SUPPORTING FUTURE TEACHERS IN PROVIDING CARE FOR YOUNG CHILDREN WITH CHALLENGING BEHAVIORS

by

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ABSTRACT

REBECCA ANNE FITZGERALD. Supporting Future Teachers in Providing Care for Young Children with Challenging Behaviors.
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Challenging behaviors exhibited by students can disrupt the schedule of daily learning. The purpose of this study was to gather the perceptions of early childhood education pre-service teachers on their levels of preparedness to work with children exhibiting challenging behaviors. Information was also gathered on what types of handson learning experiences they had in their teacher preparation programs that contributed to these levels of preparedness. Twenty-one pre-service teachers in the final semester of their undergraduate early childhood education licensure program participated in a survey either online or via a hard copy version of the survey to complete during a student teaching seminar at their university. The findings from this study were inconclusive and suggest that further research is necessary to evaluate the preparedness levels of preservice teachers regarding children's challenging behaviors. Limitations as well as recommendations for future research are discussed.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

When challenging behaviors are exhibited in early childhood education, classroom instruction, development, and teacher-student relationships are impeded. Teachers working to provide quality care and education for young children describe challenging behaviors as one of the most prevalent barriers (Hemmeter, Santos, & Ostrosky, 2008). While many teachers begin their career with understandings of the demands of the job, a vast number of teachers feel the need to quit within the first year due to lack of preparation for certain classroom behaviors (Akdağ & Haser, 2016).

Research has shown a relationship between children's social-emotional development in their preschool years and their potential academic and social success throughout the remainder of their lives (Hemmeter et al., 2008). Because early intervention is crucial in the reduction of challenging behaviors and promotion of healthy social-emotional development, it is necessary for this process to begin in the early years of preschool (Garrity, Longstreth, & Linder, 2017). Aside from academic school readiness, the following social-emotional skills have been identified as the most important component of success for children transitioning from preschool to elementary school: (a) the ability to label and express one's own emotions, as well as recognize the emotions of others; (b) maintaining relationships with others (adults and peers included); (c) managing frustration while completing difficult tasks; (d) following directions; (e) participating appropriately in group activities, solving social and inter-personal conflicts; and (f) controlling one's own difficult emotions (Hemmeter et al., 2008). Without these skills, a child cannot prosper academically or socially. Children's challenging behaviors prevent the development of these skills as well as teachers' ability to provide quality

instruction. The purpose of this study is to gather information from early childhood preservice teachers on their perspectives regarding their preparation in working with children exhibiting challenging behaviors in the classroom.

It is an objective of many early childhood education professionals to create a stronger link between the process of research and the implementation of policy and practice. However, there is a gap between what professionals know and what they actually practice (Garrity et al., 2017.) Research shows an undeniable relationship between the early development of social-emotional skills such as self-control, attention, social skills, self-regulation, and identification of emotions and the development of high cognitive skills and school readiness (Green, Malsch, Kothari, Busse, & Brennan, 2012). Although a great amount of research has provided information about what children need in terms of developing new social and academic skills, many professionals are still struggling to implement these findings in their work (Garrity et al., 2017). This could be due to fact that the teachers may not be given the proper experiences required to promote the social-emotional development of young children prior to leading their own classrooms.

It is recognized by many educators, parents, administrators, researchers, and policy makers that the number of children entering elementary school without proper social-emotional or behavioral skills is continuing to increase. It is also recognized that there is a need to equip teachers with the proper knowledge and skills necessary to help children appropriately develop socially and emotionally (Hemmeter et al., 2008). Many teacher education training programs adequately prepare pre-service teachers for things such as lesson planning, Developmentally Appropriate Practice (DAP), and parent

communication. However, these same programs' lack of content and hands-on experiences for pre-service teachers regarding children with challenging behaviors may be what is causing pre-service teachers to feel ill-prepared (Akdağ & Haser, 2016). Because children's brains grow so rapidly in the early years of their life, each positive and negative experience impacts the way children grow, learn, connect emotionally, and process new information, causing the preschool years to be undeniably crucial for healthy child development (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, 2015). When challenging behaviors are persistent and recurring in classroom settings healthy child development, unfortunately, is impeded. Teacher preparedness is an integral feature for quality early childhood education programs; this is why preparation and training for pre-service early childhood educators should be made a top priority (Artman-Meeker & Hemmeter, 2013).

Early childhood pre-service teachers must be provided with training that will adequately promote the knowledge, efficacy, dispositions, and skills necessary to support young children in the development of all domains, specifically social-emotional development. Preparing pre-service teachers with realistic expectations and classroom management skills will benefit both teachers and young children in their classroom environment (Hemmeter et al., 2008). Providing pre-service teachers with time to learn about and time to practice working closely with children with challenging behaviors during their undergraduate coursework and/or field experiences may reduce teacher attrition. Field experiences allow pre-service teachers to partake in opportunities that include team collaboration, hands-on learning, curricula questions and suggestions, daily classroom routine expectations, and time management skills (Recchia & Puig, 2011).

More time committed to hands-on classroom management experiences for pre-service teachers during field experiences could provide pre-service teachers with greater levels of self-efficacy before entering their own classroom post-graduation.

Review of past research has shown that the term "challenging behaviors" is used interchangeably with other terms such as "disruptive behaviors," "antisocial behaviors," and "social-emotional problems." For the purpose of this thesis, challenging behaviors will be used and defined as any child behavior that disrupts instruction, activities, or learning for a child or children in the classroom (Artman-Meeker & Hemmeter, 2013). Challenging behaviors create stress for teachers as well as students and has detrimental effects on the development of the child exhibiting the behaviors (Garrity et al., 2017). Challenging behaviors can be exhibited in many forms, with the universal attribute being interferences with daily routines (Artman-Meeker & Hemmeter, 2013).

1.1 Statement of the Problem

Challenging behaviors of children in the classroom, specifically those children who have been identified as having behavioral disorders, are a substantial contributing factor to teacher stress and attrition (Brownell & Smith, 1993). Teacher attrition is defined as a teacher's act of transferring, exiting, or leaving a job or education field due to job dissatisfaction (Billingsley, 1993). Persistent challenging behaviors of children in early childhood special and general education classes can lead to a cycle of stressful teacher and student interactions. Teachers may begin to feel inadequate in their own ability to manage a child's challenging behaviors, therefore leading to a reduction in quality instruction and more challenging behaviors from students (Brownell & Smith, 1993).

