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Classroom Management: Beginning Teachers' Perceptions of Preparedness

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by

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Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree.

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Abstract

Classroom management has been the focal point of many different studies and research projects. Unfortunately, it has also been cited as one of the top three reasons teachers leave the field of education not only today, but for the last 40 years (Berry, 2010). There is a need for an understanding of the implications of past classroom management research trends, styles, and strategies that are popular but have not worked in the past. Realizing further research in teacher training programs was needed, this study included examinations of perceptions of teachers about how well prepared they were for the classroom environment, how effective they felt when dealing with issues in the classroom, and what teachers feel prepared them most to handle classroom management issues. To collect data, a mixed method study was conducted. A quantitative survey was used to gather perceptions of teachers using a Likert scale. A qualitative interview was conducted to gather perceptions of teachers, and a custom matrix was used to record responses from interview transcriptions. To validate data from the survey and interview, a literature review was compiled and compared to survey and interview results. Findings indicated mentoring and feedback from mentors and administrators helped teachers to feel better prepared for classroom management. Teachers felt more prepared for classroom management after their first year of teaching and after accepting their first job than they did prior to teaching, and those who had prior life experiences outside of teaching felt more prepared than those who did not. Likewise, engaging lessons and positive teacher and student relationships helped teachers to feel more effective in handling classroom management issues.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter One: Introduction

Teachers have always had to maintain class control while attempting to teach a specific lesson on a topic (Kratochwill, 2011). It does not matter the grade level of students, teachers must manage classroom behavior in order to deliver lessons effectively and efficiently (Kratochwill, 2011). Classroom management has been cited as one of the number one reasons teachers leave the profession (Berry, 2010). Understanding why teachers feel unprepared to handle classroom management issues is key to keeping teachers in the field of education (Berry, 2010).

Taking classes or observing teachers who have very good classroom management is not enough (Huling & Resta, 2001). Huling and Resta (2001) supported a multi-tiered approach to teacher preparation that involves everyone. Teacher preparation takes multiple individuals working at different levels of education to help a teacher overcome the challenges of teaching; specifically, in classroom management (Huling & Resta, 2001).

Background of the Study

Classroom management encompasses multiple frameworks; time, behavior, record keeping, and lesson planning are all part of classroom management (Kratochwill, 2011). These frameworks are valuable to a teacher's success; however, one may help teachers be more successful than others in the first years of teaching (Kratochwill, 2011). Pinpointing which framework will have the highest impact on the ability of beginning teachers to be successful will help the field of education retain teachers and is essential to the vitality of the profession. According to Kratochwill (2011):

> Classroom management, often called classroom discipline, has been a priority for teachers for nearly 40 years, or for as long as there have been opinion surveys of educational priorities. For example, the Gallup Poll designed to assess perceptions of public education (Rose & Gallup, 2010) has consistently cited classroom management/school discipline as a major issue. (p. 2)

Teachers are faced with many issues in education (Kratochwill, 2011). Classroom management is consistently ranked as the one issue teachers struggle with the most (Kratochwill, 2011).

Whether called management or discipline, the ability of teachers to manage the discipline of students has been cited as an indicator of teacher success or failure within the first years of teaching (Rose & Gallup, 2010). Additionally, one of the most common factors cited as being directly related to job burnout for the first-year teacher (and a leading cause of attrition) is the lack of effective classroom management training programs (Kratochwill, 2011). According to Berry (2010), "Over 30% of new teachers leave within the first five years of teaching, and over 50% of novices who teach in urban schools leave within the first three years" (p. 6). America has created a dysfunctional system of teacher support (Berry, 2010). This is evident in the inability of new teachers to control students when it comes to classroom management (Berry, 2010). Berry (2010) provided evidence of teachers leaving the profession due to the classroom struggles endured in the first few years of teaching. Specifically, beginning teachers have struggled within the framework of behavior management (Berry, 2010; Kratochwill, 2011).

Conceptual Framework

The lens through which this study was viewed focused on behavior management in the classroom. Although there are many different approaches to classroom management, the behavior component of total classroom management is the key issue (Kratochwill, 2011). According to Kratochwill (2011), a poll of 2,300 teachers from kindergarten to twelfth grade revealed, "Teachers wanted assistance with classroom management because of their concerns about student safety and their desire for strategies to deal effectively with students' negative and/or disruptive behavior" (p. 3). Safety is one concern, while addressing and managing behavior is another (Kratochwill, 2011).

Researchers have identified two main approaches to classroom management. The approaches are referred to as reactive and proactive, and each shares the following commonalities, according to Kratochwill (2011):

- Fostering relationship building between the student and teacher,
- Being firm and fair when dealing with student discipline,
- Organizing and implementing instruction so students can learn in the best possible learning environment,
- Utilizing management methods to maximize the engagement of students, helping students develop quality social skills,
- Using a common method to effectively handle students with behavior problems. (p. 4)

Kratochwill (2011) determined these commonalities in classroom management must exist regardless of the teacher's approach to classroom management. Without one or more of

the commonalities teachers will struggle with classroom management issues (Kratochwill, 2011).

A reactive approach involves waiting for a behavior to take place and reacting to it (Hayden, 2010). According to Hayden (2010), when students display correct classroom behavior, they are rewarded both intrinsically and extrinsically. This is a system of relationship exercises that build upon interactions between students and the teacher in a classroom throughout the school year (Hayden, 2010). With a proactive approach, the teacher recognizes a behavior may take place and prepares a plan to keep it from happening (Churchward, 2010). This technique or theory focuses solely on creating the teacher as the authority in the classroom, while being firm and fair when it comes to certain behaviors (Churchward, 2010). Both concepts of behavior management are referred to throughout the study.

