reports. Direct observation could provide a more accurate picture of the practices, how they differ with gender and grade level, and of course the observed effectiveness of the practices.

The present study used the term "expectations" broadly. However, it might be useful to investigate in more depth what teachers' perceptions are when referring to class-wide expectations and school-wide expectations. Utah's LRBI manual clearly distinguishes between class-wide and school-wide expectations and how they must support one another. Yet many teachers and administrators may not distinguish the two. Tillery et al. (2010), after interviewing several teachers, found that despite ongoing PBIS training at their schools, most of them were not able to accurately articulate the difference between school-wide and class-wide strategies. She underscored the necessity for teachers to understand this since many schools are using this approach to improve the discipline policies in schools. If frameworks like PBIS are to be successful, teachers must attain and understand the prerequisite skills necessary to implement the model and the challenges that come with it. The extent to which Utah teachers and administrators are aware of the LRBI manual and thoroughly understand the best practices contained therein would provide valuable information on how well pre-service institutions and districts are preparing and supporting teachers as they attempt to manage frequent problem behaviors in their classrooms. Perhaps more emphasis on the conceptual framework of multi-tiered intervention systems (i.e., PBIS) in pre-service coursework can better prepare new teachers to meet the demands of PBIS implementation (Tillery et al., 2010).

Additionally, the LRBI states that schools should be providing teachers with continual training in behavior management skills. On a school and district level, future research could examine the extent and effectiveness to which this is carried out, both on an elementary and secondary level. In the same vein, for schools that implement the PBIS framework, further investigation on how well aligned both administrators and teachers are in terms of their commitment to understand the principles and practices of the model could contribute insight into

the effectiveness it may have on both a school-wide and class-wide level. Tillery et al. (2010) found that teachers knew more behavior management practices aimed at the individual, but were far less familiar with strategies directed at a whole group, undermining the importance of strong proactive and preventative management practices necessary for a whole class.

Another possible avenue of research is to evaluate how thorough administrators understand teachers' perceptions in managing problem behaviors. As teachers have cited in other literature, a common source of stress is feeling that they don't have administrator support in dealing with problem behaviors (Ingersoll, 2001). Insights could help administrators assess how well they are responding to teachers' needs to assure teacher job satisfaction.

Finally, this study examined externalizing problem behaviors, yet internalizing problem behaviors can be just as problematic. Additional research could examine how teachers respond to internal problem behaviors in the same contexts that we have highlighted in this present study.

Implications for Practice

We have presented our findings and situated them in existing literature. Though exploratory in nature, they offer some implications for stakeholders on multiple levels of the educational organization. First, we found that much of the discussion from our results consistently referred to the practices outlined in the LRBI. The comprehensive information about the multi-tiered framework (i.e., PBIS) and evidence based practices that encourage a proactive approach to classroom management theory and practice cannot be overstated, especially with the research that correlates effective classroom management to student achievement (Brophy, 1988). It's logical that a teacher is not able to use effective practices if he/she doesn't know what they are. Thus, gaining a deep understanding of the guidelines in the LRBI could give direction to both school leaders and teachers as they seek to improve the

discipline practices of their schools and classrooms. Consistent professional development of the principles endorsed in the LRBI can arm teachers with a variety of proactive practices that they can use when responding to common and frequent problem behaviors. In the same vein, pre-service institutions could better prepare pre-service teachers with a foundational knowledge about the theories and practices in the LRBI.

Second, our findings suggest that it might be worthwhile for teachers to have a stronger foundational understanding of behavior principles. Youngblom and Filter (2013) stated that teachers who have a better understanding of why behaviors occur are able to respond more effectively to problem behaviors. To support this effort, special education could assist in training and supporting general education teachers in fundamental principles of behavior; for example, using planned ignoring to decrease attention-seeking behaviors. Often, special education teachers have a specialized skill set in dealing with problem behaviors that general education teachers do not have (Carr, 2012; Cooper, 2018). This collaboration could help build school consistency in responding to problem behaviors and promote a stronger sense of school community, possibly improving job satisfaction.

Third, our teacher sample aligns with existing literature by acknowledging that problem behaviors are a concern and a predictor of possible intentions to leave the job. District and school leaders should be proactive in finding frequent and diverse opportunities to evaluate teacher perceptions on how they are dealing with problem behaviors. As leaders identify and respond to teacher concerns, it could improve teacher job satisfaction and retention.