Approximately 10% to 20% of preschool aged children exhibit challenging behaviors in the classroom (Garrity et al., 2017). When a preschooler's challenging behaviors include aggressive behaviors, they are more likely to persist through elementary school as well as adolescence. Not only can a child's challenging behaviors be unsafe and disruptive for other students and their learning, but the behaviors can also lead to the child dropping out of school, peer isolation, delinquency, and poor emotional regulations (Garrity et al., 2017). Preschool aged children's education can also be disrupted by challenging behaviors through means of suspension and expulsion. When preschool students are compared to their kindergarten through twelfth grade peers, preschool students have proven to be more than three times as likely to be expelled from their education programs for challenging behaviors (Gilliam, 2005). Because the early years of a child's life determine his or her ability to learn, grow, and develop in a healthy manner, removing a child from their education setting via suspension and/or expulsion interferes with his or her typical development (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, N/A). In order for children to be able to replace negative behaviors with positive social and academic outcomes, it is crucial that early childhood education programs promote the knowledge and skills needed for pre-service teachers working with children who exhibit challenging behaviors. This, in turn, may reduce the rate at which preschool-aged children are being suspended and expelled as well as teacher attrition.

1.2 Research Questions

The purpose of this study was to gather the perceptions of early childhood education pre-service teachers on their preparedness as well as the supports they feel are necessary

for the mastery of skills required to work with children exhibiting challenging behaviors in the classroom. Through the use of an online survey disseminated to pre-service teachers in their final year of their undergraduate education program, the following research questions were addressed: 1) How prepared do pre-service teachers feel to provide services to children with challenging behaviors in the classroom? and 2) What kind of hands-on learning experiences are pre-service teachers receiving from their undergraduate programs to prepare them to serve children with challenging behaviors? It was hypothesized that early childhood education pre-service teachers will feel inadequately prepared to serve children with challenging behaviors due to lack of proper hands-on learning experiences provided to them by their undergraduate programs.

CHAPTER 2: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

To identify relevant literature on teacher preparation and children's challenging behaviors in classrooms, the following EBSCOhost research databases were searched: PsycINFO and ERIC. The terms *social-emotional learning and early childhood, social-emotional development in early childhood and special education, pre-service or teacher candidates or preservice teachers or student teachers and classroom management and early childhood education, preservice teachers and classroom management, early childhood education suspension and expulsion rates, challenging behaviors and preschool expulsions,* and *teacher attrition* were terms and phrases used in the electronic search. In addition, the academic search engine Google Scholar was explored to locate further resources for the literature review.

2.1 Theoretical Framework

A teacher's ability to manage challenging behaviors in the classroom depend on many contributing factors. Some of these factors include teacher disposition, self-efficacy, and self-regulation. A teacher's awareness of and belief that they can control their own emotions in the presence of stress increases their likelihood to calmly approach the challenging behaviors that might occur in the classroom (Jennings, 2015). Bandura's (1991) social cognitive theory of self-regulation is a theoretical influence for this research study. Self-regulation is defined as the human ability to intercede external influences on behavior. Bandura also theorized that self-regulation is the basis for an individual's ability to choose actions that hold purpose, rather than constant instinctual reactions to stimuli. Most purposeful human behavior is controlled by an individual's ability to practice forethought. According to Bandura, forethought allows humans to form beliefs

about their own capabilities, anticipate the consequences of their actions, set new goals, and plan purposeful actions that will produce the most desire outcome. When utilizing self-regulation and forethought, a teacher can better control his or her own responses to the challenging behaviors of the children in their classroom. More focus on skills such as self-regulation and forethought by early childhood education programs during pre-service teachers' field experiences may benefit pre-service teachers when preparing them to serve children with challenging behaviors.

2.2 Challenging Behaviors in the Classroom

Challenging behaviors are described as ones that interfere with the daily classroom routine; prevent a child's appropriate interaction with peers and/or classroom materials; and/or cause harm to oneself, peers, faculty and staff, and/or school property. These behaviors can be exhibited through a child's unwillingness to follow instructions or rules; speaking disruptively during group learning time; taking toys and materials from peers without permission; using off-limit classroom materials (i.e., teacher supplies, toys that require teacher guidance, closed centers, etc.); physical and aggressive outbursts; tantrums; and/or fleeing from helpful teachers and staff members (Artman-Meeker & Hemmeter, 2013). Children who struggle with challenging behaviors are continuing to enter early childhood education settings at an increasing rate. Because of the continually increasing rate, it is understandable that classroom teachers consider challenging behaviors an area in which they desire more training (Artman-Meeker & Hemmeter, 2013, p. 112). Early intervention in early childhood education settings prevent children from having more persistent and long-term challenging behaviors throughout their lives both academically and socially (Garrity et al., 2017). When teachers do not receive

proper training for managing challenging behaviors in the classroom, they are not only unable to complete instruction, but they also are unable to best serve the child who is presenting the challenging behaviors.

As previously mentioned, research shows that approximately 10-20% of children in preschool exhibit challenging behavior (Garrity et al., 2017). This percentage is also higher for children who are considered at-risk, such as those from low-income households and those that have developmental delays (Carter & Norman, 2010). While many preschool teachers express that children's challenging behaviors in the classroom are the biggest inhibitor of successful education for all students, it is estimated that less than 10% of children exhibiting challenging behaviors actually receive services for them. This shows that early childhood education preschool teachers may not have adequate training or access to resources in order to put evidence-based approaches to practice (Carter & Norman, 2010, p. 279). However, even when children are receiving services for their challenging behaviors, preschool teachers that serve children with identified disabilities still report that they feel they require more training on managing children's challenging behaviors (Gebbie, Ceglowski, Taylor, & Miels, 2012). Teachers also have reported that children with behavioral delays and challenging behaviors are more difficult to work than their peers with any other type of identified disability. These reports suggest that teachers feel unprepared to manage children's challenging behaviors in the classroom regardless of the child's disability status or the type of classroom. Pre-service teachers' training, personal perceptions, and stress management skills have also shown to be significant influences on teachers' preparedness for serving children challenging behaviors in the classroom (Gebbie et al., 2012, p. 35).