Statement of the Problem

Challenges facing new teachers in the realm of classroom behavior management have been attributed to the increased number of teachers leaving the profession (Berry, 2010). With 30% of teachers leaving the teaching profession within five years and 50% leaving the teaching profession within the first three years, the challenge of solving the attrition problem and its relation to classroom management is a real one (Berry, 2010). According to Gonzalez, Brown, and Slate (2008):

> Over 150,000 teachers are employed to meet the demands of growing school districts, retiring teachers, and replacing those individuals who have left the profession. Additional researchers have reported that public school enrollment rose 21% between 1985 and 2002. The highest growth percent occurred in

> the elementary grade levels, showing an increase from 27 million to 33.8 million. Projections for the 2012 public school enrollment are forecasted to be slightly higher than that of 2002 with a 2% increase occurring every year. With these increasing numbers, it is imperative that researchers address the attrition rate of teachers who are leaving the profession, particularly within the first year of teaching. (p. 1)

Attrition is a problem in education, and it is a growing problem (Berry, 2010). The rate of attrition continues to rise because of the difficulties teachers have with classroom management (Berry, 2010).

Gonzalez et al. (2008) interviewed several teachers in a qualitative research project. The project concluded with the following findings, "The three most influential factors found were lack of administrative support, difficulties with student discipline, and low salary levels" (Gonzalez et al., 2008, p. 2). Is there a specific aspect of classroom management causing teachers to leave the profession altogether? Pinpointing where the best preparation for teaching comes from will prove beneficial for the future of teacher preparation (Gonzalez et al., 2008)

The problem addressed by this study involves teachers leaving the profession both in large numbers and early in their careers. One of the biggest challenges teachers face is classroom management (Berry, 2010). The inability to handle student behavior comes with the possibility of losing teachers from the profession (Berry, 2010).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the perceptions of beginning teachers in regard to their preparedness and effectiveness in the use of

behavior management strategies. Three research questions guided this study. Perceptual data about how teachers believe they were prepared to handle classroom discipline were used to deepen the understanding of teacher feelings about pre-service preparation for behavior management. Classroom discipline is one framework of classroom management, according to Kratochwill (2011). Berry (2010) supported classroom management or discipline as being a challenge for teachers.

Research questions. Understanding that teachers are leaving the profession early in their careers and in large numbers (Berry, 2010), the following research questions guided the study:

1. Within the first three years of teaching, to what degree do teachers perceive they were prepared to handle classroom discipline?

2. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive is their level of effectiveness in handling classroom discipline?

3. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive as the reasons for their preparedness in handling classroom discipline?

Significance of the Study

The results of this study add to the scholarly research and literature in the field of education through an analysis of how well teachers perceive they were trained either at the post-secondary level or within their individual districts to handle classroom management, specifically targeting student behavior. In a survey of teacher attrition conducted by the National Center for Career Statistics, Keigher (2010) found, “Among public school teachers with 1-3 years of experience, 77.3% stayed in their base-year school, 13.7% moved to another school, and 9.1% left teaching in 2008-09” (p. 4). The

researcher sought to amplify the knowledge of leaders in the field of education as to why teachers are leaving the profession.

According to Gonzalez et al. (2008), "Teachers leave the profession early because of their struggles with classroom management" (p. 2). Primarily, teachers leave within the first three years of entering the profession (Berry, 2010). Berry (2010) also found teachers willing to leave for higher pay; however, these jobs were only slightly higher paying. Most jobs were less stressful and required less responsibility when it came to management (Berry, 2010). Results of this study will deepen understanding for school leaders of how teachers perceive they were prepared for the classroom management piece of educating students.

This study allowed the researcher to determine if the practices currently in place for educating pre-service and early service teachers are perceived to be effective. One new program designed to help beginning teachers focus on class time and allowing more hands-on experience with difficult student behaviors was described by Berry (2010) as "deeply engaged with students at the same time that they are deeply engaged as students. Such a structure helps ensure that (new) teachers are learning from children" (p. 1). Berry (2010) supported the idea of more time in the classroom and around students before a beginning teacher enters his or her own classroom. Berry (2010) believed teachers were leaving the teaching profession for jobs with less responsibility, specifically citing classroom management. Berry (2010) supported teachers spending more time in a classroom preparing strategies to handle classroom management.

By gaining insight into the perceptions of new teachers regarding how well they were trained, school leaders can begin to make changes within organizations to close the

gap as it pertains to classroom management. This study will be beneficial to both school districts and post-secondary schools. Deepening the understanding of where organizations are failing pre-service teachers in the area of classroom management will allow policies and programs to be changed to start the process of adapting pre-service teacher preparation practices.

Definitions of Key Terms

For the purposes of his study, the following terms were defined:

Beginning teacher. Beginning teachers are defined as those who are in their first three years of teaching (Choy, Wong, Lim, & Chong, 2013).

Classroom management. Weimer (2008) described classroom management as "the provisions and procedures necessary to establish and maintain an environment in which instruction and learning can occur" (p. 1). For the purposes of this study, classroom management specifically means the management of student behavior within the classroom.

Limitations

There are teachers with more than three years of experience in the field of education; however, those within the first three years of teaching will offer insight into the most current practices of teacher training. Berry (2010) reported teachers tend to leave the profession between years one and three; therefore, it is imperative to target this group of educators. This limited group can provide perceptive data closest to the time during which teachers choose to leave the field of education.

The population of teachers is large, so a sample of the population was selected for this study. Specifically, the sample was limited to the teachers who chose to participate in

the study while in years one through three of their careers in southwest Missouri. Teachers in years four through 30 ostensibly have a firmer grasp on classroom management and disruptive behaviors. This smaller-sized sample may offer biases. According to Smith and Price (2010), the smaller the sample size, the larger margin of variance in study results. Smith and Price (2010) went on to support the larger the sample in a study, the more accurate tendencies in responses will be.

