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Behavior Support Intervention Programs in K-12 Public Schools

by

Kali Preisinger

A Thesis

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Abstract

This paper presents an overview of the juvenile delinquency concept, trends in behaviors in public school systems, factors that have been linked to the situational and social learning, and public school systems efforts to reduce and prevent delinquent behavior in K-12 public schools. Some suggestions are made to improve understanding of student's behavior due to outside influences as well as behavior intervention programs in which can be helpful in delinquent behavior prevention. These behaviors range from minor socially unacceptable acts such as disrespect and interruption, to criminal acts, such as assault and illegal possession and selling of drugs. School failure in including prevention programs places students at higher risk for involvement in juvenile correctional facilities, gang related activities, or even a lifetime of delinquent behavior. The aim of this study was to examine the effects of behavior intervention programs in establishing higher-quality learning environments and overall improved behaviors.

Keywords: Juvenile delinquency, public school systems, behavior intervention programs

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Discipline Behaviors in Public Schools

The St. Cloud Area School District 742 took disciplinary actions against students a total of 971 times within its 16 schools throughout the 2018-2019 school year (Minnesota Department of Education, 2019). Of the 9,457 students in these schools, there are 290 in grades K-5, 385 in grades 6-8, and 299 in grades 9-12 (Minnesota Department of Education, 2019). Within the first month of the brand new Technical High School's opening in St. Cloud Area School District 742, a fight violent enough to charge five felonies and 14 gross misdemeanors took place (St. Cloud Times, 2019). Felony charges include third-degree assault, aiding and abetting third-degree assault, second-degree riot, terroristic threats and possessing a dangerous weapon on school property. The fight occurring on September 25, 2019, prompted a large police response and put Tech High School in lockdown; classes resumed as normal the following day with a police presence as a precautionary step for the safety of other students and staff members. Student problem behavior at school is one of the most stressful challenges that teachers and school other school staff are faced with. During the 2015-2016 academic year, more than 291,100 students were referred or subjected to school-related arrest in Minnesota, 82,800 were students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2018). Additional education and resources are put into place to help students succeed both in their educational growth and their development of social skills. Strong tradition of behavioral science, in particular, applied behavior analysis, and positive behavior support (PBS) evolved to improve and extend comprehensive interventions for individuals with severe problem behavior and developmental disabilities (Carr, et al., 1999; Sugai & Horner, 2002; Sugai, et al., 2000). There is a significant

problem with in-school behavior in today's society and working to get students proper emotional and mental health services could slowly eliminate the number of students getting discipline write ups and entering the legal system. As my colleagues have said, "the 2019-2020 school year simply became out of our control as the students began to violently run the student body".

Negative behaviors and attitudes considered to be adolescent delinquency can unequivocally make a devastating impact on a youth's life early on. Juvenile delinquency is considered to be negative behavior of children and teens that may result in crimes and/or legal action—frequently causes widespread problems in communities (Rand Corporation., 2019). The negative behaviors of youth began to be recognized in the 18th century, when the incarceration and rehabilitation era began. Before the establishment of juvenile youth under the age of 7 could not be tried because it was believed that they were incapable of forming the criminal intents. Youth between the ages of 7 and 14 were generally thought to be incapable of committing a criminal act. Although, this could be disproved if the youth who committed the crime knew it was a crime or knew it would be harmful to another person.

Typically, it starts with the school system. Schools are institutions established to help young people realize their best potentialities and to develop into wholesome personalities and useful citizens. Public schools are instruments of the state, organized so that all the children of all the people can receive a good common school education. This implies that schools deal in education, a process by which the behavior of people is improved so that they may think, feel, and act differently than they did before. As I have seen in my experience the students usually belong to a particular system in the school. This could include past interventions, detentions, in school suspension, out of school suspension, or even expulsion in the most serious matters.

Typically, the schools Behavior Support Specialists, Bully and Violence Prevention Specialists, Paraprofessionals, and Administration do all they can to be understanding and supportive of each student. District employees understand that youth are going through a lot emotionally, mentally, and physically which could be the root to issues they are having. Schools typically would not take the more serious actions unless the delinquent behavior is continuous. The school, as a part of society, and together with all other agencies, has the responsibility to help adjust school and society to the needs of the individual student so that they help them build up self-respect, self-confidence, and hopefully orientation to their life. Consequently, it can be acknowledged that school is related to juvenile delinquency in three ways; it may produce delinquency, it may help to prevent delinquency, and it may deal with delinquent behavior that is encountered within its walls (Stullken, 1953, p. 565).

However, finding the consistent data for all Minnesota school districts can be considered a problem as not all districts publicly share their behavior analysis and issues or simply do not do it electronically in keeping records. Another issue we face is inconsistent responses for behavior per school district as well. For example, some Minnesota school districts would suspend a student for a verbal altercation, as others would not. From year-to-year students get older and some will continue their behaviors due to outside influences where others change completely and partake in no delinquent behavior going forward.

Delinquency, like truancy or incorrigibility, is but a symptom picture of underlying conditions the roots of which may be found in the family life, the school adjustments, or the environmental background in the community. Some school more than others have the responsibilities of dealing with maladjusted or delinquent students. It is the business of every

teacher not only to teach children what they otherwise would not know but also to help them acquire the skills they otherwise would not acquire but also to help them behave in a way that society expects them to behave. Teachers are expected to know that at some point in their career they will have to expect to deal with disorderly adolescent behavior and work with their team to try and help that student correct it. Most schools have a School Resource Officer (SRO) just in case behaviors get out of hand. Depending on the offense of the student, the officer can write a ticket for the juveniles and they will have to be seen in court. Once the court system can see they are not following through with what is expected or the behavior is not changing, they can assign them to a juvenile Probation Officer.

Research Purpose, Questions and Objectives

In a number of school districts in Minnesota, behavior offenses, or better known as acts of juvenile delinquency are at high rates. Central Minnesota is one of areas consisting of higher rates, and as years continue, the numbers continue to raise from 2014-2017. After specific behavior intervention programs were put in place, we would expect to see behavior offense rates either increase, decrease, or remain steady. Traditionally, there would be no prevention or intervention and schools would respond reactively and punitively.

The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine three models of discipline in schools, and to discuss the efficacy of each. Those three models are characterized by A) reaction, B) intervention, and C) proaction. My objective was to determine whether there is support in the research literature and archival data for the presence of Models B and C in Minnesota's schools today. I employed secondary analysis of archived data from Minnesota educational institutions,

which were identified and selected using a nonrandom, purposive sampling technique; 3 samples were used ($n = 15$, $n = 4$, and $n = 1$).

MODEL A: (poor student emotional and mental health) + (poor educational growth and poor development of social skills) + (some stimulus) → (violent behavior in school) → (traditional forms of punishment) → (recidivistic behavior).

MODEL B: (poor student emotional and mental health) + (poor educational growth and poor development of social skills) + (some stimulus) → (violent behavior in school) → (programs as intervention) → (changed behavior).

MODEL C: (poor student emotional and mental health) + (poor educational growth and poor development of social skills) + (programs as prevention) + (some stimulus) → (changed behavior).

In Model A, nothing changes. A student acts out violently and that behavior is presented repeatedly and consistently over time. In Model B, the intervention program modifies student behavior and future violence is not presented in school. In Model C, certain types of programs can reach all students ahead of time, especially those who need it, and change the potential for violent behavioral events in school.

This problem statement was addressed by answering the following research questions:

- 1) What does the existing literature say about the nature and extent of the problem?
- 2) Does having more intervention programs available to students decrease the amount of discipline referrals in public schools?
- 3) Is there a point where adding additional intervention programs does not make a difference?

Chapter II: Literature Review

Behavior and Response

I examined the research literature regarding the etiology of behavior support intervention programs relative to central Minnesota today. This review presents research findings and theories that help to explain and understand the origin (history, theories, and contributing factors) as well as the quantitative characteristics of behavior offenses within the St. Cloud Area School District 742. In this chapter, I answer research question 1, which was, “What does the existing literature say about the nature and extent of the problem?”