2.3 Impact on Students

When children ages three to six do not receive interventions for their challenging behaviors, they can experience a negative impact on their development. These children are more likely to experience peer rejection, have negative interactions with family members and school professionals, and end up in the juvenile justice system (Carter & Norman, 2010). Consequences such as these are even more difficult to combat when the challenging behaviors persist up until children reach third grade (Gebbie et al., 2012). Throughout their lives, children with persisting challenging behaviors are at higher risk for failing or dropping out of school, substance abuse, divorce, unemployment, mental illnesses, and premature death when compared to children of other disability status and categories (Carter & Norman, 2010; Gebbie et al., 2012). While research shows that children's healthy social-emotional and behavioral development is crucial for academic and lifelong success, a greater focus is placed on cognitive and academic development when preparing children for kindergarten (Yates et al., 2008).

Children's brains develop rapidly in the early year of their lives making socialemotional development a necessary focus for early childhood education program. Beginning this process of fostering social-emotional development at a child's earliest age possible allows for the greatest impact on his or her development (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services & U.S. Department of Education, 2015). It has been reported that 60% of children begin school with the necessary cognitive skills for success while only 40% of children enter school with the necessary social-emotional skills (Yates et al., 2008). Without focus on social-emotional development in early childhood, children are set up for failure rather than success throughout their lives.

Along with obvious concerns for development among preschool-age children with challenging behaviors, there is a significant disproportion in suspension and expulsions for these young children as well (Garrity et al., 2017) Preschool students are more than three times as likely to be suspended or expelled from their education programs than their K-12 peers (Gilliam, 2005), with African-American preschool students being suspended and expelled at four times the rate of their European American peers (Public School Forum of North Carolina, N/A). The cause for preschool suspension and expulsion most frequently reported in Gilliam's (2005) study was challenging behaviors. More recent data collected by the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2014) states that preschool-age boys of color and preschool-age children with identified disabilities are 3 to 4 times as often suspended or expelled for challenging behaviors.

Suspensions and expulsions from educational settings aim to remove the student exhibiting challenging behaviors from the setting, temporarily alleviate stress for teachers and staff, and to alert parents of persistent challenging behaviors and disruption in the classroom (Chin, Dowdy, Jimerson, & Rime, 2012). However, this approach can become counterproductive. When a child is removed from an educational program based solely on their challenging behaviors, educational access is denied to the child that most needs it. A child's school should be a safe place providing them with generous support to develop academic as well as social and emotional skills. However, when they are being pushed out of their programs, they may learn to see school and authority as stressors and threats instead of supporters (Adamu & Hogan, 2015). Research shows that a child's social-emotional development can be positively influenced when early identification and intervention of social emotional needs is prioritized (Yates et al., 2008). Because of this,

it is integral to provide proper training for pre-service teachers managing children's challenging behaviors to reduce the occurrence of unnecessary removal of children from early childhood settings and in turn, reducing detrimental effects on the young children's lives.

2.4 Impact on Teachers

Challenging behaviors create stress for teachers and disrupt the learning of the entire classroom. When challenging behaviors are presented by students, they can derail the classroom environment routine established by the teacher (Jennings, 2015). With the increasing number of children entering school with behavioral challenges (Hemmeter et al., 2008), they are at risk of persistent difficulties with emotional regulation and anger management (Jennings, 2015). In order for teachers to appropriately support the needs of children with challenging behaviors, teachers must also be capable of their own emotional regulation. In moments of student-initiated stress, teachers' proper emotional regulation will promote their own cognitive functioning as well as their self-efficacy in managing the emotions of their students. When teachers consistently fail to regulate their high levels of emotion during times of distress, they are more likely to decrease in instructional performance, increase the challenging behaviors of students, and are more likely to leave their jobs sooner than their peers (Jennings, 2015). Research shows that teachers who have difficulty managing stressful situations are found to spend more than 20% of their time partaking in negative teacher-student interactions and only 5% of their time in positive teacher-student interactions with children exhibiting challenging behaviors (Gebbie et al., 2012). This leads to a continuous cycle of challenging behaviors from students and negative interactions and stress from teachers.

When working and interacting with children exhibiting challenging behaviors in the classroom, it is the duty of the teachers to provide the necessary interventions for these children. Teachers' skill level and self-efficacy play crucial roles in the process of promoting the success of these interventions (Gebbie et al., 2012). When teachers possess high levels of self-efficacy, teachers use more positive intervention strategies such as praise, reinforcement, and modeling appropriate behaviors when working with children with behavior problems. School environments and pre-service teacher training programs that foster the development of teacher self-efficacy and emotional regulation can promote healthy student-teacher interactions, reduce teacher stress, and reduce challenging behaviors. While on-site in-service teacher training may contribute to self-efficacy, research shows a gap between what teachers learn in on-site trainings and what they practice in the classroom (Gebbie et al., 2012). Training on emotional regulation, selfreflection, and practicing strategies for managing challenging behaviors in pre-service teacher programs could help reduce this gap.

2.5 Training for Pre-Service Teachers

While teachers commonly receive support and training for working with children with challenging behaviors once they are working in their own classrooms, it is important to prepare teachers on realistic expectations and strategies for classroom management before their first year in their job. Many schools now implement school-wide behavior models such as the Teaching Pyramid to provide support for their students' socialemotional needs at a primary (implementing supportive learning environments), secondary (targeted social-emotional education), and tertiary level (individualized behavioral intervention plans) (Hemmeter et al., 2008). However, lack of instructional

and content continuity throughout undergraduate courses as well as lack of specific expertise needed by faculty members make it difficult to include training for future educators on the use of the Teaching Pyramid in pre-service teacher training programs (Hemmeter et al., 2008).

Research by Akdağ and Haser (2016) illustrated that courses devoted to field experiences as well as student teaching placements for pre-service teachers play an important role in the development of classroom management skills. The research also displayed that pre-service teachers may benefit from more opportunities to implement their own rule setting, classroom management strategies, and conflict resolutions while under the supervision of a Clinical Educator, rather than simply learning through observation of the Clinical Educator's strategies. This will help prevent teachers from learning through trial and error when leading their own classrooms post-graduation. Preservice teacher training programs should allow for field experiences that prepare preservice teacher with realistic expectations, as well as appropriate strategies to work with children exhibiting challenging behaviors (Hemmeter et al., 2008). This may provide preservice teachers with skills to promote social-emotional development beginning in their field experiences rather than feeling like observers (Akdağ & Haser, 2016; Hemmeter et al., 2008). Pre-service teachers may benefit from having the opportunity to identify which techniques work best for them as individuals, implementing interventions under the supervision of licensed professionals, and being able to ask professionals questions and receive feedback before entering their own classrooms (Akdağ & Haser, 2016).