The location of this study was southwest Missouri. To keep the results of the interview and survey reliable, the same demographics were used for both methods of data gathering, which included a survey tool and interview tool. Perceptions of beginning teachers throughout the state of Missouri were not included in the data; however, a sample of those in southwest Missouri produced the most reliable outcomes obtainable from the survey and interviews (Salkind, 2010).

To gather data, a survey was used. The participants in the survey were only able to offer quantitative data. According to Johnson and Christensen (2010), quantitative data only take into account a single reality. The data are objective in nature and quantify, in numbers, the responses from participants. The limitation of a survey of quantitative data, according to Johnson and Christensen (2010), is the inability to record, understand, or interpret social interactions. According to Wyse (2012), other weaknesses include the fact participants may not be honest or may not want to portray themselves in a negative manner. The number of non-responses may outweigh the number of responses (Wyse, 2012). This creates bias in the survey responses as they relate to the non-response rate (Wyse, 2012).

Rogelberg et al. (2003) took bias a step further in their argument about non-response. They stated, “Survey non-response is typically classified into four discrete categories: inaccessibility, inability, carelessness, and noncompliance” (Rogelberg et al., 2003, p. 1106). Inaccessibility refers to participants not being able to access the survey tool, while inability is the extent to which the participants are unable to complete the survey (Rogelberg et al., 2003). Carelessness may be a result of participants not having time or simply not caring about the results of the survey tool (Rogelberg et al., 2003). Rogelberg et al. (2003) also reiterated noncompliance is simply the act of not completing the survey.

Dillman (2011) offered hope of keeping bias out of the survey and increasing responses. When surveys are created that are personal in nature, the participants are able to identify with the tool (Dillman, 2011). In fact, when respondents are pre-notified of the survey, the survey is timed well, and a follow-up email is sent either reminding respondents to take the survey or thanking them, response rates can be as high as 55% for online surveys (Dillman, 2011).

Depending on the timing of the survey, some beginning teachers may have already made a decision about leaving the teaching field. Bias could play into the data about the preparedness to handle classroom management. To keep bias as minimal as possible, questions about whether or not teachers are staying in the profession or leaving were not asked.

Bias can play an important role in the validity of survey or interview results (Reio, 2010). There are multiple types of bias. Reio (2010) supported that while web-

based surveys are fast and inexpensive, these surveys often allow for bias to show through unexpectedly. Reio (2010) proposed:

> Low response rates in survey research can be problematic for three important reasons. First, lower response rates mean fewer participants, which reduces statistical power and prevents the use of certain statistical procedures. Second, low response rates can reduce the perceived credibility of the study's findings. Third, low response rates can generate biased samples where study participants are systematically different from non-respondents. (p. 48)

According to Reio (2010), higher response rates lower the amount of bias through surveys and interviews.

Interviews were conducted with teachers in southwest Missouri. These interviews offered qualitative data. Unlike quantitative data, qualitative data are social and personal (Lichtman, 2012). Qualitative research is designed to explore, connect, and construct data to make connections and generalizations in multiple realities (Lichtman, 2012). It is subjective (Lichtman, 2012). While each method has weaknesses or limitations, using a combination of qualitative and quantitative data collection methods increases reliability of data (Lichtman, 2012).

The main weakness in the interview lies in the ability of the interviewer to lose the focus of the study during the interview process (Practical Assessment, Research and Evaluation [PARE], 1997). Because the response of the interviewee cannot be controlled during the interview process, it is easy for the interview to stray from the intended purpose (PARE, 1997). Another weakness identified by PARE (1997) is the probability of an interviewee to use theoretical language to answer questions while trying to impress

the interviewer. The occurrence of this phenomenon may allow interviewees to respond in a way they think the interviewer would want them to respond (PARE, 1997).

Summary

There have been numerous research studies conducted proving teachers are leaving the teaching profession early in their careers. Many studies have been conducted analyzing why teachers are leaving the field of education (Berry, 2010; Churchward, 2010; Gonzalez et al., 2008; Kratochwill, 2011). Classroom management is one of the reasons teachers leave (Berry, 2010). Analyzing teachers' perceptions about how well they were trained to handle classroom management may be instrumental in teacher retention. By identifying and describing the perceptions of beginning teachers' preparedness and their perceived effectiveness of their classroom management skills, decision-making will be made easier for school leaders. The conceptual framework of this study was behavior management as classroom management.

This framework was appropriate in determining how well beginning teachers feel they were prepared for classroom management during their first three years of teaching. The overarching questions for this study were: How effective do beginning teachers think they were in handling classroom discipline after completing all course requirements in an undergraduate program? Finally, what do beginning teachers perceive as the reasons for their preparedness or effectiveness in handling classroom discipline? Hopefully, the answers to these questions will help school leaders decide the next steps needed to help teachers with their classroom management skills.

Chapter Two includes discussion of the history and current challenges of classroom management. Chapter Two provides the most common strategies or best

practices used today. The process for gathering the perceptions of teachers in the field of education is outlined in Chapter Three.

Chapter Four provides data that were gathered from the research process. Chapter Four contains a review of the demographics of respondents and interviewees who participated in the study. Recorded responses from the survey and interviewees are also presented in Chapter Four.

Chapter Five offers a more in-depth analysis of how findings of the research related to the literature. A list of outcomes is provided, through the summary and conclusion, as they relate to the research questions in Chapter One. Lastly, recommendations for future research are given.

Chapter Two: Review of Literature

Classroom management is one responsibility a teacher is given upon starting a new career as an educator. While Kratochwill (2011) reported, “There is no definition of classroom management,” (p. 1) some have defined classroom management simply as classroom discipline. Classroom management has been summarized as a set of rules which foster academic learning with as few interruptions as possible through student engagement (Evertson & Weinstein, 2013). While there is no universal definition for classroom management, there are two areas of classroom management that are challenges in classroom discipline (Evertson & Weinstein, 2013). According to Evertson and Weinstein (2013), classroom management encompasses student discipline and is a frustrating issue among educators.