Throughout history the evaluation of behavior and punishment has been burdensome. Punishment as a reprimand of misbehavior has been around as long as human beings have been. Corporal punishment was the result of misbehavior in the classroom such as disruptive talking, chronic avoidance of work, clowning, interfering with teacher activities, harassing classmates, verbal insults, rudeness to teachers, defiance, or hostility. However, the difference of punishment following misbehaviors varies greatly depending on what school and district one occupies. For example, the school in which I grew up, Maple Lake High School, suspended me in sixth grade for simply bending a metal fork in half. On the contrary, as I work in the St. Cloud Area School District, students can entertain a physical altercation or assault and be sent to their next period class in an hour. One begs to consider what type of success we are setting students up for in a district that allows such behavior. The main focus within the school of the St. Cloud Area School District 742 is deterrence and prevention. District 742 respond by establishing mentoring programs, additional support programs, chemical health programs, mental health programs, tutoring, and tier three program interventions in each of the districts thirteen schools.

The education, development, discipline, and extracurricular activities are essential when flourishing into adolescence and adulthood. Today it seems to be painless for people to judge and reprimand the public school system without knowing anything that is involved when operating behavior within a school itself. Student problem behavior at school is one of the most stressful challenges facing teachers and school staff based on personal experience. During the 2015-2016 academic year, more than 291,100 students were referred or subjected to school-related arrest, 82,800 were students with disabilities (U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights, 2018). The ability to obtain knowledge is obviously different depending on the expanding factors of the K-12 public school system supports. Research has found that youth with learning disabilities and emotional disturbances are at an increased risk of placement in juvenile correctional facilities (Quinn et al., 2001; Quinn et al., 2005). While in K-12 grade students are learning response to their behaviors and their ability to cope with specific situations and realities. In place, public school districts have been making tutors, behavior support groups, and intervention programs more accessible to students for them to learn the appropriate skills needed to be a successful adolescent and adult, hopefully keeping them out of the criminal justice system at all ages, which all begins with the education system and social emotional support.

Minnesota school leaders and the Minnesota Department of Education came to the decision that corporal punishment is not to be permitted within its public school system and have rethought discipline policies and practices. Suspension and other exclusionary discipline policies that many people once thought would solve problems in school sometimes do more harm than good when you take into account the home life of many students. Studies show that these suspension and other exclusionary discipline policies and practices can have several negative

effects on students, including decreased academic achievement and increased behavior problems. In addition, data also show that suspension and other exclusionary discipline policies disproportionately affect minority students. For example, within the St. Cloud Area School District at Apollo High School suspended 74 black students and 31 white students, Technical High School suspended 70 black students and 12 white students, North Junior High School suspended 101 black students and 49 white students, and South Junior High School suspended 53 black students and 2 white students. In addition to this, student ethnicity of American Indian, Alaskan Native, Asian, Pacific Islander, or Hispanic all had less than 10 suspensions during the 2018-2019 school year (Minnesota Department of Education, 2020).

Historical Background

Discipline has been part of American schooling from its very beginning. The debate has been how it should be achieved in the right way. Some educators and administrators have believed in harsh discipline methods like corporal punishment, suspension or expulsion. Others have sought less onerous means just as short detention or a simple conversation. In 1977, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in its *Ingraham v. Wright* decision that school corporal punishment is constitutional, leaving states to decide whether to allow it. Nineteen U.S. states currently allow public school personnel to use corporal punishment to discipline children from the time they start preschool until they graduate 12th grade; these states are: Alabama, Arkansas, Arizona, Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Missouri, Mississippi, North Carolina, Oklahoma, South Carolina, Tennessee, Texas, and Wyoming (Center for Effective Discipline, 2015). Corporal punishment is defined as the use of physical force with the intention of causing a child to experience pain so as to correct their misbehaviors (Straus, 2001). A total of

163,333 children were subject to corporal punishment in these states' public schools during the 2011-2012 school year (National Center for Biotechnology Information, 2016). These actions of corporal punishment used in terms of discipline included using a large wooden board for "paddling" a student's buttocks or the infliction of pain through actions of hitting, spanking, slapping, and other means of physical force.

Problems and Punishment

Removal, suspension, expulsion, and exclusion are all methods used in Minnesota public schools when redirecting the poor behavior. Poor behavior can be considered breaking school rules, significantly disrupting the right is others to and education, and being a danger to other students or staff and themselves. School boards make rules that students must follow. The rules must be clear, and the school must show that the student knew about the rules. The rules can typically be found online or in the student/parent handbook. Students are not allowed to disrupt classes, after-school programs, sports, or other school functions. A student who disrupts school or school events may be disciplined. Students are also not allowed to do things that put themselves or others in danger, or that damage school or one's personal property. Examples include fighting, hitting, throwing, or breaking objects, and threatening to hurt others or themselves.

When removing a student, that means the student is kept out of a specific class or activity and brought to an alternate place for the time being. Another option is suspension, when student's get into trouble at school the school must follow the law, as they do for attendance and truancy. All districts must have a discipline policy. A student can be kept out of class for a class period, the day, or up to 10 days. If the bad behavior continues, the student could be expelled. A

student who is expelled may not attend their school or any school in the district for up to 12 months. Usually, students are only expelled for very serious offenses or for repeated discipline referrals. The most common reasons students are expelled in Minnesota are bringing weapons to school, having illegal drugs, and a fight that causes harm to someone else (assault) or multiple fights otherwise. Similar to expulsion is exclusion. The difference being that the student does not have the option to go to any other school after being expelled from the one that were previously enrolled in. If this is the case, the district or charter school must offer your student alternative education services at another location so that your student can continue to work toward graduation requirements. If you do not like the services offered by the district or charter school, you can independently enroll your student in another school district or charter school (including online programs) or a non-public school (private or home school). For example, we have had case managers meet their students for a few hours a week at the local McDonalds to support their education.

If a student is expelled or excluded the school district must provide the parent and student with a written Notice of Expulsion/Exclusion. This notice must include a complete statement of the facts, a list of witnesses and description of testimony, date, time, and place of the hearing. This notice must also inform the parents and the student of their right to obtain a legal representative of their choosing, to obtain free or low-cost legal assistance, to examine the student's educational record, and to present evidence and confront and cross-examine witnesses at the hearing. The student is not permitted to be present at any school or district buildings, grounds, school buses, school functions, activities, or trips except for the purposes of attending an alternative education program as part of the student's disciplinary action. In place of the

suspensions, expulsions, and exclusions districts have been trying to use programs put in place to correct student behavior before it reaches that point, not only to attempt to keep students in school and educated, but also to keep them safe.

The opportunities that arise are essential to the positive development of students in order to try to prevent them from entering the criminal justice system. In doing so, we ponder how having access to positive behavior support programs may affect the behavior of students within K-12 public schools. Fuchs et al. (2011) identify instructional explicitness as the first principle of effective intervention for students. It is called explicit because it is an unambiguous and direct approach to teaching that includes both instructional design and delivery procedures. This is why the one-on-one instructor interaction may be necessary for student success.

When analyzing different behavior support systems that are capable of being beneficial for student behavior, there is no one single one that trumps the rest. As an employee in the behavior support field of a middle school there are a few programs and behavior support systems that are used on a day-to-day basis that I believe have a positive outcome on student behavior. This is especially important when teaching students how to understand and cope with their emotions and feelings, hopefully keeping them away from the criminal justice system. It takes a combination of student effort, staff effort, family effort, and so on to make this successful.

Protocols and Programs

In recent years, positive behavior support (PBS) has expanded into a variety of different settings including school, home, and the community, students with and without disabilities, and a broad range of social and academic problem behaviors (Sugai & Horner, 2002). PBS has moved from individual case management basis to systems-level of implementation for the school as a

whole. PBS has a number of key features including prevention-focused continuum of support, proactive instructional approaches to teaching and improving social behaviors, systems change to support effective practices, and more. The practices of PBS are based on the conceptual logic of behavioral theory and the empirical foundations of applied behavior analysis (Sugai & Horner, 2002).

This positive behavior support is set in place to decrease the number of problem behavior cases by utilizing the most effective practices in order to help the school as a whole. The following scholarly journal, *Introduction to the Special Series on Positive Behavior Support in Schools* discusses that Applied Behavior Analysis has over time been refined, tested, and replicated to create a successful disciplinary approach to student behavior in schools. This scholarly journal was very thorough in documenting its settings and outcome goals. It is also carried through the text that these positive behavior supports should be a part of early intervention and childhood in turn to get the desired outcomes of the student's behavior.