Conclusion

This study examined the issue of student problem behavior in the classroom. The purpose was to examine if the practices teachers use to respond to problem behavior, based on

self-report, had any relationship to the likelihood of teacher attrition. These topics have been consistently examined from many different angles for several decades. This study contributes to the extant literature regarding these topics. Results indicated that there was not much differentiation between the most endorsed teacher-managed practices for high-frequency behaviors and low-frequency behaviors; that is the same teacher-managed practice was primarily endorsed for the problem behaviors of *off-task, disruptive,* and *non-compliant,* and the same out-of class practices were primarily endorsed for *verbal aggressive* and *physical aggressive* behaviors. The most endorsed practices had low response effort and were directed to individual students. The limited variance of responses to the different intensities of problem behaviors suggest that teachers might benefit from learning about basic principles of behavior functions in order to increase their repertoire of proactive management practices. We consistently referred to the practices outlined in the LRBI manual that are readily available to teachers and administrators. A deep knowledge and continual training of the practices therein could provide all stakeholders in the education system with proactive tools to increase effectiveness in managing problem behaviors in the classroom. The use of proactive management strategies is vital, as overuse of reactive practices can be a significant predictor of teacher stress (Clunies-Ross et al., 2008). Thus, having more knowledge of proactive practices can contribute to less stress in classroom management issues, more job satisfaction, and ultimately lower rates of teacher attrition.

Statistical analyses using chi-square models produced several significant relationships with the demographic variables of teacher gender and elementary/secondary grade level taught. In addition, a regression model indicated four independent variables that contributed to a teacher's likelihood to leave the profession. Both types of analyses provided interesting results

about managing problem behaviors and offer a worthy angle for further investigation into how teacher response type might relate to teacher attrition.

The need for experienced, qualified teachers to remain in the workforce has been a concern for decades. Our teacher sample indicated that although the majority of teachers are satisfied with their job, there was still a high percentage of them who reported the likelihood of leaving the profession. This is concerning as school leaders look forward in addressing the social and academic needs of their students. The information found in this study could be used as a guide for teachers, administrators, and pre-service institutions in determining the effectiveness of the training they offer to teachers entering the workforce. Considerations could have positive implications on how to support teachers and continually provide them with opportunities to develop skills that can help them in managing the complex set of problem behaviors that students exhibit in schools. Without these tools, it is difficult to meet the social and academic needs of students.

The results of this study align with the conceptual model we presented at the beginning (Figure 1). It supports that teacher attrition is a concern for our participant sample and managing problem behaviors is an influential variable in possible attrition. Efforts to provide teachers with the skills necessary to manage problem behaviors may be a first step to decrease teacher attrition. We agree with Eisenman, Edwards, and Cushman's (2015) assertion that effective classroom management is a means to improve student outcomes, not just a means to control problem behavior. Effective classroom management practices and positive student achievement are statistically correlated and must become part of the pre-service curriculum and professional development for the teacher workforce. The theories have been validated for decades, yet teachers are still entering the workforce not prepared to deal with the problem behaviors that

they are faced with. Education stakeholders on all levels need to consider the theory, research, and strategies that effective classroom management plays in student achievement as well as teacher attrition.

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APPENDIX A

Institutional Review Board Consent

My name is Christian Sabey, and I am a professor at Brigham Young University from the department of Counseling Psychology and Special Education. My research assistant, Ingrid Shurtleff, is a graduate candidate for a Master's of Special Education. We are inviting you to participate in this research study, *General Education Teachers' Self-Reported Response to Overt Student Problem Behaviors in the Classroom.* Our purpose is to get an insight on what practicing teachers experience in their classroom regarding student misbehaviors.

Your participation in this study will require you to complete the following online survey. It should take no more than 10 minutes to complete. We are inviting all general education teachers in several districts to take this survey, but be assured your participation will be anonymous. There will be no way for anyone to verify if you have or have not completed the survey; thus, you will not be contacted again in the future. You will not be compensated monetarily for participating in this study, and it involves minimal risk to you.

You do not have to participate in this study. The benefits, however, will help us obtain an accurate picture of what teachers on the frontlines are experiencing. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this project or any research-related problem, you may contact me at christian_sabey@byu.edu or 801-422-8361.

If you have any questions about your rights as a research participant, you may contact the IRB Administrator at A-285 ASB, Brigham Young University, Provo UT 84602. The IRB is a committee who reviews research studies to ensure that the rights and welfare of research participants are protected. Completing this survey indicates your consent to participate in this research. If you choose to participate, please complete the survey by April 19th, 2019.

Thank you!