Moreover, Thompson (2011) contended, “The failure to manage a classroom successfully is often the reason that even the most dedicated teachers leave education for a less stressful career” (p. v). The findings in multiple surveys showed discipline issues with students to be one of the most frustrating parts of a teacher's career (Thompson, 2011). To keep these discipline issues and other disruptions under control, teachers must exercise good classroom management (Thompson, 2011). Farber (2010) asked the question, “Who has time to teach them [students] with so much management taking place?" (p. 21). The management Farber (2010) wrote about is the classroom management of student discipline.

Rodriguez (2010) stated the same about the different elements of classroom management. He reported the elements vary from supervision and refereeing to facilitating learning (Rodriguez, 2010). Yet another issue faced by beginning teachers is

finding out where personal values meet educational philosophies (Edwards & Watts, 2010). According to Edwards and Watts (2010), finding effective discipline models for classroom management is the key to success. Effective models are individualized and do not come in a one-size-fits-all package (Edwards & Watts, 2010).

The history of classroom management, along with different types of classroom management styles and strategies, were researched to gain knowledge and understanding about classroom management. Existing teacher perceptions about preparedness for classroom management, along with different expectations for teachers in the classroom, were analyzed to broaden the understanding of the role classroom management has in the retention and attrition of teachers. Different teacher training programs were researched and analyzed, as well as teacher assessment and measurement tools to focus the expectations for classroom management among teachers.

History of Classroom Management Research

Classroom management has always been a concern among teachers (Marzano, Marzano, & Pickering, 2003); however, it has only been a research phenomenon since the late 1990s and early 2000s. Marzano et al. (2003) cited the work of Emmer and Brophy as a starting point for modern classroom management research. Emmer and Brophy were the leaders in the first major studies of classroom management in the 1960s (Marzano et al., 2003).

During the 1960s and 1970s, a movement started in which classrooms were open (Cuban, 2014). An open classroom is one where walls do not exist, and instead, there are areas in a large open space dedicated to specific learning outcomes (Cuban, 2014). Cuban (2014) went on to write, "Open classrooms' focus on students' learning by doing

resonated with those who believed that America's formal, teacher-led classrooms were crushing students' creativity" (p. 2). Classes might have a table for science, a tent with pillows for students to read in, and a small table where the teacher sits with students for individual instruction (Cuban, 2014). All students work on all subjects throughout the day in an informal setting to spur creativity (Cuban, 2014). Cuban (2014) said these classrooms were a direct result of the issues America faced in the post-1950s era.

Cuban (2014) went on to report that while open classrooms were popular across America, they were also short-lived. Bennett (2012) wrote open classrooms were chaotic in their interdisciplinary approach to teaching. The open classroom model and its lack of walls and barriers allowed for too many disruptions and not enough support for quiet reflection and deep thinking (Bennett, 2012). Students thrive in a quiet and reflective classroom, not one that is constantly interrupted with noise (Bennett, 2012).

Since the majority of students are either special needs or academically able and these students succeed in smaller, contained classrooms where learning is the focus, that is the model schools use most (Bennett, 2012). By the late 1970s, the open classroom model was fading to rows of desks where education was compartmentalized and students learned the same subjects at the same time (Cuban, 2014). During the 1980s, new models of classrooms emerged (Cuban, 2014). While challenges in classroom management were similar, studies emerged to help aid teachers in their grasp for classroom control (Cuban, 2014).

While classroom management was one of the biggest issues teachers faced during the 1960s, it is not fair to compare it to classroom management practices (Morones, 2013). Minor classroom management issues were handled in the classroom, while major

incidents were dealt with by administration (Morones, 2013). Teachers are now encouraged to find and adapt strategies for handling classroom management issues within their classrooms (Morones, 2013). Corporal punishment or paddling of students was common during the late twentieth century, and in some states, it is still used as a means of punishment in public schools (Morones, 2013).

Morones (2013) went on to report corporal punishment was common in most states until 1977 with the ruling of *Ingraham v. Wright*. In the case, students argued corporal punishment violated the fourteenth and eighth amendments (Morones, 2013). The court ruled fourteenth amendment rights were not violated since students were given due process and the eighth amendment was not violated since "cruel and unusual punishment" was meant to protect criminals, not public school students (Morones, 2013).

The ruling of the case supported corporal punishment in schools as a way of disciplining; however, most schools, trying to protect money from attorney fees and court costs, do not want to fight a corporal punishment case (Morones, 2013). While corporal punishment is still used in schools, it is viewed as a behavioral and classroom management support that takes away the power of the teacher in the classroom rather than upholding it (Morones, 2013). Providing support for teachers, through corporal punishment, has added to the emphasis for classroom management studies and strategies for teachers (Morones, 2013).

According to Marzano et al. (2003), the first systematic classroom management study was completed by Kounin and Gump in 1958. Kounin and Gump (1958) videotaped 49 different classrooms to determine the most effective behaviors a teacher could and should possess in the classroom (Marzano et al., 2003). These behaviors were

withitness, smoothness, stating clear behavior expectations, and providing a variety of learning activities from which to choose (Marzano et al., 2003).

In the late 1970s, Brophy and Evertson (1975) asked, "What characteristics separate effective teachers from less effective teachers?" (p. 5). They went on to answer their question by reporting the following positive teacher characteristics: offering a variety in curriculum choices, providing student opportunity to learn, teaching with enthusiasm, being clear and warm with instructions, asking a high level of complex-type questions, and task orientation (Brophy & Evertson, 1975). Brophy and Evertson (1975) went on to report negative criticism by the teacher to the student was not a characteristic of teacher effectiveness. For purposes of their study, Brophy and Evertson (1975) analyzed the behaviors of the most effective teachers in terms of classroom management. Brophy and Evertson (1975) looked at which teachers had the largest gains in achievement within classrooms and correlated the behaviors exhibited to achievement.

