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by

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**The Impact of Elementary School Teachers' Beliefs about Classroom
Management on Intervention Implementation Decisions**

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Report

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The Impact of Elementary School Teachers' Beliefs about Classroom Management on Intervention Implementation Decisions

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The University of Texas at Austin, 2015

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There is a gap in the research about teacher beliefs as it pertains to how these beliefs guide teachers' intervention decisions, particularly decisions about classroom management. The proposed study is interested in understanding and exploring how teacher beliefs impact classroom management implementation decisions. While classroom management interventions are used across grade levels, behavior management is a primary concern during the elementary school years. Therefore, the proposed study will be conducted with elementary school teachers.

In order to more keenly examine this teaching experience, the proposed study will use a phenomenological approach to discern whether there are overarching themes in how teachers think about classroom management, plan and implement classroom management interventions, adjust to changes in the classroom environment, and represent

their beliefs about classroom management in their classroom activities. This information will be obtained through the use of qualitative methods such as semi-structured interviews, classroom observations, and two lived experience descriptions.

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Introduction

The room is set. The smell of freshly sharpened pencils and new packs of crayons fills the air. The teacher bustles about making everything look just right. Students' desks are arranged in groups of four or five with their names taped on the corners, and inspirational quotes line the walls. There are tissues and bottles of hand sanitizer in every corner of the classroom, and the classroom library has been stocked with bestsellers and literary guides. This classroom seems to have all the necessary tools for a successful school year, but the teacher still feels like something is missing. As the first day of school draws near the teacher begins to worry. Are her lesson plans in order? Will the students and parents like her? Will she remember everything she needs to say? Will she really be able to help her students?

Many teachers face similar worries at the start of a new school year. In fact, according to a qualitative study conducted by Meister & Jenks (2000) the emotions this teacher may be feeling are not uncommon. The authors determined that most first year teachers have concerns in the following areas: managing the behavior and diverse needs of their students, time constraints and work overload, and conflict with parents. In a follow up survey study of over two hundred first and second year teachers from 41 different states, Meister & Melnick (2003) confirmed that classroom management, time management, communication with parents, and academic preparation continue to be major concerns for teachers. While Meister & Melnick (2003) have determined the categories of concern for teachers on a national level, there seems to be a gap in the research as it pertains to the beliefs that guide teachers' intervention decisions,

particularly decisions about classroom management. The aim of this proposed study will be to fill this gap in knowledge by using a phenomenological qualitative approach to better understand how teacher beliefs about classroom management manifest themselves in their intervention implementation. This study will provide much needed insight into this teaching experience.

As stated previously, navigating the amount of time and energy needed to address the individual needs of each student in a classroom can be difficult for any teacher, but is especially difficult for elementary school teachers. Elementary school represents the foundation for which children begin to build not only academic knowledge, but also social and emotional knowledge. Elementary school teachers are responsible for teaching their children how to read and write, as well as how to build relationships with others in appropriate and healthy ways. Doing so allows students to build knowledge across developmental domains and promotes school success. The elementary school years are a pivotal time in a child's development, which places a great deal of responsibility on elementary school teachers. Thus, it will be especially important to gain a more detailed understanding of elementary school teachers' beliefs and how these beliefs influence their decision making, particularly regarding classroom management.

Integrative Analysis

What is Classroom Management?

Before gaining insight into how teacher beliefs about classroom management manifest themselves in their implementation decisions, it is important to discuss what classroom management is. To provide a context for this examination, this study will briefly discuss what classroom management is, and describe various factors that impact the implementation and success of classroom management interventions. Research on classroom management has provided a variety of definitions and important tenets for engaging in effective classroom management and all agree that the purpose for classroom management is to ensure that learning occurs.