Teachers' self-efficacy is a crucial factor in their success for managing challenging behaviors in the classroom. This self-efficacy is increased when teachers continue to have positive professional experiences (Gebbies et al., 2011). This history of positive professional experiences can begin in undergraduate teacher training programs when pre-service teachers are given the appropriate opportunities throughout their courses and field experiences. Providing learning experiences for pre-service teachers that are hands-on, promote social-emotional development in children, increase teachers' ability to regulate their own emotions all while under the supervision of professionals that can provide feedback could influence the development of self-efficacy in teachers before they enter their own classrooms post-graduation.

Macy, Squires, and Barton (2009) stated that field experiences and student teaching placements are essential components in the development of qualified early childhood educators. They also stated that the most successful early childhood education teacher licensing programs are those that include field experiences that align with the teachings of the programs, provide diverse experiences in term of classrooms and students, and involve qualified and knowledgeable clinical educators. The research by Macy et als (2009) also showed that it is important that field experiences in these programs provide opportunities in which student teachers can receive feedback, apply their coursework knowledge to the classrooms, and participate in authentic classroom responsibilities and experiences in which the student teachers can practice their own techniques. When early childhood education teacher licensing programs include these elements, they help to develop qualified, professional early childhood educators. If programs intend to maximize the impact that field experiences can have on student

teachers' ability to serve children with challenging behavior, the programs must cover the content in undergraduate courses to allow for retention of strategies as well as provide realistic opportunities for student teachers to engage with children exhibiting challenging behaviors (Akdağ & Haser, 2016; Hemmeter et al., 2008). These experiences will also allow for student teachers to practice what they have learned and receive proper feedback from professionals as suggested by Macy and colleagues (2009).

2.6 Summary

Equipping pre-service teachers with the skills necessary to promote young children's social-emotional development from the beginning of the pre-service teachers' undergraduate education program could give them enough time to master these skills before leading their own classrooms post-graduation. Many teacher training programs provide sufficient training on how to best create and instruct a developmentally appropriate lesson plan, how to communicate with families, and how to accommodate for different learning styles and abilities. However, teachers still struggle to diffuse some of the challenging behaviors and conflicts presented by young children in the classroom, leading to unhealthy social-emotional development for these children and more stress for the teacher. If pre-service teachers received more hands-on opportunities to practice managing children with challenging behaviors throughout the pre-service teachers' undergraduate education, they may be more likely to experience higher levels of self-regulation and self-efficacy in their abilities to manage challenging behaviors once they are leading their own classrooms.

CHAPTER 3: METHODOLOGY

Past literature has shown that early childhood educators are continuously feeling unprepared to serve children with challenging behaviors (Akdağ and Haser, 2016; Hemmeter et al., 2008). The aim of this study was to investigate what about challenging behaviors make pre-service teachers feel the most unprepared as well as what types of experiences might be provided to best help prepare pre-service teachers to serve children with challenging behaviors. A researcher-developed online survey was used to provide information on these topics.

3.1 Participants and Setting

Through the use of a convenience sample, the survey was distributed to approximately 100 pre-service teachers in their final year of their undergraduate education program at four-year universities in the southeast. A portion of the participants were contacted through the Birth-Kindergarten Higher Education Consortium email list. An introduction letter, consent form, and link to the online survey were sent via email to members of the Birth-Kindergarten Higher Education Consortium to be distributed via email amongst the undergraduate students of said members. Another portion of the participants were given hard copy versions of the survey to complete during a student teaching seminar at their university with an introduction letter and consent form. In order to be eligible for the study, participants were required to be completing their final semester of their student teaching in a birth-kindergarten pre-service teacher licensing education program. Participants also were required to be at least 18 years of age and English speaking to participate.

The final sample included 21 pre-service teachers in their final year of their undergraduate education. In this sample, 19 of the participants were completing a bachelor's degree in Child and Family Development, one was completing a degree in Early Childhood Development Birth-Kindergarten, and one was Child Development Birth-Kindergarten. Of these participants, 52.3% (n=11) were placed in NC Pre-K classrooms, 23.8% (n=5) were placed in blended early childhood classrooms, 9.5% (n=2) were in Kindergarten classrooms, 4.8% (n=1) were in self-contained classrooms, 4.8% (n=1) were in Title 1 Pre-K classrooms, and 4.8% (n=1) were in Head Start classrooms. All of the participants had variety of teacher preparation field experiences in a variety of birth-kindergarten classroom including Head Start classroom (n=20), blended classrooms (n=8), NC Pre-K classrooms (18), Reggio Emilia classrooms (n-11), self-contained classrooms (n=7), and Montessori classrooms (n=5). The majority of the participants were between the ages of 21-23 (n=16), two were between the ages of 24-30, two were over the age of 30, and one was between the ages of 18-20. Eighty-one percent (n=17) of the participants were white, 9.5% (n=2) were black or African American, 4.8% (n=1) were Hispanic or Latino, and 4.8% (n=1) were Native American or American Indian Asian/Pacific Islander. All 21 participants identified as female.

3.2 Instrument

The participants completed a quantitative online researcher-designed survey (Appendix C). The survey was created using a review of the literature information specific to preparing early childhood educators on children social-emotional development and challenging behaviors (Hemmeter et al., 2008), as well as the training and feedback on teacher's preventive practices (Artman-Meeker & Hemmeter, 2013), and on early

childhood educators' classroom management (Akdağ & Haser, 2016). The survey included 22 questions addressing four different sections: (a) demographic information, (b) confidence level on ability to lesson plan, modify lessons for children's individual needs, communicate with parents, and to prepare IEP's, (c) confidence level serving children with challenging behaviors and implementing different classroom management strategies, and (d) pre-service teachers' past opportunities for hands-on training for serving children with challenging behaviors during field experiences. Consent was gained using a form preceding survey participation (Appendix B). The survey was estimated to take 10-15 minutes to complete.

3.3 Procedure

Prior to distribution of the survey, the final draft was reviewed by experts in the field of Child and Family Studies and Special Education Programs for approval and feedback on content validity. The feedback received by the researcher from the experts regarding the survey influenced modifications made to the measurement before it was distributed to participants in the study. After receiving approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB), an introduction letter (Appendix A), consent form (Appendix B), and link to the online survey were sent via email to members of the North Carolina BirthKindergarten Higher Education Consortium asking for their participation in the research study. Hard copies of the consent form and survey were distributed during a student teaching seminar and collected by the researcher. The survey was also distributed to the undergraduate students working under faculty members of the Higher Education Consortium that agreed to participate in the study. After one week of the initial online survey distribution, a reminder email was sent to participants to encourage participation

during another two weeks of survey availability. A following reminder email was sent out after two weeks of initial survey distribution to encourage participation during the final week of survey availability. This provided a total of 21 days for participants to complete the survey.