Emmer and Evertson (1981) and Doyle (1985) led research in classroom management during the 1980s. In a report by Emmer and Evertson (1981), teachers who attended classroom management training often exhibited changes in attitude or in perceptions in how to deal with students. Emmer and Evertson (1981) went on to state, "Training programs are apparently successful in eliciting teacher enthusiasm and support, and to a considerable extent, are consistent with the teachers' role expectations or preferences" (p. 21). The most successful and widely used training programs in the 1980s and 1990s included Gordon's Teacher Effectiveness Training, Canter and Canter's (2001) Assertive Discipline, and Dreikurs and Soltz's (1964) Logical Consequences, a

continuation of Adlerian classroom management strategies from an earlier time period (Doyle, 1985; Emmer & Evertson, 1981).

Doyle (1985) stated, "From the beginning of their careers, teachers commonly express concern over how to achieve good discipline in their classrooms" (p. 6). This is also an expectation from the students and parents (Doyle, 1985). Both groups expect the teacher to be able to keep order in the classroom (Doyle, 1985).

By using an Assertive Discipline Model outlined by Dreikurs, teachers are able to set expectations early in the school year and continue to hold order throughout the school year with ease (Doyle, 1985). Doyle (1985) stated what happens in the classroom has a large impact on what students learn. Doyle's (1985) focus was not on the quantity of teaching received by students, but the quality of instruction existing in the classroom. Doyle (1985) argued, "Adequate time must be given for good instruction to occur, but the available time must be filled with content that represents important pieces of the curriculum and students must be given high quality opportunities to learn the content" (p. 8). To provide quality opportunities for learning, teachers must have quality classroom control or management (Doyle, 1985).

Huling and Resta (2001) knew classroom management was a struggle for beginning teachers when they reported the first years of teaching include "transition time that the teacher begins to develop the skills and habits that form the foundation for future teaching success...and many new teachers get discouraged and abandon their teaching careers" (p. 5). Huling and Resta (2001) went on to agree with Doyle (1985) regarding the beginning of the year and teacher success. The beginning of the school year is a critical time for teachers to teach students rules, routines, and procedures (Doyle, 1985;

Huling & Resta, 2001). The confidence of a teacher can be inflated or deflated based upon the positive or negative experiences a teacher has in establishing these rules of order at the beginning of the school year (Huling & Resta, 2001).

According to a meta-analysis of studies by Marzano et al. (2003), a new wave of studying, interpreting results, and reporting best practices can give solutions to a specific set of challenges. Garland, Garland, and Vasquez (2013) reported, "Early career teachers have frequently stated that they are unprepared to address problematic behaviors" (p. 133). In fact, a meta-analysis of teacher training programs found the challenge of dealing with problem behavior is greater than any other a teacher might face during the first years of teaching (Garland et al., 2013). Garland et al. (2013) reported new teachers feel uncertain to manage classroom behaviors, have a desire for more classroom experiences earlier in their training, and need more evidence-based learning to manage behavior.

Teacher Training

Teacher training programs are looking for ways to improve (Goldhaber & Liddle, 2012). Goldhaber and Liddle (2012) found policymakers ultimately have the most leverage over teacher preparation programs. While individuals are entering the teaching profession in alternative certification programs, most still use the traditional route (Goldhaber & Liddle, 2012). Policymakers select the criteria for licensure and the standards pre-service teachers must meet, so there is little control over who enters a traditional teacher certification program (Goldhaber & Liddle, 2012). Goldhaber and Liddle (2012) believed, “Changing the way teachers in traditional training programs are selected or prepared could significantly influence the teacher workforce” (p. 78).

Woodcock (2011) found teachers have a higher level of efficacy in their training and student teaching experiences than they do after their first year of teaching; however, Woodcock (2011) also stated efficacy levels rise with every year of experience and training after the first year of teaching. This demonstrates a gap between teacher training programs and what goes on in a teacher's first year of teaching. It places a value on the training received while on the job (Woodcock, 2011).

Dirkson (2014) concluded classroom management is the most important skill a teacher can possess or acquire. Johansen, Little, and Akin-Little (2011) cited three profound findings supporting a need for ongoing systemic training for both pre-service and practicing teachers. Johansen et al. (2011) indicated the percentage of teachers reportedly needing more training in classroom management was more than 90%. Johansen et al. (2011) examined the perceptions of teachers pertaining to the causes of behavior problems in public schools. The first significant finding was teachers think behavior problems are caused by external factors, such as parenting, and are therefore uncontrollable by the teachers (Johansen et al., 2011). The second finding was teachers in the study stated positive rewards and incentives do not work to promote positive behavior (Johansen et al., 2011). Lastly, Johansen et al. (2011) stated, "Teachers reported receiving minimal formal training in behavior management or ongoing professional development in the area which is likely to influence their perceptions and classroom management practice" (p. 3).

Perdue (2010) defined teacher mentoring as a personal relationship between two people for the purpose of growth in professional instruction and guidance. Broemmel, Swaggerty, and McIntosh (2010) stated, "The responsibility for scaffolding new teacher

growth does not fall to university teacher educators alone; it is shared with mentors teachers, school administrators, and intern supervisors" (p. 68). One single person cannot be held responsible for the growth of teachers. Rather, it takes multiple people in multiple roles to mold and shape a good teacher (Broemmel et al., 2010).