In the independent work time with a tutor, behavior support specialist, or MTSS teacher or adult, students can learn directly how they could have changed their behavior in order to help them get better grades, not react negatively to peers, and get placed in smaller classrooms for learning benefits. Some students have more difficult time focusing in a larger room with more students because they could have ADHD or simply because they have not learned action reaction growing up. A tutor is someone that can serve as a large support system for a developing student. They have the ability to offer the student to teacher interaction that makes it easier for students to understand and respond. *Effective and Efficient Teaching* by Anita L. Archer and Charles A. Hughes (2011) looks at guided versus unguided instruction of teachers both in general education

and special education. In this study, they used a range of instructional behaviors and elements characteristic of an explicit approach to teaching. The classroom of students was taught student-based explicit instruction with more student teacher interaction. In public schools students are to take state tests in particular main-stream courses such as math, reading, and science.

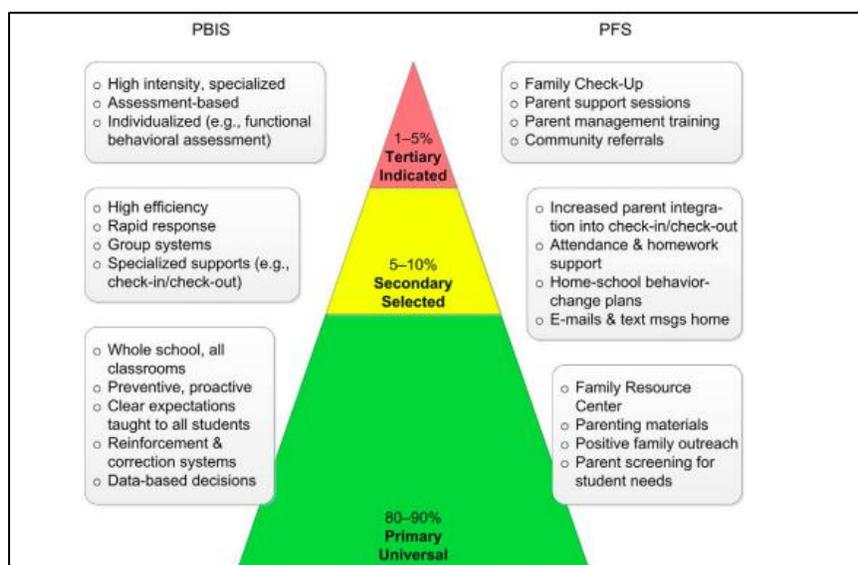
In the study *Exploring the Foundations of Explicit Instruction*, it was learned that increasing engaged time has a positive impact on student learning, which also showed in other studies as well. However, it is when students are both engaged and successful that they learn the most. A structured and explicit approach to instruction has a positive impact on student academic achievement (Archer & Hughes, 2011). For future research, it would be important to take a much larger population sample by changing it to all the schools in a large district or even state if there is a possibility to get funding to support the hiring of more staff.

A multi-tier system of supports (MTSS) is a phrase you may hear about at school or from parents or guardians. You may hear it called the MTSS framework, the MTSS process or the MTSS model. No matter what it is called, MTSS has a very important goal. It is designed to help schools identify struggling students early and to intervene quickly. MTSS supports academic growth and achievement, but it also supports many other areas. This includes behavior, social skills, and emotional needs. The St. Cloud Area School District has implemented it for families that speak no English, have no internet access at home, and as a means to help with home placement or homeless shelters. PBIS (Positive Behavior Interventions and Support) is another large program used within Minnesota public schools statewide. PBIS focuses on positive systems-changing approaches, which have been shown to reduce problem behaviors within

school settings. This places student in a tier to understand what they need to gain a positive outcome response based on PBIS and PFS (Positive Family Support).

Figure 1

Positive Behavior Interventions and Support Needs for Positive Family Support (Smolkowski et al., 2017)



This study included two cohorts of students, with 6921 in Cohort 1 and 5991 in Cohort 2. To recruit students a passive waiver of consent process was used. The parents of 14,331 students received a letter that described the study along with a decline postcard they could return if a parent did not want his or her student to participate (Smolkowski et al., 2017). The purpose of this study was to determine the effectiveness of PBIS and PFS when implemented by school staff by routine. They found that students at intervention schools with such programs outperformed students in schools that lack the intervention programs. This supports that progress is higher among students that have access to such programs.

Behavior intervention plans are also of high importance when holding students and parents accountable for the adolescent behavior. It focuses on reducing behavior issues creating a

lea toxic learning environment. They used four organizational tools to help organize the practices: school wide discipline, classroom management, specific non-classroom settings, and the individual student. The results of this study indicate the need to increase the efficiency and pragmatics with which we organize interventions, as well as the social and academic benefits. On the other hand, this article also teaches us the limitations of having such intervention programs. Having a staff that can update and maintain such intervention programs would also be highly beneficial in future research because with more structure and consistency we could hopefully produce better outcomes. Although when we do accurately place all of the interventions and student needs together in an appropriate manor, this study presents its effectiveness within the public school districts. Having these interventions and program available means there is hope and help in redirecting behavior among students, but where they experienced or learned that behavior is another topic of discussion. This is why when students are out of school suspended, expelled, or excluded, home may not be the safest or smartest place for them to be.

Sociological criminology has neglected early childhood characteristics, and consequently has not come to grips with the relationship between early childhood behavior and adult behavior outcomes. Not having studied a ton of childhood behavior limits us largely in knowing the link between delinquency and criminal activity. Although criminal or deviant activity peaks in teenage years, there is substantial evidence of early delinquency as well as continuation of criminal behavior over life's course. The original thought of the crime and deviance over the life course is that the childhood behavior would not relate in the sense that when a person reaches adulthood the ties involved with work, family, and community explain the change in criminality.

The life course has been defined as “pathways through the age differentiated life span,” where age differentiation “is manifested in expectations and options that impinge on decision processes and the course of events that give shape to life stages, transitions, and turning points” (Jacoby et al., 2012, p. 76). Looking at life stages all happen at a different time and in a different way for different people. This includes life transitions such as going to college, getting a job, getting married, having kids, and change in self-esteem and emotion. Some researchers say that such life transitions have little to do with deviant behavior and that it decreases with age. The extent of stability and change throughout transitions is a complex and debated issue. I would say these life transitions have huge impact on criminal or deviant behavior.

Anytime we meet new people, there is the potential of getting involved with a person that partakes in criminal or deviant behavior or a person that helps them stop doing it for themselves. Many parents say they would do anything for their child, but have we thought about how true that may be? It is contended that childhood antisocial behavior, such as juvenile delinquency, conduct disorder, and violent behavior link to a wide variety of troublesome adult behaviors including criminality, deviance, offenses in the military, educational failure, employment instability, and marital discord (Jacoby et al., 2012, p. 76). Social bonds including work, school, and neighborhood influences are said to influence any type of positive or negative behavior despite a criminal’s social and delinquent background. Looking at these social bonds, they attach it to social control theory, stating that crime and deviance result when an individual’s bond to society in adulthood is weak or broken.

Research and Theories

The development of social learning theory can be traced back to the work of Robert L. Burgess and Ronald L. Akers, as presented in their work entitled “A differential association-reinforcement theory of criminal behavior”. Social learning theories can be broadly understood as a social behavioral approach that emphasizes the “reciprocal interaction between cognitive, behavioral and environmental determinants” of human behavior (Akers & Sellers, 2004). The social learning theory only strengthened my opinion about social process theories. Differential association theory is very similar to the social learning theory in that they both believe deviant behavior is learned in interaction with other people and can therefore be counteracted by developing an environment in which criminal behavior is not normalized. Again, under the theory of differential association, the timing, length, frequency, and nature of the contact are important determinants of behavior. That is, the greatest effect on a person’s behavior occurs the earlier the association is made, the longer the duration of the association, the more frequently the association occurs, and the closer the association is (Akers & Sellers, 2004). Juveniles who report positive beliefs about violence are more likely to engage in antisocial and criminal behaviors.