APPENDIX B

Survey

Block 1

Are you a general education teacher?

Yes
No

This survey is intended for general education teachers only. Thank you for your willingness to participate.

Section 1: Demographic Info

What is your gender?

Female
Male
Other

What is your age?

- 19
20-30
31-40
41-50
51-60
61+

How do you describe your ethnicity?

African American
Asian
Hispanic
Native American
Pacific Islander
White

Other

How many years have you been teaching?

3 or less
4-9
10-15
16-20
21-25
25+

What is your highest level of education?

Bachelor's
Post Baccalaureate (bachelor's plus additional college credit)
Master's
Docterate
Other

Have you obtained, or in the process of obtaining, an Alternative Route to Licensure (ARL) or Academic Path to Teaching (APT).

Yes
No

At what type of school do you work?

Public
Private
Charter
Other

In which district/charter/private school do you work?

Alpine

Jordan

Nebo

Provo

Wasatch

Other

By the end of this school year, how long will you have taught at your current school?

1-3

4-7

7-10

11+

What grade/s do you teach? Mark all that apply.

Preschool

Kindergarten

1-3

4-6

7-9

10-12

In general, how satisfied are you with your job?

Not at all satisfied	Somewhat satisfied	Satisfied	Very Satisfied
1	2	3	4

What is the most challenging problem behavior you encounter in your class/es?

Section 2

The next section describes five different problem behaviors, starting with mild problem behaviors to most aggressive problem behaviors. Please read the description carefully and respond as accurately as possible.

Section 2 Revised

OFF-TASK behavior is defined as STUDENTS NOT ENGAGED IN THE EXPECTED ACTIVITY BUT NOT DISRUPTIVE TO INSTRUCTION OR OTHERS.

How serious of a problem is off-task behavior in your class/es?

Not serious at all	Somewhat serious	Serious	Very Serious
1	2	3	4

When a student is OFF-TASK, which behavior management practices do you most often use? Mark two responses.

Verbal reprimand
Remind the class of expectations
Remind the individual of expectations
Remove tokens/privileges
Ignore
Office disciplinary referral
Contact parent/guardian
Level system
Reinforce others for appropriate behavior
Other (specify)

DISRUPTIVE behavior is defined as BEHAVIOR THAT MAKES IT DIFFICULT TO TEACH AND/OR OTHERS TO LEARN

How serious of a problem is DISRUPTIVE behavior in your class/es?

Not serious at all	Somewhat serious	Serious	Very serious

Not serious at all	Somewhat serious	Serious	Very serious
1	2	3	4
1	2	3	4

When a student is DISRUPTIVE, which behavior management practices do you most often use? Mark two responses.

Verbal reprimand
Remind the class of expectations
Remind the individual of expectations
Remove tokens/privileges
Ignore
Office disciplinary referral
Contact parent/guardian
Level system
Reinforce others for appropriate behavior
Other (specify)

NON-COMPLIANT behavior is defined as a student saying "NO," "I DON'T WANT TO," or similar refusal to do any academic or non-academic request.

How serious of a problem is NON-COMPLIANT behavior in your class/es?

Not serious at all	Somewhat serious	Serious	Very serious
1	2	3	4

When a student is NON-COMPLIANT, which behavior management practices do you most often use?Mark two responses.

Verbal reprimand
Remind the class of expectations
Remind the individual of expectations
Remove tokens/privileges
Ignore
Office disciplinary referral
Contact parent/guardian

Level system

Reinforce others for appropriate behavior

Other (specify)

VERBAL AGGRESSIVE behavior is defined as PROFANITY, RACIAL/SEXUAL SLURS, THREATS OR COMMENTS INDICATING PHYSICAL HARM TO ANOTHER PERSON USING AN INAPPROPRIATE VOLUME.

How serious of a problem is VERBAL AGGRESSIVE behavior in your class/es?

Not serious at all	Somewhat serious	Serious	Very serious
1	2	3	4

When a student is VERBALLY AGGRESSIVE, which behavior management practices do you most often use? Mark two responses.

Verbal reprimand

Remind the class of expectations

Remind the individual of expectations

Remove tokens/privileges

Ignore

Office disciplinary referral

Contact parent/guardian

Level system

Reinforce others for appropriate behavior

Other (specify)

PHYSICALLY AGGRESSIVE behavior is defined as POKING, PINCHING, BITING, PULLING HAIR, HITTING, SCRATCHING, SPITTING AND/OR THROWING OBJECTS.