According to Huling and Resta (2001), "Teacher mentoring programs have dramatically increased since the early 1980s as a vehicle to support and retain novice teachers" (p. 1). This supports mentoring of new teachers, not by one person alone, but by many individuals during the first two to three years of a new teacher's career. Boreen, Johnson, Niday, and Potts (2010) stated, "In 2004, thirty-three states reported that they required mandated mentoring programs, but only twenty-two states said they required and financed mentoring for all beginning teacher" (p. 7). Mentoring is not meant to benefit only the mentee, but also the mentor. Huling and Resta (2001) went on to report, "178 mentor teachers were surveyed and more than two-thirds responded definitely to the statement that participation in the mentoring programs provided positive professional growth for me" (p. 2).

According to Boreen et al. (2010), mentoring can significantly reduce attrition among teachers. While mentor teachers help mentees improve teaching, the mentee level of professional competency improves (Huling & Resta, 2001). Boreen et al. (2010) reported the findings of a 1992 Odell Study when they stated, "The attrition rate for teachers receiving one year of mentoring was only 16% after four years of teaching, about half the national attrition rate at that time" (p. 7). Also Boreen et al. (2010) found teachers indicated a higher level of job satisfaction, higher retention, more effectiveness with diverse students, and better problem solving skills in the area of instruction as a

direct result of mentoring. Principals also noticed higher teacher morale, a willingness among staff to take more risks, an improvement in classroom management skills, and a use of more instructional strategies as a result of mentoring (Boreen et al., 2010).

There is research connecting teacher retention, teacher satisfaction, and the quality of teaching and learning in a classroom to teacher preparedness and preparation (Harrington, 2013). According to Kim (2011), the beliefs of teachers in the field have outweighed those of the pre-service or beginning teachers in the past. Kim (2011) went on to note teacher preparation programs have the biggest impact on a teacher's beliefs and practices in the classroom. Kim (2011) suggested, "Once a teacher's beliefs and practices are shaped, they are hard to change" (p. 13). The best time to train teachers in handling classroom management is during the pre-service or beginning teacher stage of careers (Kim, 2011).

Besides teacher retention, effective classroom management strategies, when used correctly, will increase student interest in learning, enhance student achievement, and reduce disruptive behavior in the classroom (Reinke, Herman, & Newcomer, 2011). Reinke et al. (2011) went on to state, "On the other hand, ineffective classroom management practices interfere with student motivation and on task learning and contribute to the risk of developing disruptive behavior problems" (p. 510). With an increase in the number of English as a Second Language (ESL) students and students with behavior and emotional challenges (Reinke et al., 2011), behavior management training is becoming more important. Reinke et al. (2011) went on to state, "To fully support teachers' efforts to use effective classroom management practices that nurture, encourage and motivate students with varying developmental abilities and cultural

backgrounds, classroom management programs are needed that are flexible and adaptive to the needs of teachers" (p. 510). Two of the top five indicators Garland et al. (2013) reported a beginning teacher must possess to be successful included having clear expectations on handling both appropriate and inappropriate behaviors by students. There cannot be one program to support all teachers in their training. As communities and regions have their own needs and culture, a program must be designed to meet those needs (Reinke et al., 2011). Teacher training programs must be flexible in design (Reinke et al., 2011).

Classroom Management Models

Throughout the history of education there have been attempts to understand classroom management through a philosophy of classroom management planning (Malgren, Trezek, & Paul, 2005). According to Malgren et al. (2005), there are different models of classroom management. These models attempt to offer teachers a systematic method to control behavior within the classroom (Malgren et al., 2005). Malgren et al. (2005) reported there are “three well-established models of classroom management: Assertive Discipline, Logical Consequences, and Teacher Effectiveness Training” (p. 36).

Assertive discipline. The assertive discipline model of classroom management was developed by Lee Canter in the 1970s, and it was then expanded upon based on Marlene Canter’s work with children with behavioral problems (Malgren et al., 2005). Malgren et al. (2005) stated, “Although this approach is often characterized as focusing primarily on rewards and punishments, the Canters actually place great emphasis on catching students being good and then providing appropriate feedback and

reinforcement" (p. 36). This is known as the teacher being assertive, and furthermore, according to Barrett (1985), the teacher undergoes assertion or assertive discipline training. Kizlik (2014) reported on Canter and Canter's (2001) assertive discipline model that the key is to catch students being good, and then, in a positive manner, recognize the student or students to reassure them the teacher likes the behavior being exhibited.

Canter and Canter (2001) reported over 1.5 million teachers have attended assertive discipline training from the mid-1970s to the early 2000s. In multiple studies, teachers who have been trained in and have used assertive discipline effectively have reported a decline in student discipline; beginning teachers who have been trained in assertive discipline report being more prepared to handle classroom behavior than their counterparts (Desiderio & Mullinex, 2005). When beginning teachers were asked about what they did not feel prepared to handle, 50% reported they were not prepared for student behavior in the classroom (Desiderio & Mullinex, 2005). After assertive discipline training the next semester, only 19% felt as though they were unprepared (Desiderio & Mullinex, 2005).

Assertive discipline supports the teacher being in complete control of the classroom (Malgren et al., 2005). According to Desiderio and Mullinex (2005), "Assertive discipline is a behavior management system that emphasizes positive reinforcement as the key to students making appropriate choices regarding classroom" (p. 384). A classroom management plan should be in place prior to the beginning of the school year and must have the four following items: firm, fair, and consistent rules; positive consequences; negative consequences; and a plan to implement the model (Shawer, 2012). According to Barrett (1985), 93% of respondents who were teachers and

had undergone assertion training stated they would use it in their classrooms. Because this model focuses on rewarding positive behavior and punishing students when rules are not followed, it is both a reactive and proactive management model (Shawer, 2012). Kizlik (2014) supported assertive discipline as being one of the most widely used discipline models for classroom management in schools because of its ease of use and implementation. Canter and Canter (2001) found, "Teachers do not receive the training they need to deal with disruptive students" (p. 6).