Lanier and Henry (2010) make an interesting comparison in their book *Essential Criminology*. Comparing the military and vampires, they had a strong point. Both of these groups represent the ability to socialize their members into thinking and doing things causing crime, from respecting your authority to anarchy and individualism. Lanier and Henry discuss two important social process theories, Differential Association Theory and Cognitive Social Learning Theory. Of the two, I would agree most strongly with the details of the Differential

Association Theory. Differential Association Theory believes that criminal behavior itself is learned through assigning meaning to behavior, experiences, and events during interaction with others (Sutherland, 2010). There are two basic elements behind the social learning theory. This includes that the content of what is learned is important and the process by which the learning takes place is important. This explains that people with power or authority, whether it is a gang member or police officer have the ability to influence people's actions and define what is or is not criminal activity. I believe more presently that criminal behavior itself is learned through assigning meaning to behavior, experiences, and events that occur during interaction with other people.

This theory, according to Sutherland, is seen in its nine testable propositions:

- (1) criminal behavior is learned;
- (2) criminal behavior is learned in interaction with other persons in a process of communication;
- (3) the principal part of the learning of criminal behavior occurs within intimate groups;
- (4) When criminal behavior is learned, the learning includes (a) techniques of committing the crime, which are sometimes very complicated, sometimes simple; (b) the specific direction of motives, drives, rationalizations, and attitudes;
- (5) the specific direction of motives and drives is learned from definitions of the legal codes as favorable or unfavorable;
- (6) a person becomes delinquent because of an excess of definitions favorable to violation of law over definitions unfavorable to violation of the law;
- (7) differential associations may vary in frequency, duration, priority, and intensity;

(8) the process of learning criminal behavior by association with criminal and anti-criminal patterns involves all of the mechanisms that are involved in any other learning;

(9) while criminal behavior is an expression of general needs and values, it is not explained by those needs and values, since non-criminal behavior is an expression of the same needs and values (Sutherland, 2010).

The core of the differential association is found in the sixth proposition, telling us when people learn more definitions that favor crime rather than not committing crime, likely criminal behaviors will be chosen.

Juveniles who report positive beliefs about violence are more likely to engage in antisocial and criminal behaviors. I beg the exact same questions on a day-to-day basis with my students as Lanier and Henry point out, the KEY factors! The first is priority of learning: how early is this learned? This is such an important question to ask. For example, if a toddler or small child sees that it is okay to take things from someone else, those children will go to elementary with that as their skill set rather than learning that stealing is not okay. Another is frequency: how often one interacts with groups encouraging criminal behavior. This can mean for that young child that sees this at home that it is an everyday occurrence. This could also apply to my middle-aged students that change friends' groups and see it on the weekends when they spend time with them without any form of supervision. Duration is also important. How long have they been exposed to specific behavior patterns? There is bound to be a significant difference in behavior in someone who was around criminal behavior for a week compared to someone who has been around it their entire life. The final one is intensity: the prestige or status of those

manifesting the behavior. The odds that a juvenile imitates criminal behavior would be much greater if it a parent that are learning it from. On the other hand, if they are seeing it from a peer or someone that is not seen to have power there is a possibility that they may not imitate the poor behavior.

Behavior imitation does not occur only criminally. There have been other empirical tests regarding differential association theory in actions such as bullying in schools as well. Moon, et al (2011) state that delinquent and criminal behaviors are learned in a fashion similar to law-abiding behaviors. As expected, results indicate that juveniles who associate with bullies and/or report positive attitudes toward the use of violence are more likely to engage in bullying. Moreover, Pepler and Craig, using a remote audiovisual observation method, found that a group of children collectively engage in bullying as aggressors, rather than as an individual child engaging in bullying. This explains that with more peer interaction it is also more likely the bullying occurs. In sum, the findings from the extant bullying research indicate that differential association theory is a viable explanation of the phenomenon according to Moon, Hwang, and McCluskey (2011).

Would we consider bullying a crime? Who decides that it is? Crime is not produced by legislation alone. The best approach to take in defining crime would be to divide it into two types depending on whether they reflect consensus or conflict in society. For example, Gary Yourofsky (American animal rights activist) wanted to know whether the violence against animals would ever end. Backing up the idea he said that farmers would go to prison for breaking animals' necks, anally electrocuting foxes, and catching animals in steel-jaw leghold

traps. With time, things have become one giant circle of differential association theory. There was a time when animal cruelty was thought to be not as bad as it is now.

As one giant American society, we decided that unfair treatment to pets and all animals would no longer be acceptable. With social media and the awareness of things happening around the world, a vast amount of people pushed for something legal to be done. Very recently, November 25, 2019, to be exact, cruelty to animals became a federal crime under a new law signed by President Trump. The Preventing Animal Cruelty and Torture Act (PACT) is a bipartisan initiative that bans the intentional crushing, burning, drowning, suffocating, impalement or other serious harm to “living non-human mammals, birds, reptiles, or amphibians.” The law also bans “animal crush videos,” meaning any photograph, motion picture film, video or digital recording or electronic image that depicts animal cruelty. The penalty for violating the law can include a fine, a prison term of up to seven years or both (Gonzales, 2019). This is a very prime example of today’s American society learning through differential association theory and coming to a legal resolution.

I believe that if criminal activity is something that we want to lessen then it needs to be targeted in people while they are still children. Some would say you cannot teach an old dog new tricks. The first theories that had taken little data are interesting to read about; specifically, the Early U.S. Family-Type and Body-Type Theory. Shortly after the Civil War in 1865, it was widely believed that there were basic differences between ethnic groups and that certain families could be mentally degenerate and “socially bankrupt” (Lanier & Henry, 2010, p. 102). Part of the reason for his thought was that there was a huge transition happening in the United States with the abolition of slavery and large European immigration. They compared the Europeans with the

slaves because they were diverse in ethnic groups and like slaves, were mostly poor and unskilled. It still blows my mind that there was a time like this in our history. Dugdale concluded that “the burden of crime” is found in nonmarried family lines, because he found a family with six generations of criminals. He also concluded that the eldest child has a tendency to be criminal, and that males are more likely than females to be criminal (cited in Lanier & Henry, 2010).

Dugdale was one of the first anthropologists to claim that his approach was a new science, studying the criminal rather than the crime, just as medicine studies disease. In the studying of the criminal themselves, he stated that the physical body mirrors moral captivity, and that criminals were the “imperfect, knotty, knurly, worm-eating, half-rotten fruit of the human race” (cited in Lanier & Henry, 2010, p. 102). Anthropologist Harvard studied 14,000 criminals and 3,000 non-criminals for their physical features and also determined that people that become criminals are usually inferior. He concluded that criminals typically inherit low foreheads, compressed faces, and so on.

Considering the social control theories embrace the bond and the individual to society as their two key concepts, they have been used as a basis of explanation at many times as well as being described in a variation of ways. There are four well-explained elements of the bond to conventional society (Hirschi, 1969): attachment, commitment, involvement, and belief. Attached and conforming behavior suggests that man is sensitive to the opinion of others, therefore exclude sensitivity from their explanations of deviant behavior. As a good example, a psychopath is characterized by “deficient attachment to or affection for others.” This would involve being excessively aggressive and have a lack of control. Even in middle school aged

students some of these characteristics. The ability to have no form of empathy, fear, or pain, and the way they look right through you when you attempt to discuss feeling or emotion for someone else. People like this or people that are just insensitive to the opinions of others can be considered deviant because they are willing to violate the norms of society contrary to the wishes and expectations of other people. The essence of internalization of norms and conscience lie in the attachment of an individual towards others. Bond to conventional society is frequently found in most social control-orientated research and theory.

Commitment to oneself is the idea that a person invests time, energy, their well being, getting an education, or building a good reputation. Whenever someone considers delinquent behavior, they need to think about the risk involved in losing what was gained through conventional behavior, such as suspensions or detentions. The students I work with fail to have the commitment bond as a part of their societal norm. When a student gets into a fight with another student or hits a teacher, they are not thinking about what they may lose or what their consequence may be. When we attempt to teach them that acting this way risks them and their education in the end they do not see the cost vs. risk concept. People that are noncriminal believe that the organization of society would be endangered if they engaged in criminal or deviant acts. When I wake up every morning I think about the organized society that I live in, the home I have earned, the job I have, the reputation I have built. I would never risk losing any of those, so in turn I do not act delinquent.