Prior to distribution of the survey, the final draft was reviewed by three experts in the field of Child and Family Studies and Special Education for approval and feedback on content validity. These experts were chosen due to their range of experiences and knowledge in training pre-service teachers. The feedback received by the researcher from the experts regarding the survey influenced modifications made to the measurement before it was distributed to participants in the study. After receiving approval from Institutional Review Board (IRB), an introduction letter (Appendix A), consent form (Appendix B), and link to the online survey were sent via email to members of the North Carolina Birth-Kindergarten Higher Education Consortium. Once receiving approval, hard copies of the consent form and survey were distributed during a student teaching seminar and via email to the undergraduate students of faculty members of the Higher Education Consortium. After one week of the initial online survey distribution, a reminder email was sent to participants to encourage participation during another two weeks of survey availability. A following reminder email was sent out after two weeks of initial survey distribution to encourage participation during the final week of survey availability. This provided a total of 21 days for participants to complete the survey.

3.4 Design and Data Analysis

The data collected through the survey was processed and analyzed through

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software by Qualtrics. Data on (a) demographic information; (b) name of B-K licensing program; (c) how prepared preservice teachers feel to prepare and modify lesson plans, communicate with parents, and prepare IEP's; (d) how prepared pre-service teachers feel in regards to serving children with challenging behaviors; (e) how prepared pre-service teachers feel in regards to regulating their own emotions and modeling this process for the children in their classrooms; (f) how prepared pre-service teachers feel in regards to the use of verbal praise for the children in their classroom; and (g) what kinds of experiences have they received in their field placements to prepare them to serve children with challenging behaviors in the classroom were also asked in the survey. The researcher and committee chair communicated periodically throughout the duration of data coding in order to discuss the data collection and coding process. Data was transferred from SurveyShare into SPSS (IBM Corp, 2013) for data analysis. No names or identifiable participant information were used in data collection and confidentiality was maintained with numerical values assigned to participant responses. Descriptive statistics were used to document demographic information and survey responses. Counts and percentages were used for describing nominal data.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

The researcher gained perspective on the two following research questions through the use of descriptive statistics: 1) How prepared do pre-service teachers feel to provide services to children with challenging behaviors in the classroom? and 2) What kind of hands-on learning experiences are pre-service teachers receiving from their undergraduate programs to prepare them to serve children with challenging behaviors? The results are presented by research question and survey question themes.

4.1 Research Question 1

Preparedness Levels for Common Teacher Requirements. When asked about their preparedness level for common requirements and expectations for teachers, majority of pre-service teachers said they felt prepared to accomplish these duties (Refer to Table 1). Over 61% (n=17) of pre-service teachers said they felt adequately prepared to create lesson plans for the children in their classrooms. Nineteen percent (n=4) of participants felt somewhat prepared to create lesson plans and the other 19% (n=4) stated that they felt extremely prepared. Regarding their preparedness level for modifying lessons to meet the needs of the children in their classrooms, about 38% (n=8) of pre-service teachers felt adequately prepared, about 38% (n=8) felt somewhat prepared, and over 23% (n=5) felt extremely prepared. Over 42% (n=9) reported feeling adequately prepared to appropriately communicate with parents and guardians of the children in their classroom, over 33% (n=7) felt somewhat prepared, 19% (n=4) felt extremely prepared, and 4.8% (n=1) felt not at all prepared. When asked about their preparedness levels to participate in creating Individualized Education Plans (IEPs) over 61% (n=13) of pre-service teachers

responded saying they felt somewhat prepared, 19% (n=4) felt not at all prepared, over 14% (n=3) felt adequately prepared, and 4.8% (n=1) felt extremely prepared.

Table 1: *Common Teacher Requirements Preparedness Levels*

Teacher Requirement	Preparedness Level %
Creating Lesson Plans	Not at all prepared: 0.0 Somewhat prepared: 19.0 Adequately prepared: 61.9 Extremely prepared: 19.0
Modifying Lesson Plans	Not at all prepared: 0.0 Somewhat prepared: 38.1 Adequately prepared: 38.1 Extremely prepared: 23.8
Communicating with Parents and Guardians	Not at all prepared: 4.8 Somewhat prepared: 33.3 Adequately prepared: 42.9 Extremely prepared: 19.0
Preparing IEPs	Not at all prepared: 19.0 Somewhat prepared: 61.9 Adequately prepared: 14.3 Extremely prepared: 4.8

Preparedness Levels for Challenging Behaviors. When asked to report their feelings of preparedness for serving children with challenging behaviors in the classroom overall over 42% (n=9) of participants felt somewhat prepared, approximately 38% (n=8) felt adequately prepared, and 19% (n=4) felt extremely prepared (Refer to Table 2). Over 47% (n=10) of pre-service teachers felt somewhat prepared to serve child with aggressive behaviors in the classroom, approximately 33% (n=7) felt adequately prepared, 9.5% felt (n=2) felt extremely prepared, and 9.5% (n=2) felt not at all prepared.

More than 71% (n=15) of preservice teachers felt adequately prepared to appropriately manage disruptive behaviors in the classroom, almost 24% (n=5) felt somewhat prepared, and 4.8% (n=1) felt extremely prepared. More than 71% (n=15) also felt adequately prepared to resolve conflicts in the classroom, 19% (n=4) felt extremely prepared, and 9.5% (n=2) felt somewhat prepared. When asked about their preparedness levels to manage a child's use of foul language in the classroom, about 52% (n=11) of participants felt adequately prepared, about 38% (n=8) felt somewhat prepared, 4.8% (n=1) let extremely prepared and 4.8% (n=1) felt not at all prepared.