How serious of a problem is PHYSICAL AGGRESSIVE behavior in your class/es?

Not serious at all	Somewhat serious	Serious	Very serious

1	2	3	4
Not serious at all	Somewhat serious	Serious	Very serious
1	2	3	4

When a student is PHYSICALLY AGGRESSIVE, which behavior management practices do you most often use? Mark two responses.

Verbal reprimand
Remind the class of expectations
Remind the individual of expectations
Remove tokens/privilieges
Ignore
Office disciplinary referral
Contact parent/guardian
Level system
Reinforce others for appropriate behavior
Other (specify)

Section 3: Opinions

Is your school currently implementing School-wide Positive Behavioral Intervention Supports (PBS or PBIS)?

Yes
No
Don't know

Problem behaviors are a serious concern in my class/es.

Strongly disagree	Somewhat disagree	Agree	Strongly agree
1	2	3	4

About how many times do students engage in problem behaviors in a typical class period/teaching block?

0-5
6-10

11-15

15+

How confident do you feel about your behavior management skills?

Not confident at all	Somewhat confident	Confident	Very confident
1	2	3	4

How well were you trained to manage problem behavior during your pre-service education (i.e. college, university, alternative route)?

Not well at all	Somewhat well	Well	Very well
1	2	3	4

How well have you been trained on the job (e.g. professional development, mentoring) to manage problem behavior?

Not well at all	Somewhat well	Well	Very well
1	2	3	4

Where have you received the BEST training for classroom behavior management?

College classes

Personal study/research

School/district professional development

Mentoring from colleagues

Trial and error in my classromm

Other

How well supported do you feel in managing classroom problem behavior (e.g. administrators, behavior support team, counselors, etc.)?

Not well at all	Somewhat well	Well	Very well
1	2	3	4

Not well at all	Somewhat well	Well	Very well
1	2	3	4

Where do you MOST OFTEN go for help when you encounter a persistent problem behavior amongst your students?

Colleague
Principal/Admin
School Psychologist
School Counselor
Behavior Specialist
Internet
Other

How likely are you to leave the teaching profession for reasons other than retirement?

Not likely	Somewhat likely	Likely	Very likely
1	2	3	4

Is dealing with student problem behavior a significant reason you would consider leaving the profession?

Not significant	Somewhat significant	Significant	Very significant
1	2	3	4

What insight or comments about problem behaviors can you share?

Section 4

The next question DOES NOT commit you to any training. This survey is anonymous and you CAN NOT be contacted. We simply want a teacher's perspective on the need and/or desire for training.

Given the opportunity, would you like to receive additional training on behavior management?

Yes

No

Other; explain

Which problem behavior do you feel you need the **most** training on?

Off-task

Disruptive

Non-compliant

Verbal aggresion

Physical aggression

Other

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APPENDIX C

Teacher Responses to Each Problem Behavior

Table C1

Behavior Management Practices for Off-Task Behavior

How teachers respond	Number	%
Remind the individual of expectations	232	32
Reinforce others for appropriate behavior	163	22.5
Remind the class of expectations	115	15.8
Verbal reprimand	103	14.2
Remove tokens/privileges	31	4.3
Level system	31	4.3
Ignore	23	3.2
Other	15	2.1
Contact parent/guardian	13	1.8
Office disciplinary referral	0	0

Note. $n = 726$

Table C2

Behavior Management Practices for Disruptive Behavior

How teachers respond	Number	%
Remind the individual of expectations	226	31.2
Verbal reprimand	128	17.7
Reinforce others for appropriate behavior	84	11.6
Remove tokens/privileges	78	10.8
Remind the class of expectations	64	8.8
Contact parent/guardian	50	6.9
Level system	34	4.7
Other	28	3.9
Ignore	21	2.9
Office disciplinary referral	11	1.5

Note. $n = 725$

Table C3

Behavior Management Practices for Non-compliant Behavior

How teachers respond	Number	%
Remind the individual of expectations	190	26.2
Contact parent/guardian	111	15.3
Verbal reprimand	86	11.9
Reinforce others for appropriate behavior	71	9.8
Remove tokens/privileges	70	9.7
Office disciplinary referral	55	7.6
Other	47	6.5
Ignore	38	5.2
Remind the class of expectations	29	4
Level system	27	3.7