Not only would I not take part in delinquent behavior, I would not be able to find time for it. While working sixty hours a week and going to school full time I would not be able to engage in criminal activity if I wanted to, this is involvement. Involvement or engrossment in

conventional activities is a large part of control theory. A person involved in conventional activities is tied to appointments, deadlines, meetings, working hours, and plans. In relation to school, a student that is in class doing work, completing homework assignments, and participating in extracurricular activities will have less time to engage in deviant activities. Throughout these busy days deviant behavior is in turn not even being thought about. In the area of juvenile delinquency, the most significant difference in a deviant group and a non-deviant group is the abundance of conventional opportunities that keep them busy. For example, some students go to school all day, have practice at night for sports or clubs and then go home and get homework done. By the time all of these conventional things are done it would be time to eat, bathe, and go to bed. On the other hand, there are many students that walk out of school early throughout the day and get themselves into more trouble, as they have “nothing better to do”.

If the deviant is committed to a value system that is different from the conventional society, we can take one of two approaches for their belief system. Control theories have the two approaches, the first being that beliefs are merely just words that mean little to nothing if the other forms of control are missing. The second approach argues that the deviant rationalizes his behavior so that he can at once violate the rule and maintain belief in it. When and if a person commits a delinquent act people justifiably use the weakness of their belief system to explaining it and excusing it. When a juvenile commits a delinquent act, people sometimes assume that they have parents that never instilled moral beliefs into them. On the other hand, the idea of a common value system is consistent with having strong moral beliefs. In this case, we assume that the adolescent has a strong family core instilled values growing up. Having respect for authority and learning and recognizing a good moral system can help eliminate the growth of discipline

related school referrals and offenses. Recognizing that delinquent behavior is socially learned and giving opportunities and interventions for people to overcome the system at a young age is one way we could try and prevent irrational and undesired behaviors. Everything is taught, from the first word, to compassion, to respect, to delinquent behavior, all the way to ability to overcome. Together we can do that.

The most recent evolutionary addition to the brain is the cerebrum, which forms the bulk of the human brain, and relates to why students behave or respond in a specific way. It is generally accepted that the right hemisphere is specialized for perception and the expression of emotion, especially negative emotions, whereas the left hemisphere specializes in analytical thinking and language. All our thoughts, feelings, emotions, and behaviors are the result of communication networks (Walsh, 2002, p. 77). Many scientists argue whether or not delinquent behavior is completely determined by biological and psychological factors or social learning factors as previously discussed. Every member of society inherits species-typical brain structures and functions that are produced by a common pool of genetic material, although those members of society vary in brain functions due to their genes interacting with different environments, constructing their brains. Brains develop based on the environments they interact with, but also that human desires within those environments is what is chosen to be the influence on not only the brain but also behavior.

One of arguably the most influential sociologists of all time, Emile Durkheim, believed through anomie/strain theory that it is human nature that first and foremost we seek to maximize our pleasures and minimize our pains (cited in Walsh, 2002, p. 98). This theory believes that everyone is more or less equal in his or her desires, but not everyone is capable of achieving

them. This creates rising issues, according to Durkheim, “no living thing can be happy or even exist unless his needs are sufficiently proportioned to his means”, or not all people possess the means to accomplish the things necessary to satisfy their appetites (cited in Walsh, 2002). Consequently, a moral discipline will therefore still be required to make those less favored by nature to accept the lesser advantages which they owe to the chance of birth creating social structures within society that may pressure citizens to commit crime.

Durkheim accepts that society exists by virtue of a “pre-contractual solidarity” based on an emotional sense of belonging to a community and a moral obligation to it. Evolutionary psychology would find much agreement in the anomie/strain theory considering Durkheim’s vision argues that humans have evolved over time by living in small social groups and having strong attachments, backing up the idea that they were probably more emotional than rational. Robert Merton (1938) extended Durkheim’s concept of anomie in his famous paper *Social Structure and Anomie*, although his theory differs in the sense that Merton’s theory limits itself to the role of culture and social structure and ignores individual differences all together (cited in Walsh, 2002).

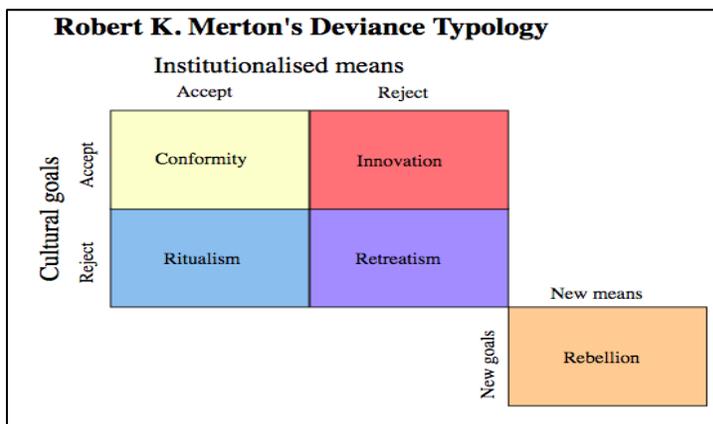
Strain may be structural, which refers to the processes at the societal level that filter down and affect how the individual perceives his or her needs. Strain may also be individual, which refers to the frictions and pains experienced by an individual as he or she looks for ways to satisfy their individual needs. These types of strain can insinuate social structures within society that then pressure citizens to become criminals. Merton proposed a typology of deviant behavior that showed the possible conflicts between culturally defined goals and the means available to achieve these goals (cited in Walsh 2002).

A typology is a classification scheme designed to facilitate understanding. In this case, Merton was proposing a typology of deviance based upon two criteria; 1) A person's motivations or his adherence to cultural goals, and 2) a person's belief in how to attain his goals (cited in Walsh, 2002). When being sworn into a gang there are ways in one must prove their loyalty, which would be at the highest motivation level for someone that wants to be part of that lifestyle, even if that means having to do something deviant or illegal.

According to Merton, there are five different types of deviance based on the following criteria; 1) conformity involves the acceptance of the cultural goals and means of attaining those goals, 2) innovation involves the acceptance of the goals of a culture but the rejection of the traditional and/or legitimate means of attaining those goals. For example, a member of the Mafia values wealth but employs alternative means of attaining his wealth; in this example, the Mafia member's means would be deviant, 3) ritualism involves the rejection of cultural goals but the routinized acceptance of the means for achieving the goals, 4) retreatism involves the rejection of both the cultural goals and the traditional means of achieving those goals, 5) rebellion is a special case wherein the individual rejects both the cultural goals and traditional means of achieving them but actively attempts to replace both elements of the society with different goals and means.

Figure 2

Social Strain Theory: 5 Types of Deviance



Arguably, the most relative part of Merton's strain theory is that people turn to deviance in the pursuit of widely accepted social values and goals. Life ideas and structures are so culturally different all over the world depending on development and economy. In this sense, according to social strain theory, social values actually produce deviance in two ways. First, a student can reject social values and therefore become deviant. Second, a student can accept social values but use deviant means to realize them (see figure above). These five types of deviance help in giving insight to student behavior based on whether or not they have cultural goals and whether they accept or reject their means, it gives a different understanding of different people. Merton discussed much about how the American society emphasis economic success more than any other society, whether it is wealthy American's or impoverished American's. The view one wants other to have about their self worth. Undoubtedly this must cause crime, considering most people cannot afford everything that they want they might take it into their own hands to get ahold of materialistic good for social success. They may then also rationalize their criminal behavior depending on which of the five types of deviance category they belong to and

individuals may adapt to the “strains” brought on by the inability to secure their desired success (Akers & Sellers, 2004). The combination of peoples desires to maximize pleasures and minimize pains become a society-based influence on criminal behavior at age, even children. As learning theories would agree that children want to “fit in” and be like other children, meaning even young they will learn criminal behavior due to the “strains” of fitting in on the playground.