In her explanation of appropriate classroom management strategies Charney (2002) indicated that classroom management is based on the three R's: reinforcing, reminding, and redirecting. Charney (2002) states that "this approach requires teaching proactively" which "involves presenting and helping children practice appropriate attitudes and behaviors rather than constantly reacting to inappropriate ones" (p.27-33). Thus, Charney suggests that classroom management involves planning and active participation of teachers through interactions and conversations. Brophy (2006) and Evertson & Weinstein (2006) agree with this definition and take it one step further to include maintaining students' attention and encouraging academic engagement through relationship building between teacher and students and among students.

According to Evertson & Weinstein (2006) there are five primary tasks teachers must participate in when implementing classroom management strategies: develop

relationships with and among students, provide adequate access to learning, use large and small group activities to promote academic engagement, encourage development of social and self-regulatory skills, and use necessary interventions to assist with behavior problems. (p. 4). Accomplishing these tasks requires a great deal of focus and planning.

Evertson & Weinstein's (2006) definition of classroom management consist of many of the same components of Bethell, Forrest, Stumbo, Gombojav, Carle, & Irwin (2012) definition of school success. Bethell et al.'s (2012) defined school success as a focus on academic achievement as well as social and emotional factors such as a sense of competence and social belongingness. Taken together these factors provide opportunities for increased school engagement and motivation to learn. Bethell et al. (2012) also identified factors that promote their definition of school success: engagement in class, participation in extracurricular activities, and feeling safe at school.

Hsiao & Yang (2010) determined that when teachers realized their belief systems they were able to more appropriate engage in the tasks expressed in Evertson & Weinstein's definition of classroom management. Further, according to Hsiao & Yang (2010) teacher beliefs impact their thinking, decision making, and other core aspects of their behavior, which therefore has an impact on how teachers go about accomplishing the tasks required for effective classroom management.

Hsiao & Yang (2010) go on to state that research on teachers' thinking processes are becoming an important focus within the field of education. The proposed study is interested in adding to this research by exploring teachers' experience with implementation of their current classroom management strategies. In order to obtain an

understanding of teachers' beliefs and the experience of implementing classroom management, it will be important to discern whether there are overarching themes in how teachers think about classroom management, plan and implement classroom management interventions, adjust to changes in the classroom environment, and balance responding to individual needs of students.

Research conducted by Anderson, Lubig, and Smith (2012) was interested in understanding how preservice teachers identified their students' needs and the ways in which they planned to meet them. To obtain this information Anderson, Lubig, and Smith (2012) employed phenomenological principles to explore how these teachers identified strategies for responding to their students' needs. The researchers asked the teachers to describe their lived experience by completing brief journal entries that explained their students' needs and how they addressed them. The researchers used content analysis and focused coding to draw inferences about the preservice teachers' experience. Anderson, Lubig, and Smith (2012) were able to provide specific and rich details about how these teachers responded to their students' needs by categorizing their actions. The proposed study would like to obtain similar information regarding elementary school teachers' beliefs and experience when implementing classroom management strategies.

Stevens & Lingo (2013) provide an umbrella approach to understanding classroom management. Included in their conceptualization of classroom management is: appropriate usage of room/space, rules and consequences, positive relationships among students and with teacher, engaging lessons, routines, precorrection strategies, and schedules. According to Crosby, Jolivet & Patterson (2006), precorrection strategies

can be an integral aspect of effective classroom management because it acts as a preventive strategy for managing disruptive behavior. More specifically, precorrection refers to the systematic observation of antecedents of problem behavior, the context of the behavior, and the identification of strategies that can be used to change the environment to prevent the behavior from occurring. A similar process is involved when conducting functional behavioral analysis, which has also been shown to result in decreases in disruptive behavior (Shumate & Willis, 2010; Kamps, Wendall & Culpepper, 2006; Broussard & Northrup, 1997).

Jones, Jones, and Vermette (2013) provide additional components of classroom management, which include: student-teacher relationships, high expectations for student behavior, non-verbal cues and redirection, teacher consistency, teacher perseverance and assertiveness, using peers as a resource for mediation and modelling, restorative justice, and school wide consistency for student behavior. Jones et al. (2013) suggest that inclusion of these key components when implementing classroom management allows the teacher and students to feel connected, empowered, and safe. Further doing so leaves room for meaningful academic, emotional, and social development.