Table 2: *Challenging Behaviors Preparedness Levels*

Types of Behavior	Preparedness Level %
Overall Challenging Behaviors	Not at all prepared: 0.0 Somewhat prepared: 42.9 Adequately prepared: 38.1 Extremely prepared: 19.0
Aggressive/Potentially Dangerous Behaviors	Not at all prepared: 9.5 Somewhat prepared: 47.6 Adequately prepared: 33.3 Extremely prepared: 9.5
Disruption	Not at all prepared: 0.0 Somewhat prepared: 23.8 Adequately prepared: 71.4 Extremely prepared: 4.8
Conflicts	Not at all prepared: 0.0 Somewhat prepared: 9.5 Adequately prepared: 71.4 Extremely prepared: 19.0

Table 2: *Challenging Behaviors Preparedness Levels (Continued)*

Foul Language	Not at all prepared: 4.8 Somewhat prepared: 38.1 Adequately prepared: 52.4 Extremely prepared: 4.8

Preparedness Levels for Strategies used with Challenging Behaviors. The participants were asked about their preparedness level to implement different strategies that can help children with challenging behaviors in the classroom (Refer to Table 3). These strategies included regulating one's own emotions, model the self-regulation of one's emotions, and using verbal praise. When asked about their preparedness level to regulate their own emotions when working with a child with challenging behaviors, about 57% (n=12) of participants reported feeling adequately prepared, over 23% (n=5) felt somewhat prepared, and 19% (n=4) felt extremely prepared. When asked about their preparedness level to model this emotional self-regulation over 47% (n=10) of participants reported feeling adequately prepared, about 38% (n=8) felt extremely prepared, and about 14% (n=3) felt somewhat prepared. About 57% (n=12) of participants reported feeling adequately prepared and over 42% (n=9) of participants felt extremely prepared to use verbal praise to focus on a child's appropriate behaviors when they occur. Participants were also asked how often they use verbal praise for appropriate behaviors compared to verbal reprimand of challenging behaviors. For this strategy, 33.3% (n=7) participants reported using slightly more verbal reprimands than verbal praise, 28.6% (n=6) used equal amounts of verbal reprimands and verbal praise, and 33.3% (n=7) used slightly

more verbal praise than verbal reprimands, and 4.8% (n=1) used almost no verbal reprimands.

Table 3: *Strategy Implementation Preparedness Levels*

Strategy	Preparedness Level %
Regulate Own Emotions	Not at all prepared: 0.0 Somewhat prepared: 23.8 Adequately prepared: 57.1 Extremely prepared: 19.0
Model Emotional Regulation	Not at all prepared: 0.0 Somewhat prepared: 14.3 Adequately prepared: 47.6 Extremely prepared: 38.1
Provide Verbal Praise	Not at all prepared: 0.0 Somewhat prepared: 0.0 Adequately prepared: 57.1 Extremely prepared: 42.9

4.2 Research Question 2

Pre-service Teacher Preparation Experiences. The participants were asked if they had the opportunity to participate in any of three different types of teacher preparation experiences. The three experiences included facilitating conflict resolution between two or more children in the classroom, participating in the preparation of a Behavioral of Individualized Education Plan for a child in the classroom, or experience implementing step from any Social Emotional Learning Programs or Pyramid Programs.

Conflict resolution: When asked about their teacher preparation experiences for serving children with challenging behaviors, 90.4% (n=19) of participants reported having the opportunity to resolve conflict while working under their Clinical Educator.

Of these participants, 23.8% (n=5) reported having the opportunity because it was required by their program and 47.6% (n=10) of participants said it was suggested by their Clinical Educator. Nineteen percent (n=4) gave written answer as to why they did have the opportunity to resolve conflict in the classroom. One of the participants stated, "it is expected for the 'day-to-day.'" Three participants stated that it just happened naturally: "My Clinical Educator was not there. I did it independently," "I am so comfortable in the room it just happened," "She (the Clinical Educator) did not ask me to do it. I did it without being told to." The other 9.6% (n=2) said they did not have the opportunity either due to the opportunity not arising or due to the respondent not feeling confident in their ability at that time.

Behavioral and Individualized Education Plans: Regarding their experiences with participating in the preparation of Behavioral Plans and/or Individualized Education Plans (IEP), 66.7% (n=14) of participants said they did have the opportunity to participate in this experience. Of those participants, 14.3% (n=3) said it was required for their program and 47.6% (n=10) said that their Clinical Educator suggested it. For those that did not have the opportunity, 4.8% (n=1) answered that they did not feel confident in their ability at the time and 4.8% (n=1) answered that their Clinical Educator would not allow it. The other 23.8% (n=5) of participants gave a written answer as to why they did not have the opportunity to participate in the preparation of these plans. One respondent wrote that they had class during the time of the meeting, another wrote that the IEP meeting took place before the respondent was assigned to the classroom, and another said that they were "not offered the chance to come along. Two participants stated that there are no children in their classes with an IEP, so the opportunity never arose.

Pre-service Teacher Use of Social Emotional Learning or Pyramid Programs: During their student teaching placement, 57.1% (n=12) of participants were able to implement the steps of a school-wide Social Emotional Learning (SEL) Program or Pyramid Program. Of these participants, 9.5% (n=2) said it was required for their program and 33.3% (n=7) said it was required by their student teaching placement. The other 14.3% (n=3) of participants gave written responses as to why they able to implement these steps. One of the participants stated that she has used steps of an SEL Program or Pyramid Program because it was part of her student teaching placement's curriculum and she used it every day. Another said that it was not required but she implemented different steps during large group lessons and meeting with her students. Another participant said that her Clinical Educator uses one of these programs and has taught some of the steps to the participant. For those who did not have the opportunity to implement any steps of these programs, 23.8% (n=5) said their student teaching placement did not implement one of these programs, but they were still familiar with them. Nineteen percent of participants, however said they were not familiar with these programs at all.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

This study was designed to collect and analyze information from pre-service teachers' perspectives about their preparation to provide services for children with challenging behaviors. Due to the wide range of responses, the results of this study are inconclusive. Based on the responses provided by the participants, it is unclear if the hands-on learning experiences contribute to the preparedness levels of pre-service

teachers as hypothesized by the researcher. Further research is required in order to determine pre-service teachers' preparedness levels and hands-on learning experiences in their undergraduate program. Limitations to the study as well as suggestions for future research are discussed in the following sections.

5.1 Limitations

It is important to discuss the multiple limitations that were present in this study. First, the response rate for an online survey was limited due to small sample size. With only 21 participants, it is difficult to generalize the data and information gathered to all pre-service teachers and their experiences. Second, the study is limited by the fact that the responses were self-reported causing the questions in the survey to be left to interpretations by the participants. Third, the use of a researcher-designed survey created a potential for researcher bias and reduced validity. Fourth, the researcher is a graduate of a four-year B-K education licensing program which created a potential bias and threat to reliability and validity of the instrument and study overall.