Note. $n = 725$

Table C4

Behavior Management Practices for Verbally Aggressive Behavior

How teachers respond	Number	%
Office disciplinary referral	173	24.2
Contact parent/guardian	165	23
Remind the individual of expectations	120	16.8
Verbal reprimand	107	14.9
Remove tokens/privileges	36	5
Remind the class of expectations	35	4.9
Other	31	4.3
Reinforce others for appropriate behavior	20	2.8
Level system	17	2.4
Ignore	12	1.7

Note. $n = 721$

Table C5

Behavior Management Practices for Physically Aggressive Behavior

How teachers respond	Number	%
Office disciplinary referral	245	34.4
Contact parent/guardian	225	31.6
Remind the individual of expectations	70	9.8
Verbal reprimand	64	9
Other	34	4.8
Remove tokens/privileges	33	4.6
Remind the class of expectations	20	2.8
Level system	9	1.3
Reinforce others for appropriate behavior	9	1.3
Ignore	3	0.4

Note. $n = 719$

APPENDIX D

Chi-square Counts

Table D1

Gender - Off-Task

	Response Option									
Count	Verbal Reprimand	Remind Class of Expectations	Remind Individual of Expectations	Remove Tokens/ Privileges	Ignore	Office Disciplinary Referral	Contact Parent/ Guardian	Level System	Reinforce Others for Appropriate Behavior	Other
Female										
Count	71	93	173	25	18	0	10	27	144	10
Expected Count	81.9	92.9	178.8	25.2	18.1	0	9.5	24.4	128.4	11.8
Difference	**-10.9**	0.1	-5.8	-0.2	-0.1	0	0.5	2.6	**15.6**	-1.8
Male										
Count	33	25	54	7	5	0	2	4	19	5
Expected Count	22.1	25.1	48.2	6.8	4.9	0	2.5	6.6	34.6	3.2
Difference	**10.9**	-0.1	5.8	0.2	0.1	0	-0.5	-2.6	**-15.6**	1.8

Note. Differences ≥ 10 are in boldface.

Table D2

Gender - Non-Compliant

	Response Option									
Count	Verbal Reprimand	Remind Class of Expectations	Remind Individual of Expectations	Remove Tokens/ Privileges	Ignore	Office Disciplinary Referral	Contact Parent/ Guardian	Level System	Reinforce Others for Appropriate Behavior	Other
Female										
Count	58	19	154	62	27	44	88	21	60	37
Expected Count	67.7	22.8	149.6	55.1	29.9	43.3	87.4	21.3	55.9	37
Difference	-9.7	-3.8	4.4	6.9	-2.9	0.7	0.6	-0.3	4.1	0
Male										
Count	28	10	36	8	11	11	23	6	11	10
Expected Count	18.3	6.2	40.4	14.9	8.1	11.7	23.6	5.7	15.1	10
Difference	9.7	3.8	-4.4	-6.9	2.9	0	-0.6	0.3	-4.1	0

Table D3

Elementary/Secondary - Off-Task

	Response Option									
Level	Verbal Reprimand	Remind Class of Expectations	Remind Individual of Expectations	Remove Tokens/ Privileges	Ignore	Office Disciplinary Referral	Contact Parent/ Guardian	Level System	Reinforce Others for Appropriate Behavior	Other
Elementary										
Count	39	58	101	10	7	0	2	24	119	4
Expected Count	53.9	61.2	117.7	15.1	11.9	0	6.2	16.1	84.5	7.8
Difference	**-14.9**	-3.2	**-16.7**	-5.1	-4.9	0	-4.2	7.9	**34.5**	-3.8
Secondary										
Count	65	59	123	32	16	0	9	7	43	11
Expected Count	49.2	55.8	107.4	32	10.9	0	5.7	14.7	77.1	7.1
Difference	**15.8**	3.2	**15.6**	0	5.1	0	3.3	-7.7	**-34.1**	3.9
Mixed										
Count	0	1	3	0	0	0	1	0	1	0
Expected Count	0.9	1	1.9	0.3	0.2	0	0.1	0.3	1.3	0.1
Difference	-0.9	0	1.1	-0.3	-0.2	0	0.9	-0.3	-0.3	-0.1

Note. Differences ≥ 10 are in boldface.