In a review of strategies for educating teachers on effective classroom management, Wubbels (2011) describes the focus of approaches to classroom management: behavioral, social emotional, ecological, discourse-centered, academic, and interpersonal. Wubbels (2011) sought to determine which approach was the most relevant and appropriate for teaching classroom management to teachers. Wubbels (2011) concluded that no one approach can be applied nationally or internationally when

teaching and implementing classroom management. Thus, effective classroom management lies with the teacher being able to respond to the unique cultural and academic needs of their classroom and students. Wubbels' (2011) examination of teacher-education of classroom management illustrates the importance of considering the unique cultural and academic needs of students and the classroom/school environment before employing any particular strategies.

While previous research has provided multiple definitions and conceptualizations of classroom management, for the purpose of this qualitative study classroom management will be defined as the use of interventions to set and communicate high expectations for student behavior, establish and maintain positive relationships among teachers and students, consistent reinforcement of determined expectations (American Psychological Association, 2015). This definition of classroom management allows room for a richer understanding of how teacher beliefs present themselves in their decision making as it pertains to classroom management. Additionally, doing so is less restrictive and will allow the data collected from descriptive information gained from teacher participants to develop into a more detailed understanding of their experience. Giorgi (2012) discusses the importance of description when conducting phenomenological research. Giorgi (2012) posits that description articulates "the intentional objects of experience," which will be important to capture in this examination of classroom management beliefs.

Factors that Impact Beliefs about Classroom Management

The previous discussion defining classroom management highlighted a variety of

factors that might impact implementation of interventions. The following discussion will focus on the impact the following factors have on the implementation of classroom management interventions: demographic composition of student population, disruptive behavior, teacher-student relationships, and teacher training in classroom management.

The number of culturally diverse students in schools is continuing to increase (National Center for Education Statistics, 1996; Aud et al., 2013). Research by Richards, Brown & Forde (2007), implores teachers to adopt a culturally responsive approach when responding to the needs of their students. By doing so, teachers provide students with equal opportunities to learn. Further, culturally responsive teaching not only benefits students from diverse backgrounds, but all students as well as teachers because it allows for attention to be directed toward personal, family, and world histories, as well as the opportunity to think and see the world from a variety of perspectives.

In addition to providing a culturally responsive environment for students, teachers also need to foster resilience in students who may be experiencing social and/or economic difficulties. Research by Downey (2008) highlighted the impact home and community environments can have on students and provided daily classroom activities teachers can engage in with students to promote resilience. Downey (2008) posited that when teachers integrate activities to promote healthy relationships between teacher and student and among students, provide opportunities for meaningful engagement in classroom/school community, bolster cooperative and leadership skills, and teach students transferable life skills such as conflict resolution, assertiveness, and critically thinking students are given more opportunities to develop resilience. By doing so,

students have the necessary tools needed to successful function in the world.

A study conducted by Savas & Toprak (2013) focused on identifying problems teachers have with students who come from migrant backgrounds illustrates the type of behaviors that can occur when teachers do not spend enough time responding to the needs of culturally diverse students (i.e., frequent absences, violent behavior, lack of interest in class, students' inability to understand lesson, etc.). Savas & Toprak (2013) also directed attention to the impact a students' family and home environment can have on their performance in school (malnutrition, desire for child to work, violence in the home, etc.). This study speaks to the importance of teachers being aware of these pressures and influences in students' lives and finding ways to promote resilience, healthy relationship building, as well as address the students' academic needs.