Fifth, the study used only a posttest gathering information about student teachers' preparedness levels at the end of their schooling as opposed to a pretest posttest design or assessment of first-year teacher preparedness levels. This limited the study's ability to evaluate the direct impact the student teacher placements had on the student teachers' preparedness levels. Sixth, the study only included pre-service teachers from four-year undergraduate Birth-Kindergarten licensing programs. This excludes the populations of pre-service teachers in two-year programs or graduate school programs. Finally, the reliance on program faculty at institutions to distribute the survey may have impacted the

amount of responses due to faculty members being hesitant to share a survey asking whether or not their programs of study prepared these students properly.

5.2 Implications and Recommendations

Past research shows that teacher preparation programs benefit from including courses devoted to field experiences because of their importance in the development of teacher's classroom management skills. When pre-service teachers have the opportunity to try multiple implementing interventions during their teacher preparation programs, they may experience more ease in handling challenging behaviors post-graduation (Akdağ & Haser, 2016). The results of this study show that the topic of pre-service teacher preparation for challenging behaviors is worthy of further investigation to identify what experiences best prepare pre-service teachers for challenging behaviors. Future research could benefit from examining the types of experiences in which preservices teachers have participated compared with their preparedness level in that same area to give a better understanding of the impact of different field experiences. Information about pre-service teachers' preparedness-levels and experiences also may be better gained through the use of focus groups combined with observations of the preservice teachers and a self-reporting survey of the pre-service teachers' preparedness levels in future studies. In order to fully evaluate the preparedness levels of pre-service teachers through self-report, the scale of preparedness levels will need to be edited to allow for more clear and specific responses. This can be done by giving two option of "unprepared" verses "prepared" or through the use of qualitative data using opening ended survey questions or the aforementioned focus group.

The survey for this study was sent to participants towards the end of the semester during their final year of their four-year programs. This being a hectic period for preservice teachers, the limited amount of responses may have been due to the timing of the survey. Future research should be done earlier in the final semester of pre-service teachers' final year in their programs. Including a pretest to gather information about the preparedness levels of pre-service teachers in their first semester of their program compared to their last semester may allow for a better assessment of the impact teacher preparation programs and field experiences have on the participants. Future research may also benefit from the perspective of first year teachers and how they feel their teacher preparation programs prepared them for what they experience in the classroom every day.

5.3 Conclusion

Challenging behaviors exhibited by students are considered by many teachers to be the most prevalent disruption to the classroom schedule. Research shows that preservice teacher training programs can benefit from providing pre-service teachers with field experiences that provide a realistic understanding of and useful strategies for students' challenging behaviors (Hemmeter et al., 2008). Early childhood education teacher licensing programs best prepare their pre-service teachers when they include field experiences that align with the teachings of their programs as well as natural, genuine, and realistic hands-on experiences in which pre-service teachers can participate (Macy et al., 2009). The purpose of this study was to gather the perceptions of early childhood education pre-service teachers on their personal levels of preparedness as well as what experiences are necessary for pre-service teachers to master the skills that are required to work with children with challenging behaviors. Overall, the findings from this study

suggest that further research is necessary to evaluate the preparedness levels of preservice teachers regarding children's challenging behaviors. Due to the small sample size, the hypothesis that pre-service teachers will feel unprepared and lack proper hands-on experiences remains unanswered. However, many recommendations for further research such as the use of focus groups, pre-tests/post-tests, and including first year teachers' self-report of preparedness levels were suggested by the researcher.

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APPENDIX A: LETTER TO CONSORTIUM MEMBERS

UNC CHARLOTTE
Cato College of Education

Department of Special Education and Child Development

9201 University City Blvd, Charlotte, NC 28223-0001
t/ 704.687.8828 f/ 704.687.1625 www.uncc.edu

Dear _____

My name is Rebecca Fitzgerald and I am currently in my final year of the Master's in Child and Family Development program at the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. I am writing to ask for your assistance in a study I have created under the supervision of Dr. Kelly Anderson, Department of Special Education and Child Development at the university. The purpose of the study is to gain information from pre-service teachers in four-year undergraduate birth-kindergarten licensure programs and their skills in serving children with challenging behaviors. The information collected through this research could help the advancement of birth-kindergarten licensure programs by allowing us to obtain knowledge on what training pre-service teachers are currently receiving or may be lacking from their programs. This could assist those instructing birth-kindergarten licensure programs in having a better understanding of what experiences will best prepare the pre-service teachers before entering their own classrooms as lead teachers.

If you agree to provide your assistance with this study, you will receive an email with an electronic survey link that I am asking you to share with the pre-service teachers in your birth-kindergarten licensure program. The inclusion criteria for participation is that the participants must be pre-service teachers in their final semester of their four-year undergraduate birth-kindergarten licensure programs. If you agree to assist in this study, please send an email containing the survey link directly to all pre-service teachers in their final semester of your program. The survey is estimated to take approximately 10-15 minutes of candidate's time and participation is entirely voluntary. The survey is

completely anonymous meaning that participation and data cannot be connected back to any participants. I hope that candidates find their participation in this survey as a unique opportunity to reflect on and share their experiences in their undergraduate programs to benefit the education of future pre-service teachers. The opinions of participants on this topic are incredibly important to us and the process of this research. Thank you for your time; this study can only succeed with the support of people like you.

Thank you again for your support,

Rebecca Fitzgerald
Candidate for Masters of Education Child & Family Studies, UNC-Charlotte
704-960-3515, rfitzge7@uncc.edu

Dr. Kelly Anderson
Ph.D Special Education and Child Development
Associate Professor, UNC-Charlotte
704-687-8832, keanders@uncc.edu

APPENDIX B: INFORMED CONSENT FOR PARTICIPANTS

Subject Line: Pre-Service Preparation for Challenging Behaviors Survey

To whom it may concern,

My name is Rebecca, and I am currently working towards the completion of a Master's in Child and Family Studies from the University of North Carolina at Charlotte. I am entering the final phase of my program and ask your assistance in completing my research by participating in a short survey. Preparation for serving children with challenging behaviors in the classroom is a crucial aspect for birth-kindergarten teacher licensure programs. The purpose of this research is to investigate pre-service teachers' perceptions of their preparation to serve children with challenging behaviors in the classroom. The inclusion criteria for participants is pre-service teachers in their final semester of their undergraduate four-year birth-kindergarten licensing program.