Logical consequences. Dreikurs' model of classroom management is based on logical consequences (Malgren et al., 2005). His work is a continuation of the work done by Alfred Adler, according to Malgren et al. (2005). Dreikurs' model is centered on the belief that when a student misbehaves it is because of an unmet need. In fact, Dreikurs laid out a hierarchy of student action based on unmet needs (Malgren et al., 2005). Dreikurs and Soltz (1964) reported, "Since the child is a social being, his strongest desire is to belong" (p. 13). According to Pawlychka (2012), "The primary principle is the fundamental belief that all individuals, including children, must be treated as equals and all relationships must be based on mutual respect" (p. 28).

Pawlychka (2012) supported Dreikurs by stating that social connection, human interest, and cooperation are fundamental in the behavior of a child and the character development of a child. The first misbehavior a student displays is attention-getting behavior (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964). If the student does not get the attention or recognition initially sought, the student may engage the teacher in a power struggle (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964). If the student is still seeking attention or recognition, the student may concentrate on fairness or revenge on the teacher (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964). Finally, if the

student's need goes unmet long enough, the student may shut down (Malgren et al., 2005).

Dreikurs' model attempts to create a classroom in which students feel as though they are recognized and important (Malgren et al., 2005). This keeps students feeling as though what they are learning is worthwhile, because they are a part of a group (Pawlychka, 2012). When student misbehavior occurs, the consequences should be logical (Malgren et al., 2005). The consequences to misbehavior must be aligned to the behavior the student is exhibiting (Malgren et al., 2005). Since students are treated as equals and an important part of the classroom group, they have the right to be treated with respect (Pawlychka, 2012). Dreikurs and Soltz (1964) stated, "A student's security or lack of it depends on their feeling of belonging within the group" (p. 14). Malgren et al. (2005) reported, "Where the Assertive Discipline model of classroom management emphasizes the importance of teacher imposed structure in the classroom, the Driekurs model emphasizes the importance of assisting students in meeting their innate need to gain recognition and acceptance" (p. 37). Malgren et al (2005) went on to write, "Although the use of logical consequences to respond to misbehavior is an important element of Dreikurs' model, the real strength of the model lies in its emphasis on preventing misbehavior" (p. 37).

Teacher effectiveness training. Gordon's (2003) model of teacher effectiveness training emphasizes shifting the responsibility of classroom management from the teacher to the student. In Gordon's (2003) model, the teacher focuses on behavior after it occurs. According to Gordon (2003), the model is based upon mutual respect between the teacher and the student. When misbehavior occurs, the teacher and student problem solve ways to

overcome the issue (Wagaman, 2010). Rather than using logical consequences as a reaction to behavior as previous models suggested, Gordon's model suggests the teacher should focus on how to correct the undesired behavior through responsible choices (Malgren et al., 2005). According to Gordon (2003), "It is the quality of the teacher-learner relationship that is crucial, more crucial, in fact, than what the teacher is teaching" (p. 2). An example offered by Wagaman (2010) was if a student interrupts the class often, then the student might have the choice of different disciplines so that a plan can be made to correct the behavior.

Gordon's model of teacher effectiveness training does not focus on the punishment of students; instead, it focuses on providing the student with ownership of the undesired behavior and the plan to correct it (Gordon, 2003). Malgren et al. (2005) offered this difference between Gordon and Canter, "Gordon's model of classroom management contrasts with the Canters' model in that Canters' model conceptualizes a well-run classroom as a reflection of the teacher's explicit articulation of rules and his or her consistency in applying rewards and consequences" (p. 38). Wagaman (2010) put Gordon's classroom discipline model into six steps:

- Help students identify a problem behavior
- Model the problem solving method for students
- Find multiple solutions for the behavior
- Allow students to find a solution
- Student or students plan the solution
- Solution is monitored for effectiveness. (p. 4)

According to Gordon (2003), "Research—literally volumes of it—has shown how critical listening is in facilitating learning" (p. 4). Gordon's model empowers students to regulate their own behavior by teaching students how to solve problems for themselves (Gordon, 2003).

Missouri Teacher Certification

The state of Missouri has several avenues to obtain certification (Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education [MODESE], 2012a). According to Green and Ballard (2011), "Traditional teacher preparation programs are under constant scrutiny and strain to prepare students to be more effective in the public classroom and remain in the profession" (p. 12). There are six different avenues a teacher may take to become certified, as reported by the MODESE (2012a): "The Missouri initial certificate is a four-year license requiring two-years of mentoring, annual evaluation, one year of beginning teacher assistance, a professional development plan, and professional development for a total of 30 contact hours during the four years." After initial certification requirements have been fulfilled by a teacher candidate, a career certification can be acquired (MODESE, 2012a).

Teachers who hold a certificate from another state and want to transfer the certificate may be required to take extra classes (MODESE, 2012b); however, the state of Missouri does allow some teaching certificates to reciprocate between states. These states often have equal or more stringent requirements to obtain a teaching certificate, and most often, the decision depends on the amount of years teaching (MODESE, 2012b). Missouri's traditional route for certification requires teachers to complete a degree program or course of study (MODESE, 2012b). Next, the pre-service teacher must

complete a field experience known as student teaching, pass an exit exam, and then graduate with a bachelor's degree specifically in education (MODESE, 2012b).

Missouri also offers an alternate or innovative route to certification for nontraditional teachers (MODESE, 2012b). This alternate certification route offers the flexibility of enrolling in a program of study while simultaneously teaching (MODESE, 2012b). According to the MODESE (2012b), an individual with a bachelor's degree can teach for two years on a provisional certification as long as they are in a program allowing them to complete 30 hours of credit in the field of education. After the completion of the program, an exit exam, and a recommendation from the college or university, an individual may be able to renew certification to the same initial teaching certificate as a traditional-route teacher (MODESE, 2012b). Courses taken may be used toward a master's degree in education but do not necessarily have to be (MODESE, 2012b).