Degree of disruptive behavior is another factor the impacts the success or failure of classroom management interventions. Thomas, Bierman, Thompson & Powers (2008) identified characteristics that predict the behavioral problems. This characteristics include (Thomas et al., 2008) behavior problems at home, attention problems, and deficits in social cognitions. Thomas et al. (2008) defines deficits in social cognition as a child's inability to engage in social problem solving skills and tendency to engage in hostile attributional biases. According to Thomas et al. (2008), such deficits result in difficult adaptation to the school environment and reactive, aggressive, noncompliant behavior at school. This research (Thomas et al., 2008) combined with the findings from Bethell et al. (2012), suggests that disruptive behavior has significant and negative effects on students' school success. For the purposes of this study disruptive behavior will be

defined as inappropriate vocalizations such as making noises or using profanity, out of seat behaviors, temper tantrums, aggression toward others, and other behaviors that disrupt the flow of the class.

Research has demonstrated that disruptive behavior can lead to negative outcomes for students socially, emotionally, and academically (Thomas et al., 2008; Bethell et al., 2012; Downer, Rimm-Kaufman & Pianta, 2007) and suggests that disruptive behavior is one of the leading factors that impede school success for individual children and for the classroom as a whole. Such findings shed light on the challenge disruptive behavior brings to an elementary school classroom and for the teacher. What makes disruptive behavior even more challenging to address in the classroom is that these behaviors present themselves in such a variety of ways. Waschbusch, Porter, Carrey, Kazmi, Roach & D'Amico (2004) demonstrated that there are three main categories of disruptive behavior: reactive/oppositional, proactive/callous, and inattention-impulsive-overactive. With such variety of presentation, it can be difficult for a teacher to provide guidance to decrease these behaviors.

The challenge disruptive behavior poses in the classroom suggests the need for classroom management interventions. In their review of literature Greer-Chase, Rhodes, & Kellam (2002), suggest that disruptive behavior is the leading problem in public education and that such behavior can lead to greater and more serious outcomes later in life such as juvenile delinquency, the development of behavioral disorders, and drug use. Greer-Chase et al. (2002) conclude their argument by entreating public education systems and teacher training programs to make classroom management interventions mandatory.

Further, a study conducted by Reglin, Akpo-Sanni & Losike-Sedimo (2012) demonstrated that when a classroom management model was implemented in 11 classrooms disciplinary referrals and suspensions decreased.

Evidence of the current and future negative outcomes associated with disruptive behavior at the elementary school level and evidence to suggest implementing classroom management interventions can curtail these outcomes, speaks to the importance of understanding the process and experience of implementing classroom management. By providing more information about the process and experience of implementing classroom management, future teachers may obtain a better understanding of how to implement their own classroom management strategies. Therefore, obtaining rich information about the experience of implementing classroom management from teachers is essential.

According to a study conducted by Giles (2012) teacher-student relationships are an essential component of a student's educational experience. As a result, Giles (2012) recommends that teachers be aware of how their relationship with students at both an individual and collective level impacts the students' ability to relate to the teacher and vis-versa. Giles (2012) goes on to state that teacher-student relationships are currently being undervalued and should be pushed to the forefront of educational research. Taitz (1996) examined teacher-student relationships through their collaboration in establishing classroom rules and expectations. Taitz (1996) determined that the classroom has shifted from teacher-dominated learning environment to a cooperative student initiated environment. In this new environment students and teacher work together to share the responsibility of managing classroom expectations. One strategy depicted in this study

involved the use of role playing and teacher-student discussion to demonstrate expectations and teach conflict resolution in the classroom. Taken together this research suggests that teacher-student relationships are a necessary element of classroom management because provides space and opportunity for teachers and students to learn from each other.

Teacher conceptions of the amount of training they receive in classroom management can impact whether or not such interventions are implemented. Arbuckle & Little (2004) demonstrated that when teachers felt supported by training in staff meetings and professional development services, they were more confident in their ability to address disruptive behavior and found more value is using behavior management strategies. Similarly, Nelson (1996) demonstrated that when a school-wide intervention was used teachers felt well trained and supported because they shared common goals for their classrooms. Taken together this research demonstrates that teachers are more responsive and confident to using classroom management strategies when they have sufficient training and support.