On the other hand, the Modern Ecological Theory’s most fundamental idea is that socially disorganized slum neighborhoods have higher rates of crime and delinquency than more affluent and stable neighborhoods (Walsh, 2002, p. 174). Therefore, the question they ask is whether it is the people or the places that are responsible for the crime. Some would argue that it is both, because people that can only afford to live within the socially disorganized neighborhood most likely also struggle with Merton’s point being that our society desires success, causing criminal behavior to gain those pleasures in life (Walsh, 2002). Similarly, the social disorganization theory states that location matters when it comes to crime rates and criminal activity. The neighborhoods were viewed as “socially disorganized.” In such areas, conventional institutions of social control such as family environment, schools, churches, voluntary community organizations, and so on were weak and unable to regulate the behavior of the neighborhoods’ youths and criminal behavior. As unfortunate as it may be, people with either a lot of money, authority, or influence can also influence the law enforcement community. I would guess that if a rich Caucasian 17-year-old football star got busted stealing he would get off on easier consequences than an African American 17-year-old from a disorganized community. They also argued that areas characterized by economic deprivation had high rates of population

turnover, since these were undesirable residential communities, which people left once it became feasible for them to do so (Akers & Sellers, 2004).

Recent research on social disorganization has taken two distinct but related directions. These have been referred to as the systemic model of social disorganization and the social capital/collective efficacy framework developed by Robert Sampson and his colleagues (Akers & Sellers, 2004). The systemic piece of social disorganization focuses on the structure of three basic types of networks and the effects of these on crime. These networks relate to the private sphere (intimate friendship and relations), parochial networks (less intimate and secondary relationships), and the public sphere (groups and institutions outside the neighborhood). The social bonding theory, claims that depending on the level of friendship (or bond) in the disorganization theory can also determine crime rates and behavior in all neighborhoods.

The social capital/collective efficacy framework argues that social disorganization can reduce social capital and increase crime and violence rates. Social capital fosters trust and solidarity among people that live in that neighborhood, while collective efficacy relates to the belief that residents can effectively control the likelihood of undesirable behavior within their neighborhood (Walsh, 2002). The violence rate at the school I work at has changed significantly over the past few years due to the role models within the school and positive behavior intervention programs to teach them and hold them accountable for their behaviors. One controversial argument among staff in public school building is whether or not nature or nurture is to blame for the undesired behavior of young students, although this is an impossible research question to answer it is often brought to attention.

Nativism is the extreme end of the nature position, the oldest thought characteristics of criminal behavior. People that adopt this extreme behavior are known as nativists. Their basic assumption is that the characteristics of the human species as a whole are a product of evolution and that individual differences are due to each person's unique genetic code and cannot be changed by learned behaviors. In general, the earlier a particular ability appears, the more likely it is to be under the influence of genetic factors rather than environmental factors. The classic example of the way this affects our physical development are the bodily changes that occur in early adolescence at puberty. However, I myself would argue that in the stages of maturation the mental maturing is more important than the pubic stages of a maturing young adolescent.

Empiricism is at the other end of the spectrum, meaning they are the environmentalists believing in nurture. Their basic assumption is that at birth the human mind is a blank slate and that it is gradually "filled" as a result of life experiences. From this point of view, psychological characteristics and behavioral differences that happen through infancy and childhood are the results of learning. A person's upbringing governs the psychologically significant aspects of child development and the concept of maturation applies only to the biological (Allen, 2015). Empiricism believes people learn through life experiences and development, meaning that is a student is in school forty hours every week for almost twelve years of their live, there is a great chance that school related interactions and peers have a great impact on the behaviors and choices that a student makes.

How a society determines what crimes are and what the severity is an essential role in how society responds to crime, from developing crime prevention programs to designing incarceration systems and rehabilitating criminals. The number of theories that have come from

the study of criminal and deviant behaviors is extensive. Differential Association Theory indeed does the best job of explaining both current criminal behavior and also gives us the knowledge to work together to prevent it.

Social process theories propose that we engage in either criminal or noncriminal behavior based on the social environment around us and that we are influenced by how other people reward or model behaviors. Social process theories also suggest that criminal behavior is learned and can therefore be counteracted by developing an environment in which criminal behavior is not normalized. Social process theories are typically supportive in serving juvenile age people and their behaviors. Working with social process theories typically means there is some type of program or organization working against the criminal behaviors. For example, School Transitional Environmental Program (STEP) is a well-known school organization that seeks to decrease student anonymity, increase accountability, and enhance students' abilities to learn school rules and expectations. Students in the program had better classroom behavior, improved grade point averages, experienced less transition-related stress, and had lower levels of psychological distress (National Institute of Justice, 2013). Some adolescents lash out even if they seem to have a "picture perfect" life and others will because that is what they learned from their surrounding environment, explaining why programs like these target ages starting in elementary school. Although an important consideration when defining what crime is, that it is contextual. Criminal harm changes and takes different forms depending on historical period, specific context, social setting, location, or the situation that it occurs in, leaving crime open to interpretation.

Classical criminology believes deterrence employs the threat of punishment to influence behavior assuming that: people are rational, people's behavior is a product of free will, and that people's goal is to increase pleasure and/or avoid pain (Chapter 4—Crime and Criminology, n.d.). Beccaria's Classical deterrence theory hallmarks three different principals of punishment; 1) Swift—punishment must be swift to be effective. You can't have the punishment linger or the punishment and the crime lose their association. 2) Certain—people must know they will be punished for their illegal behavior, and 3) cannot have people evade the law for any reason. Finally, 4) severe—must be severe enough to outweigh the rewards of the illegal action—severity and proportionality are sometimes at odds especially since each person is different in terms of what constitutes a "severe" punishment. Punishment must also be proportionate to the harm caused. This is because if people lose proportionality there is little to prevent/discourage the criminal from committing more severe crimes and engaging in worse behavior. Punishment used to keep order, not avenge crime. Another Classical School reformer, Jeremy Bentham, also believed that people were governed by the pleasure/pain principal and that acts of punishment were only useful to bring about a greater good to society as a whole and not pressed upon a person with the intention of harm. At the heart of Bentham's punishment philosophy was Utilitarianism, "*the greatest happiness principal*" (Stanford Encyclopedia of Philosophy, 2014). Utilitarianism is generally held to be the view that the morally right action is the action that produces the most good. Something particular about this theory is that it's a form of consequentialism, meaning the right action is understood entirely in terms of consequences produced. What distinguishes utilitarianism from egoism has to do with the scope of the relevant consequences in reaction to behaviors. On the utilitarian view one is thought to maximize the

overall good not only for themselves but also for others. Utilitarianism also believes that everyone's good is equal and no one's is more good than another. This is the approach that utilitarianism uses for its moral decision making.

The information and theories available about juvenile delinquency and criminal behavior is endless. However, the information and theories behind intervention programs and the use for them in all school district building is very minimal. Student behaviors range from minor socially unacceptable acts such as disrespect and interruption, to criminal acts, such as assault and illegal possession and selling of drugs. School failure in including prevention programs places students at higher risk for involvement in juvenile correctional facilities, gang related activities, or even a lifetime of delinquent behavior. The aim of this study was to examine the effects of behavior intervention programs in establishing higher-quality learning environments and to determine whether or not having behavior intervention programs stimulate the presence of these programs in school's function in a proactive prevention role/mode; either as preventing repeated violent behavior or in preventing the initial violent behavior.

Chapter III: Research Design

Research Method Selection

This study involved secondary analysis of archival data to find the trend and individual data for disciplinary actions in the St. Cloud Area School District. The data collected ranges from 2014 to 2020. Using this data, I analyzed the disciplinary trend reports, collected through Minnesota Department of Education, including information about Minnesota and specific districts to determine whether discipline offense behavior referrals have increased, decreased, or remained steady after the implication of the behavior intervention programs. This data also targets four of the fifteen school in the St. Cloud Area School District, Apollo High School (north side), Technical High School (south side), North Junior High School, and South Junior High School to compare behavior difference in age groups, 6th-8th Grade or 9th-12th Grade, and with the intervention programs (middle-school only). Finally, this data looks at 14 individual students the year prior to them enter the intervention program and the year after they enter the intervention program. The reason for choosing the secondary analysis of archival method is because all of this data can be found scattered over years of public school information online but has not been brought together in the St. Cloud Area School District to analyze if our programs are working for adolescent behavior.

This method will not study every individual student in the district due to behaviors and response to behavior being situational. There would be too much room for error. This study will also not focus on comparing rates with other schools in the area due factors such as income, population, demographics, and school sizes, as there are too many outlying factors with the surrounding schools.