Your participation in the survey is entirely voluntary. Responses are anonymous and cannot be linked directly to any participants. In addition, your decision to participate is completely confidential from your licensing program and will not impact your education in any way. The survey should take approximately 10-15 minutes to complete and is mobile friendly. Your perceptions are valued and important to the research. Thank you in advance for your time, support, and participation. Please contact me or Dr. Kelly Anderson, my committee chair, if you have any questions or concerns or you may contact the UNC-Charlotte Compliance Office, 704-687-1871 or uncc-irb@uncc.edu. Please click on the link below to complete the survey.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Fitzgerald

Candidate for Masters of Education Child & Family Studies, UNC-Charlotte

704-960-3515, rfitzge7@uncc.edu

Kelly Anderson

Ph.D Special Education and Child Development

Associate Professor, UNC-Charlotte

704-687-8832, keanders@uncc.edu

APPENDIX C: PRE-SERVICE TEACHER SURVEY

Challenging behaviors is defined as any child behavior that disrupts instruction, activities, or learning for a child or children in the classroom.

Self-regulation is defined as the process of managing one's emotions (such as calming down when one is upset).

Pre-Service Teacher Preparation for Challenging Behaviors (Pilot)

1) Current age:

18-20

21-23

24-30

30+

2) Gender identity:

Male

Female

Non-binary/third gender

Prefer not to say

3) Ethnicity:

White

Hispanic or Latino

Black or African American

Native American or American Indian Asian / Pacific Islander

Other

4) Name of the Birth-Kindergarten licensing program in which you are currently enrolled (i.e. Early Childhood Education, Child and Family Studies, etc.):

5) Please select the type of classroom in which you are current completing your student teacher placement. Select all that apply:

Self-Contained Classroom

Blended Classroom

NC Pre-K Classroom

Headstart Classroom

Montessori Classroom

Reggio Emilia Classroom

Other: _____

6) In which type of classroom(s) have you had experience in your throughout your teacher preparation training? Select all that apply:

Self-Contained Classroom

Blended Classroom

NC Pre-K Classroom

Headstart Classroom

Montessori Classroom

Reggio Emilia Classroom

7) Given your current level of experience in your B-K licensing program, how prepared do you feel to create lesson plans for the children in your classroom?

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

8) Given your current level of experience in your B-K licensing program, how prepared do you feel to modify lessons based on the individual needs of each child in your classroom?

Not all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

9) Given your current level of experience in your B-K licensing program, how prepared do you feel to communicate appropriately with parents/guardians and family members of the children in your classroom?

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

10) Given your current level of experience in your B-K licensing program, how prepared do you feel to participate in the preparation of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) for the children in your classroom?

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

11) Given your current level of experience in your B-K licensing program, how prepared do you feel to serve children with challenging behaviors in the classroom?

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

12) When working with a child with challenging classroom behaviors, how prepared do you feel to appropriately manage aggressive/potentially dangerous behaviors? (i.e. hitting, kicking, biting, etc)

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

13) When working with a child with challenging classroom behaviors, how prepared do you feel to appropriately manage disruption of classroom lessons and learning? (i.e. talking during circle, leaving small group, leaving circle, etc.)

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

14) When working with a child with challenging classroom behaviors, how prepared do you feel to resolve conflict between two or more children? (i.e. one child taking another child's toy, one child knocking down another child's tower of blocks, two children wanting the same chair, etc.)

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

15) When working with a child with challenging classroom behaviors, how prepared do you feel to manage a child's use of foul language in front of peers?

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

16) When working with a child with challenging classroom behaviors, how prepared do you feel to regulate your own emotions?

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

17) When working with a child with challenging classroom behaviors, how prepared do you feel to model your own emotional self-regulation for said child? (i.e. verbally talking through the process of calming down, modeling problem-solving in times of stress, etc.)

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

18) When working with a child with challenging classroom behaviors, how prepared do you feel to use verbal praise to focus on the child's appropriate behaviors when they occur? (i.e. "You put your bookbag away all by yourself. Awesome job!")

Not at all prepared

Somewhat prepared

Adequately prepared

Extremely prepared

19) During your current student teaching placement, how often do you use verbal praise for the appropriate behaviors of the children in your classroom compared to verbal reprimand of challenging behaviors? (i.e. "Shelby, you are sitting so nicely at circle" verses "Anthony, stop getting out of your seat")

Almost no verbal praise

Slightly more verbal reprimands than verbal praise

Equal verbal reprimands and verbal praise

Slightly more verbal praise than verbal reprimands

Almost no verbal reprimands

20) During your current student teaching placement, has your Clinical Educator provided you with an opportunity to resolve a conflict between one or more children in the class?

Yes, it was required for my program.

Yes, my Clinical Educator suggested it.

No, I did not feel confident in my ability to resolve a conflict at the time.

No, my Clinical Educator would not allow it.

No, other reason. Explain:_____

Yes, other reason. Explain:_____

21) During your current student teaching placement, has your Clinical Educator provided you with an opportunity to participate in the preparation for a Behavioral Plan or Individualized Education Plan?

Yes, it was required for my program.

Yes, my Clinical Educator suggested it.

No, I did not feel confident in my ability to participate at the time.

No, my Clinical Educator would not allow it.

No, other reason. Explain:_____

Yes, other reason. Explain:_____

22) During your current student teaching placement, were you able to implement any steps of a school-wide Social Emotional Learning Program or Pyramid Program with the help of your Clinical Educator? (i.e. Positive Behavior Supports (PBS), Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Learning (CSEFEL), Becky Bailey's Conscious Discipline)

Yes, it was required for my program.

Yes, it was required by my student teaching placement.

No, my student teaching placement does not implement one of these programs, but I am familiar with

them.

No, I am unfamiliar with these programs.

No, other reason. Explain:_____

Yes, other reason. Explain:_____

APPENDIX D: TIMELINE OF STUDY

DATE	RESEARCH ACTIVITY
February 5 2019	Defend Proposal to Committee
February 6 and 7 2019	Pilot Instrument
February 8 and 9 2019	Review Pilot Study Feedback/Revise Instrument
February 10 2019	IRBIS Submission
March 2019	IRB Approval
March/April 2019	Implement Survey
April/May 2019	Analyze and Organize Data
May/June 2019	Write Final Report
June/July 2019	Submit Thesis Draft to Chair for Revision
July/August 2019	Revise Final Report
July/August 2019	Submit to Committee
August/September 2019	Defend Thesis