Snyder (1998) posits that classroom management is an interactive process that is put in place to encourage learning and suggests that personal history, training, and time spent with teaching materials are all factors that impact classroom management. Snyder defines personal history as a teacher's experience with classroom management via college courses, observation of other teachers, and parent and previous school experience when they were students. Without proper navigation of their own personal histories in the classroom, teachers, particularly student teachers, found it difficult to develop their role

as educator. Therefore, it seems imperative that research direct attention to the impact of these personal histories. The proposed study will assist with this endeavor by exploring teachers' experience implementing classroom management in order to address aspects of personal history, belief systems and thought processes.

While each factor discussed above impacts classroom management in a variety of ways, what they all have in common is the teacher and ways s/he can contribute to the social, emotional, and cultural development to their students. Current research has provided a breadth of information about classroom management, teachers' perceptions of it, factors that impact it, and recommendations for better implementation of it; however it has not examined teachers' experience navigating this process. The proposed study is interested in understanding how teachers participate in the implementation of classroom management and their beliefs surrounding planning and adaptations to changes in the classroom environment.

Summary and Rationale for Study

As stated previously, the proposed study is interested in understanding how teacher beliefs about classroom management manifest themselves in their intervention implementation. In order to more keenly examine their experience, a phenomenological qualitative approach will be used to examine themes related to teachers' beliefs and implementation of classroom management by interviewing and observing teachers. The current study attempts to employ this approach to gain insight into teachers' experience developing their beliefs about classroom management and using their beliefs in their implementation decisions.

Proposed Research Study

Statement of the Problem and Purpose

The problem the proposed study will address is the gap in research for studies examining teachers' experience and beliefs surrounding planning and implementation of classroom management strategies. There have been a variety of studies that employ a qualitative approach to understanding teachers thinking and various aspects of their teacher experience (Anderson, Lubig & Smith, 2012; Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Evans, Whitehouse & Hickery, 2012; Giles, 2012; Goh, 2013; Greiffenhagen, 2012; Gurgur & Uzuner, 2010; Hart & Swars, 2009; Wong, Goh, Osman, 2013), but few have looked specifically at the experience of implementing classroom management. Thus, the purpose of the proposed study is to use a phenomenological research approach to explore teachers experience with classroom management and the meaning and belief systems that teachers attribute to this process.

Research Questions

In his introductory text of phenomenology Moran (2000), examines the historical roots of the approach. He states that Edmund Husserl, the pioneer of phenomenology, believed that when conducting this type of study the researcher must avoid presumptive logic and “explore experience in a pure manner, unsullied by assumption” (Moran, 2000, p. 127). However, Moran goes on to say the field of phenomenology has moved away from the reductionist view endorsed by Husserl, therefore it is appropriate to provide a broad conceptualization of what this study aims to address. Because the purpose of phenomenological is to allow the data to guide you, the research questions leave room for

the data to lead the researcher in a more specific direction if need be.

Research Question #1: What are teachers' beliefs about classroom management?

Research Question #2: What do teachers believe are essential elements of appropriate classroom management?

Research Question #3: How do teachers' beliefs about classroom management manifest themselves in the way they respond to students' individual needs/differences?

Participants

This study will recruit four to eight participants from local elementary schools. Because the purpose of the study is to obtain rich information regarding teachers' experiences and beliefs about implementing classroom management the criteria for participation are broad. Participants must have at least one year of experience with teaching and have been on their current campus for at least a year. There is no limitation for teacher age, years of experience, gender, or race/ethnicity.