Research Populations and Sampling

The target population of this research study was all Minnesota school districts. The first population sampling frame was all the schools that consist of the St. Cloud Area School District; ALC McKinley, Apollo, Clearview, Discovery, Kennedy, Lincoln Madison, North, Oak Hill, Riverwoods, Roosevelt, South, CO2, Talahi, and Technical ($n = 15$). This sample population was nonrandom and looked at the 742 St. Cloud Area School District as a whole based on the 2014-2019 Minnesota Department of Education Disciplinary Action trend report.

As sample populations vary from $n = 15$ to $n = 1$, the second population sampling frame was the Disciplinary Action referrals from four of the fifteen schools, Apollo, Technical, North, and South ($n = 4$). We analyze these four schools to compare the differences regarding the middle school and high school levels. This is because the behavior intervention program was placed at the middle school level (North and South) but not placed into the high schools (Apollo and Tech).

The final sample population was taken from South Junior High School ($n = 1$). This sample was of fourteen students, comparing their amount of discipline referrals the year before they entered the behavior intervention program versus the year after they entered the behavior intervention program. These data were collected by the current Assistant Principal at North Junior High, when he ran that program at South Junior High its first year in 2017. These data look at an individual scale and these students much go through the MTSS program to get entered into this program.

Data Collection and Processing

The data collected vary greatly depending on what sampling frame we are discussing. The $n = 15$ sampling frame required data analysis from 2014-2020. The Number of Disciplinary Actions—District Trend Report was used to look at districts individually from year to year to determine if their behavior offenses increased, decreased, or remained steady. I used the St. Cloud Area School District 742 Financial Summary Three-Year Plan to retrieve that data to determine the enrollment rates of students from 2014-2018, which remained fairly steady.

For the $n = 4$ sampling frame data was collected through the Minnesota Department of Education to collect the 2018-2019 School year Suspension by Offense, the 2019-2020 School year Suspension by Offense, and 2018-2019 School year Suspension by School. Minnesota Department of Education provided the data of each school with a Report Card, comparing test scores, behavior offenses, and graduation rates statewide. The Minnesota Department of Human Rights was used to collect the Total Count of OSS: Jan through mid-March data that compares the data in the same time frame including the school year of 2019-2020 until our schools went completely distance learning.

The final sampling frame, $n = 1$, was collected by Assistant Principal William Sininger of North Junior High School. During the first year of the behavior intervention programs, Mr. Sininger was at South Junior High School and solely ran the program. He kept track of the students test scores, number of disciplinary actions the year before and a year after the program, and the amount of tardy attendances in school. This information was given to me confidently and the names of the students will not be used through the course of this research.

I was looking for numbers that showed that behavior intervention programs lowered the amount of discipline action referrals. Tools used in collecting this data would be my personal computer, my desktop computer in North Junior High School, my office printer, highlighters, a purple notebook, a red folder, pencils, pencils. Almost all the charts, tables, and other quantitative data was printed out. I highlighted only the sections referring to the schools I was using as a sample population for each part and it was then placed in the folder along with the other data. In my notebook was all the data that was found using the Internet (search engine Google Scholar or SCSU Library), which was scattered information. I had roughly three to five pages of notes per chapter with notes that were sketched in as I thought of something to add throughout the day or to fill a table I created. I have all the books I have needed for my program and referred back to them a lot for information and details, as they were great sources in specific sections. A handful of data tables were screenshot on my personal computer and placed into my “CJS 699” desktop folder. All of the tools used, my personal computer, table of contents, highlighters, a purple notebook, a red folder, pencils, pencils were carried with me in a red St. Cloud Dance Team Nike Backpack to work and back home everyday. When I did not have my belonging at work or elsewhere I used to “Notes” app on my iPhone 12 to create bullet points.

After collecting much data and information I created my ideal Table of Contents. I then took my pages printed work and notes and paper clipped them together depending on that section that data or information belonged in. I then transferred relevant data into my word document while following my thesis format, Table of Contents, and Excel Spreadsheets.

Data Analysis and Reporting

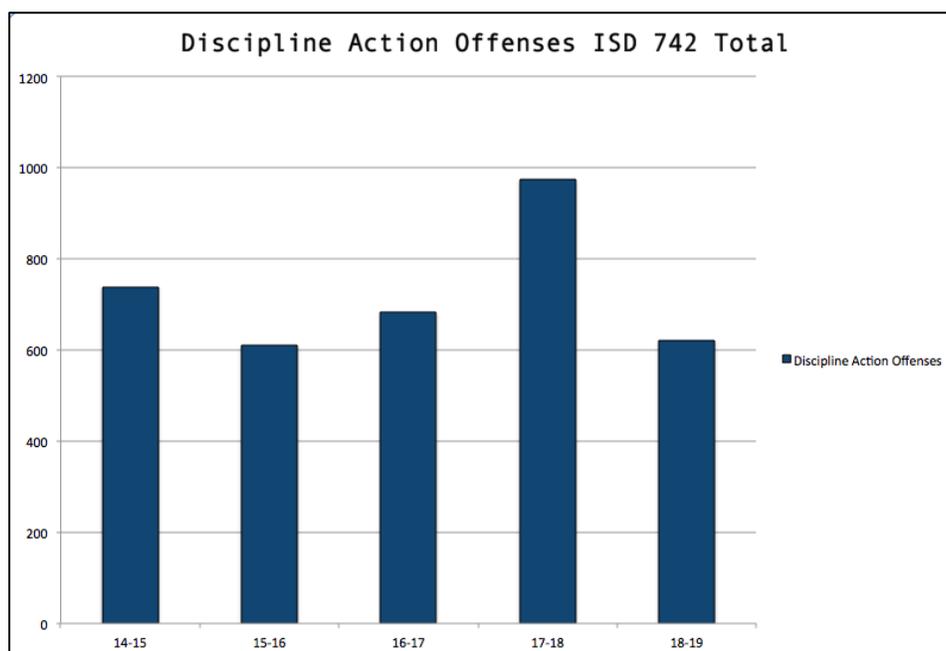
The data analysis reporting discusses whether the discipline action offenses increased, decreased, or remained steady over the course of multiple years and if in 2017, when the behavior intervention programs were introduced, those numbers increased, decreased, or remained steady. Data within bivariate tables determine which of the sample frame $n = 4$ schools showed change in increase, decrease, or staying steady. Bivariate tables identify the before and after program differences for the 14 individual ($n = 1$) students.

Chapter IV: Findings and Conclusions

The first population sampling frame finding is for all the schools that consist of the St. Cloud Area School District; ALC McKinley, Apollo, Clearview, Discovery, Kennedy, Lincoln Madison, North, Oak Hill, Riverwoods, Roosevelt, South, CO2, Talahi, and Technical ($n = 15$).

Figure 3

Bar Graph Representing the Total Number of Discipline Action Offenses from 2014-2018



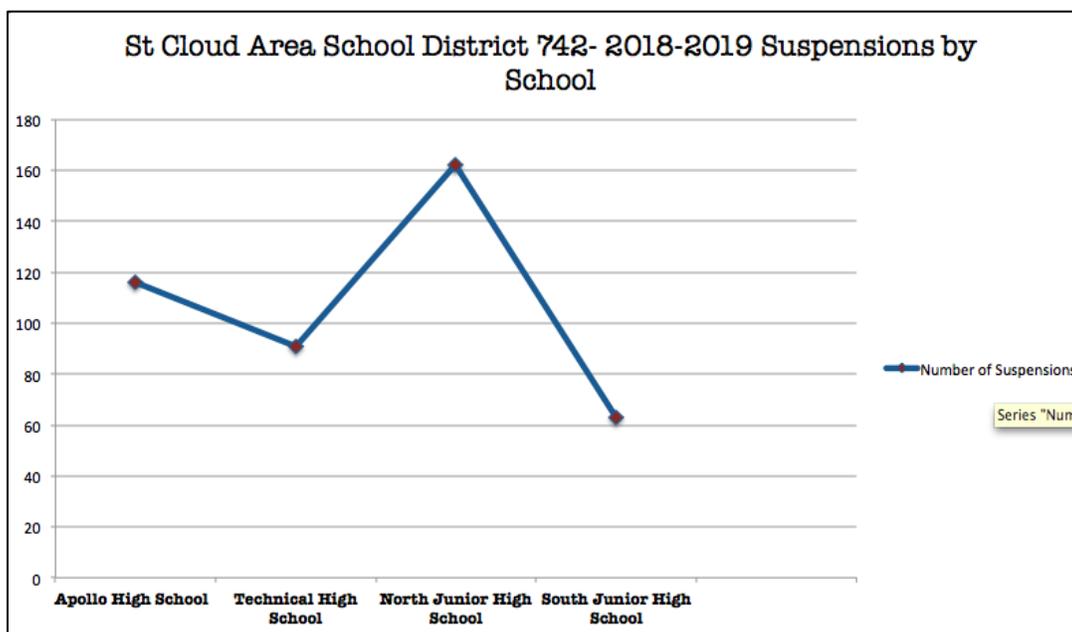
As mentioned, in past years student enrollment has been nearly the same in each school, fluctuating a hundred or so each year. The year of 2017-2018 is the year that the behavior intervention programs began, with lesser students starting off in these programs. We see in the year of 2017-2018 there were two thirds more discipline action referrals for St. Cloud Area School District all together and going back down to a similar number as before after this year,

making it an outlier. After 2017-2018's 974 discipline action offenses these behavior intervention programs have been in place for one year and have a full caseload of students.