Table D4

Elementary/Secondary - Disruptive

	Response Option									
Level	Verbal Reprimand	Remind Class of Expectations	Remind Individual of Expectations	Remove Tokens/ Privileges	Ignore	Office Disciplinary Referral	Contact Parent/ Guardian	Level System	Reinforce Others for Appropriate Behavior	Other
Elementary										
Count	46	24	109	57	12	6	19	25	65	13
Expected Count	66.5	34.3	116.3	40.5	10.9	5.7	26	17.7	43.6	14.5
Difference	**-20.5**	**-10.3**	-7.3	**16.5**	1.1	0.3	-7	7.3	**21.4**	-1.5
Secondary										
Count	82	42	112	21	9	5	30	8	18	15
Expected Count	60.5	31.2	105.8	36.8	9.9	5.2	23.6	16.1	39.7	13.2
Difference	**21.5**	**10.8**	6.2	**-15.8**	-0.9	-0.2	6.4	-8.1	**-21.7**	1.8
Mixed										
Count	0	0	3	0	0	0	1	1	1	0
Expected Count	1.1	0.5	1.9	0.6	0.2	0.1	0.4	0.3	0.7	0.2
Difference	-1.1	-0.5	1.1	-0.6	-0.2	0	0.6	0.7	0.3	-0.2

Note. Differences ≥ 10 are in boldface.

Table D5

Elementary/Secondary - Non Compliant

	Response Option									
Level	Verbal Reprimand	Remind Class of Expectations	Remind Individual of Expectations	Remove Tokens/ Privileges	Ignore	Office Disciplinary Referral	Contact Parent/ Guardian	Level System	Reinforce Others for Appropriate Behavior	Other
Elementary										
Count	33	14	104	52	12	18	47	20	52	24
Expected Count	44.7	15.1	98.7	36.4	19.7	28.6	57.6	14	36.9	24.4
Difference	**-11.7**	-1.1	5.3	**15.6**	-7.7	**-10.6**	**-10.6**	6	**15.1**	-0.4
Secondary										
Count	53	15	84	18	26	36	62	7	19	22
Expected Count	40.6	13.7	89.8	33.1	18	26	52.4	12.8	33.5	22.2
Difference	**12.4**	1.3	-5.8	**-15.1**	8	**10**	9.6	-5.8	**-14.5**	-0.2
Mixed										
Count	0	0	2	0	0	1	2	0	0	1
Expected Count	0.7	0.2	1.6	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.9	0.2	0.6	0.4
Difference	-0.7	-0.2	0.4	-0.6	-0.3	0.5	1.1	-0.2	-0.6	0.6

Note. Differences ≥ 10 are in boldface.

Table D6

Elementary/Secondary - Verbal Aggressive

	Response Option									
Level	Verbal Reprimand	Remind Class of Expectations	Remind Individual of Expectations	Remove Tokens/ Privileges	Ignore	Office Disciplinary Referral	Contact Parent/ Guardian	Level System	Reinforce Others for Appropriate Behavior	Other
Elementary										
Count	38	15	64	32	7	80	95	13	15	13
Expected Count	55.6	18.2	62.3	18.7	6.2	89.9	85.7	8.8	10.4	16.1
Difference	**-17.6**	-3.2	1.7	**13.3**	0.8	-9.9	9.3	4.2	4.6	-3.1
Secondary										
Count	69	20	55	4	5	92	67	4	5	17
Expected Count	50.5	16.5	56.6	17	5.7	81.7	77.9	8	9.4	14.6
Difference	**18.5**	3.5	-1.6	**-13**	-0.7	**10.3**	**-10.9**	-4	-4.4	2.4
Mixed										
Count	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	0	1
Expected Count	0.9	0.3	1	0.3	0.1	1.4	1.4	0.1	0.2	0.3
Difference	-0.9	-0.3	0	-0.3	-0.1	-0.4	1.6	-0.1	-0.2	0.7

Note. Differences ≥ 10 are in boldface.

APPENDIX E

Job Satisfaction and Attrition Tables

Table E1

Problem Behaviors Are a Serious Concern in My Class

Response	Number	%
Strongly disagree	95	26.8
Somewhat disagree	137	38.7
Agree	100	28.2
Strongly agree	22	6.2

Note. $n = 354$

Table E2

How satisfied are you with your job?

Response	Number	%
Not at all	7	1.9
Somewhat	73	20.1
Satisfied	209	57.6
Very satisfied	74	20.4

Note. $n = 363$

Table E3

How likely to leave for reasons other than retirement?

Response	Number	%
Not likely	102	31
Somewhat likely	120	36.5
Likely	58	17.6
Very likely	49	14.9

Note. $n = 329$

Table E4

Is dealing with problem behavior a significant reason you would consider leaving the profession?

Response	Number	%
Not significant	48	20.4
Somewhat significant	92	39.1
Significant	59	25.1
Very significant	36	15.3

Note. $n = 235$