Procedures

In order to obtain rich information from participants, data collection will consist of four phases:

- Phase One – The researcher will utilize a form of data collection described in Cammarata & Tedick (2012), lived experience description (LED). Each participant will be asked to think of one day and a specific instance during their teaching career when they felt most confident in their abilities to deliver classroom management intervention. Participants will be asked to do the same for

- a day or instances when they felt least confident.
- Phase Two – Teachers will then be interviewed by the researcher using a semi-structured protocol. Teachers will be asked very broadly about their experience with classroom management based on their Phase one responses (e.g., Tell me about a day when you felt most confident implementing a classroom management intervention.). Additional questions will be dictated by how the participant responds to the initial questions. In order to provide participants with enough time to adequately describe their LED, the second phase will occur 2-3 weeks following initiation of the first phase. (See appendix A for potential initial interview questions.)
 - Phase Three – This phase will consist of unstructured observations of the teachers in their classroom. In the field notes, the observer will pay particular attention to how the teacher manages conflict, how the teacher responds to questions from the class, the types of warnings and consequences given for disruptive behavior, and aspects of their overall temperament (i.e. is the teacher soft-spoken, does the teacher use sarcasm, how often does the teacher's affect change, etc.) Information obtained from the observation will be used provide depth to the researcher's understanding of what it looks like to implement classroom management. The third phase will occur within a week of the second phase, and will be an unannounced visit to ensure that the teacher does not do any additional preparation for the observation.
 - Phase Four – The final phase will consist of a semi-structured follow-up interview

with each teacher. The structure of this interview will be based on questions the researcher had following the initial interview and during the classroom observation. This follow-up interview gives the teacher an opportunity to expand on experiences discussed previously and explain their rationale for particular classroom management strategies observed during the classroom observations. (See appendix B for potential follow-up questions.)

It is important to note that this study seeks to obtain a realistic and rich understanding of the experience of implementing classroom management and the beliefs that guide the experience. Therefore, it is essential that no special accommodations or modifications be made in the classroom prior to the observation. To allow for initial analysis of data obtained in the first three phases, the final phase will occur 3 weeks following the classroom observation.

Data Analyses and Expected Results

Primary Analysis

The proposed study will use bracketing; a strategy used to help the researcher remove biases regarding the experience of interest and allows them to approach the lived experiences with an open mind, when interpreting transcribed interviews (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Creswell, 2013; Giorgi & Giorgi, 2003). To assist with ensuring bracketing occurs, the research will employ the use of memos to document additional questions and any difficulties with counter-transference and the removal of biases (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003). The research will also employ a combination of the coding strategies depicted in Anderson, Lubig & Smith's (2012) examination of student-teachers identification of student individualization and Cammarata & Tedick's (2012) examination of the experience of immersion teachers. The researcher will conduct repeated readings of the transcribed interviews looking first at each interview as a whole and comparing across participants. After doing an initial whole reading, the researcher will then examine transcriptions in parts, looking for key words and phrases (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012; Flood, 2010). By doing so the researcher provides the opportunity for the texts to provide as much information as possible and for the detailed examination for relationships and commonalities across participants.

Following the first phase of data collection, as well as the third phase the researcher will employ theoretical sampling, which refers to the letting the data drive your data collection. Theoretical sampling allows data to dictate whether additional concepts need to be examined with particular participants, or whether you need more

information from a participant with different characteristics than your current group. Further, theoretical sampling ensures that the researcher obtains as much information about the participants lived experience to allow for adequate representation of concepts and categories (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

When conducting qualitative analyses it is essential that there be some measure of trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Therefore, the researcher will engage in member checking with the participants of the study prior to the final phase of data collection to ensure that the categories determined during analysis adequately capture the lived experience of the participants (Cammarata & Tedick, 2012).

Expected Results

After conducting each phase it is expected that the researcher will have a fuller understanding of teachers' beliefs about classroom management and how these beliefs are illustrated in their intervention implementation decisions. As stated previously, there is a limited amount of research on how teacher beliefs impact classroom management implementation decisions. Throughout these teacher interviews the researcher expects to gain knowledge about the thought processing and reflection that occurs for teachers when they make classroom management intervention decisions. This study will gain a better understanding of what factors teachers consider, how they adjust their decisions to fit these factors, and most importantly, what beliefs about education, behavior, and teacher-student relationships underlie these decisions.