Interestingly, they only have the behavior intervention programs placed within the middle schools and do not replace it with any type of extra help once students leave for high school. For the $n = 4$ sampling frame data was collected through the Minnesota Department of Education to collect the and 2018-2019 School year Suspension by School (see Figure 4).

Figure 4

Number of Suspensions by Middle School (North and South) and High School (Apollo and Technical)



This figure represents the second school year with the behavior intervention program. Although South Junior High School has the lowest number of Suspensions, they also had the second highest number of suspensions for “physical aggression- major” with 36 total, compared to North Junior High’s 17, Apollo High School’s 24, and Tech High School’s 54. However, in comparison South Junior High’s 2018-2019 enrollment rate was 954 students, whereas Tech

High School's was 1542. Some theories would suggest puberty and the transition of schools to a different social circle could be a definite variable of change. However, as we look specifically at South Junior High's numbers down to the specificity of the students that belong to the program, we see significant changes (see Figure 5).

Figure 5

Each Student (14) Enrolled in the Behavior Intervention Program One Year Before and One Year After Starting

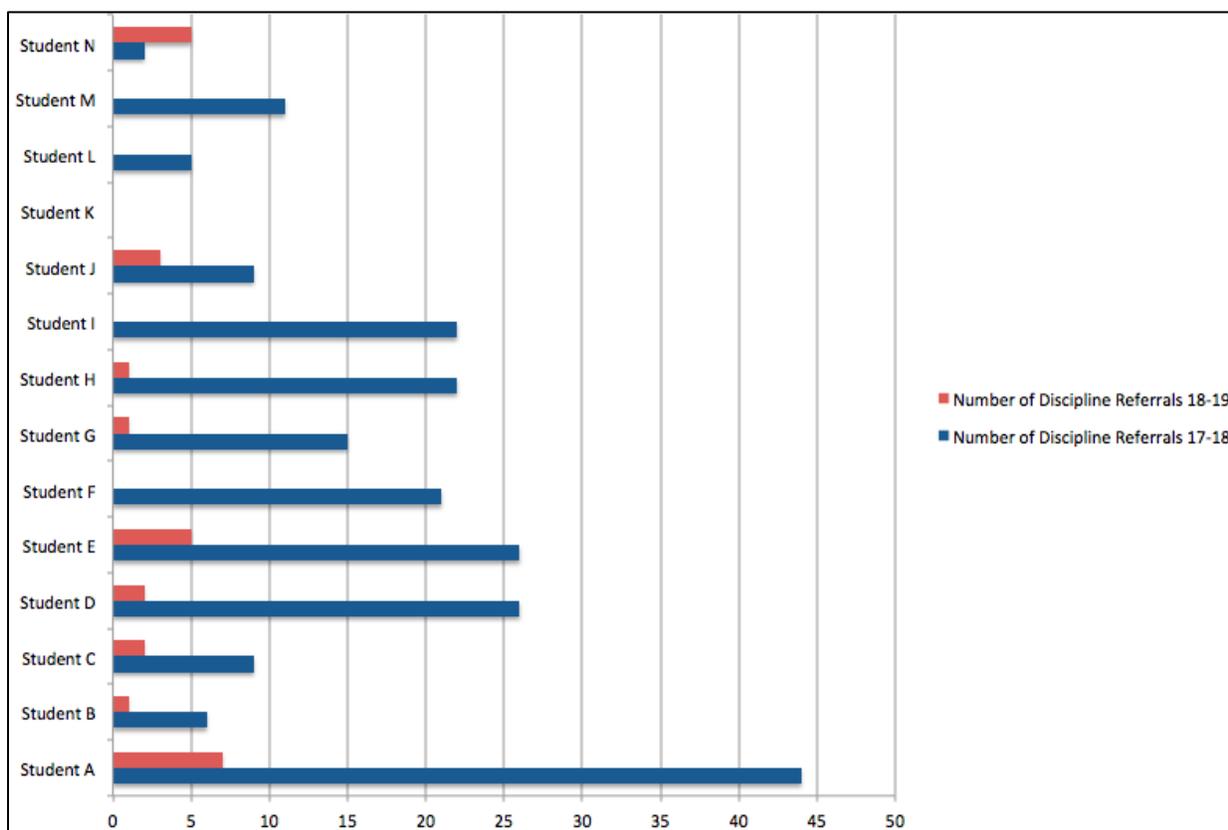


Figure 5 shows what we initially thought we were going to see as the results. Students that are placed in this program that can tend to a group of students emotional and behavior needs greatly reduce the chances of the undesired behavior response to a situation. It shows that it is not one hundred percent effective, however greatly reduced the unwanted outcomes for 13 of the

14 students. When this analysis and data all come together, provides the certainty that behavior intervention programs positively influence student behavior. This would then suggest that

MODEL B: (poor student emotional and mental health) + (poor educational growth and poor development of social skills) + (some stimulus) → (violent behavior in school) → (intervention programs) → (changed behavior), and MODEL C: (poor student emotional and mental health) + (poor educational growth and poor development of social skills) + (intervention programs) + (some stimulus) → (changed behavior) indeed do to support that the presence of these programs in schools function in a proactive prevention role/mode; either as preventing repeated violent behavior (Model B) or in preventing the initial violent behavior (Model C).

Chapter V: Recommendations and Implications

Study Summary

The purpose of this exploratory study was to examine three models of discipline in schools, and to discuss the efficacy of each. Those three models are characterized by A) reaction, B) intervention, and C) proaction. My objective was to determine whether there is support in the research literature and archival data for the presence of Models B and C in Minnesota's schools today. Existing literature says the nature and extent of the problem is infinite. Regardless of the data and research that is collected, each school district would need to individually set up the funding for these programs. Having more intervention programs available to students decrease the amount of discipline referrals in public school systems. The data showed down to the individual student that the programs are successful in the changing of behavior. However, there are only about 20 to 30 students in each program, meaning there could be use for more of these positions depending on the level of behaviors in the school. Is there a point where adding additional intervention programs does not make a difference. Adding additional support in these building would be supported based on the number of students that need the intervention support. If there are “high flying” students that do not have this support, more staff should be provided. If there aren't behavior issues continuously reoccurring, there would be no need for the additional intervention support programs.

Proposed Recommendations

Continued research on this topic would be beneficial in changing the behavior of students and create a better environment for student learning. This research is needed in terms of supporting these programs so public school districts can be granted the money for the programs.

Greater knowledge is needed in the area of long term. Knowing whether or not targeting behavior in early stages changes could also change what we know about the criminal justice system. Hopefully, there would be more attention placed on juvenile probation and behavior then as well. After conducting this research, it would be recommended to place these behavior intervention programs at all levels including elementary, middle school, and high school, and continue to monitor the behavior into adulthood assessing delinquent and criminal acts of behavior.

Closing Remarks

This research is important on an individual level as well as a large scale. It could change the way schools handle behavior and also the communities we live in in time. With regards to future research it would be helpful to keep records of all the studied school's enrollment numbers. This way there could be a rate of change each year to be analyzed. It would be constructive to keep track of the numbers of behavior support staff within each of the building being looked at. Some schools have ten people to resolve conflicts and respond to behavior and some schools have two for the same demographics and enrollment numbers.

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