Discussion

Summary and Limitations

The proposed study seeks to understand and explore teachers' experiences and beliefs when making decisions about the implementation of classroom management interventions. This study will do so by interviewing teachers and observing their classroom activities. The researcher intends to describe this phenomenon in order to shed light on another aspect of the teaching experience. Specifically, this study is interested in understanding the experience of implementing classroom management, as well as the thinking and belief systems that shape the selection and planning of classroom management interventions. Previous research has provided a number of factors that can interfere with this process, as well as the typical behaviors and actions that are involved in this process. Thus, there is a need to know and understanding the thinking behind this process and how that thinking impacts teacher belief systems and their self-efficacy.

A possible limitation of this study would be the time period and degree of participation needed to ensure rich data is obtained. Teachers are busy enough with their current schedules and may not want to dedicate hours of their time to answering questions. Also, in a study conducted by Hughes, Kemenoff & Hart (1993) examining teachers' attributions of disruptive behavior and teacher self-efficacy, it was indicated that teachers' self-efficacy for implementing classroom management is low. Therefore, teachers may not want to discuss classroom management if they are not confident in their abilities, which could limit the findings of this study. A final limitation may be the sample of teachers included in the study. The research hopes to obtain a diverse

population of teachers in order to gain a more global understanding of the impact of teacher beliefs across school settings (private, public, and charter), teacher demographic characteristics (gender, ethnicity, etc.), and years of experience. The small size of the sample may not appropriately capture the nuances these factors have on teacher beliefs and implementation decisions.

Implications for Future Research

The proposed research will be helpful in providing insight on the belief systems and environmental factors that impact teacher decision making. Additionally, the information obtained in this study could be used to assist with course development for educating teachers on classroom management. Further, this allows for even more attention to be placed on the impact of teacher characteristics and factors that impact student learning. Finally, this information may help bridge communication between teachers and parents by providing insights into how the classroom functions as a whole and the strategies teachers are using to enhance their students' learning experience.

Given the previously mentioned limitations, it will be important to continue to expand the sample size of the teacher participants and look more critically at the impact of teacher characteristics on implementation decisions. Additionally, an examination of the focus teacher education programs place on developing belief systems regarding classroom management may add important insights for future course/program development. Finally, conducting a quantitative study that examines the strength of these teacher beliefs regarding classroom management decision making could add weight to the findings of this research and promote further examination in this area.

Appendices

Appendix A. Initial Interview Questions

1. What has your teaching experience been like? How long have you been a teacher?
What motivated you to be a teacher?
2. What kind of classroom management style do you have? Are there a set of primary classroom management strategies you use in your classroom?
3. What guides your decision making when implementing classroom management interventions?
4. Do you feel like you have a good handle on classroom management? Have there been any significant difficulties?
5. Based on your experience, at which grade/age has it been easier to implement classroom management strategies?
6. Did you receive any type of training for classroom management?
7. How have you developed your systems and beliefs about classroom management?
8. How are your beliefs about classroom management represented in your classroom/classroom activities?
9. How do you make classroom rules/expectations? How do you introduce them in a way that will ensure they are continuous throughout the year?
10. Describe any preventive strategies you use.
11. Do you have any strategies for resolving conflict between students?
12. Tell me about your use of consequences.
13. What are your strengths as a teacher?
14. What are your weaknesses or things you struggle with in the classroom? How does that weakness impact your ability to manage the class?
15. Any last thoughts about classroom management?

Appendix B. Follow-Up Interview Questions

1. Are there any barriers that get in the way of how you would like to implement classroom management/interact with your class?
2. In a few words how would you describe your approach or philosophy for classroom management?
3. What advice or pearls of wisdom would you share with a new teacher?
4. What makes you different from other teachers?
5. Do you have any last comments about your approach to classroom management?
6. Include additional questions related to classroom observations as needed.

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