The temporary certification route for teachers in Missouri is similar to the alternate or innovative route for teacher certification (MODESE, 2012b). According to the MODESE (2012b), a candidate must hold a bachelor's degree, like the temporary route, but must enroll in 24 credit hours to meet specific state competencies. While teaching with a temporary certification, the teacher has to pass two exit exams and complete a school district mentoring program (MODESE, 2012b). The teacher will then be granted a temporary certificate for two years (MODESE, 2012b). If during the two years, the teacher does not complete any component of the temporary certification program, then nine additional hours of pre-approved college credit would have to be taken (MODESE, 2012b). Just like the other certification programs the MODESE offers,

once all components are complete, a Missouri Teaching Certificate is issued (MODESE, 2012b).

The last two methods of certification can only be completed for the middle school or high school levels or grades seven through 12 (MODESE, 2012b). According to the MODESE (2012b), The American Board of Certification for Teacher Excellence (ABCTE) teacher certification route allows individuals with a bachelor's degree to complete a board-certified program of study, pass a content specific test, and be certified as a teacher. This route is only available for the following content areas in middle schools and high schools: mathematics, English, history, and science (MODESE, 2012b).

The final method available for teacher certification in Missouri is if an individual holds a doctoral degree (MODESE, 2012b). Any individual holding a doctoral degree in a specific content area may take a pedagogy test in teaching and learning and obtain an initial teacher certificate (MODESE, 2012b). Teachers possessing this type of certification are limited to only the initial certificate (MODESE, 2012b). They may never upgrade to a career certificate (MODESE, 2012b).

Traditional versus Alternative Certification

Friedrich (2014) compared traditional routes of teacher certification to the recently added alternate teacher certification routes. The traditional certification route requires several courses in the science of teaching, while the counterpart requires only a bachelor’s degree in a specific content area (Friedrich, 2014). When a teaching position is acquired, the teacher then takes education courses until complete (Friedrich, 2014). Friedrich (2014) argued alternate routes to teacher certification are de-professionalizing education.

Adversely, Blazer (2012) said there is enough evidence to support alternative teacher certifications since both are needed by the profession and are viable. Alternative certifications were designed to attract individuals to the profession (Blazer, 2012). Not all schools are easy to staff and not all people are able to go back to school and earn another degree (Blazer, 2012). Alternative certifications are designed to break down barriers that might otherwise keep a good teacher from entering the field of education (Muy-Hung & Wing-Ming, 2004). The goal would never be to saturate the profession with mediocrity (Blazer, 2012).

The driving force behind alternative certification has been the fact teachers are retiring and leaving the profession at an increasing rate (Blazer, 2012; Friedrich, 2014; Muy-Hung & Wing-Ming, 2004). The top five reasons for leaving include difficult content, minimal support, pay, stress, and classroom management (Berry, 2010). Colleges and universities cannot keep up with the increasing number of teachers leaving the profession (Blazer, 2012). States have had to resort to offering alternative routes of certification to fill teaching positions at schools as positions are becoming vacant faster than they are being filled (Blazer, 2012). According to Blazer (2012), fewer than 300 teachers received certification through alternative means in 1985; however, in 2008, almost 59,000 teachers received alternative route certification. The alternate certification route opens the profession up to those who may have retired from the military, received a degree in a specific content field, or people making a mid-career change who have strong skill sets (Blazer, 2012).

While licensure for teachers may vary from state to state, most require a bachelor's degree in education, student teaching, and passing a test such as the Praxis

series (Jacob, 2012). Jacob (2012) went on to report if teacher effectiveness is quantifiably measured with test scores, then the difference among certified, non-certified, and alternative route teachers is minimal; however, it is still a top topic in education. In fact, according to Jacob (2012), there are larger discrepancies in student achievement among teachers within the same certification category than those that exist among the different certifications. Greenberg, Putman, and Walsh (2014) reviewed 122 teacher preparation programs. Teacher prep programs cover classroom management, but try to skim over the topic or string it out throughout the teacher training program (Greenberg, Putman, & Walsh, 2014). There were no programs found giving classroom management the attention it needs (Greenberg, Putman, & Walsh, 2014). There is not enough research at this time to conclude which type of certification yields the best results (Jacob, 2012).

Baines (2010) compared traditional and alternative teacher certification models and found what was once used to stop the gap between the numbers of teachers leaving and entering the profession has become mainstream. The shortage of teachers allowed states to begin giving alternative certifications to people with little or no training in education, bypassing the universities altogether (Baines, 2010). Baines (2010) argued the teacher shortage is not as bad as it used to be, and traditional university students are still forced to complete a program; however, if someone wants to get an alternate certification he or she could be certified in as little as two to three months. Alternative certification has become so popular universities have begun using the routes to help teachers get certified (Baines, 2010). More teachers are getting certified through small colleges using an alternate certification than are going through traditional certification programs (Baines, 2010).

Reese (2010) outlined the similar requirements of alternative certification teachers. Reese (2010) supported Jacob's (2012) claim alternative certification teachers must have a bachelor's degree, go through a training program, complete ongoing on-the-job training, complete coursework in education, and participate in a mentoring program. While details vary, most alternative routes to certification are similar from state to state (Reese, 2010). Reese (2010) supported an alternative certification education for teachers. Because the people entering the profession through alternative means are generally older, they tend to manage classroom behaviors more effectively (Reese, 2010). With effective classroom management comes increased student scores (Reese, 2010). Because most of the educators entering the profession through alternative routes have also worked in the private sector, they understand marketing to a client or to their students (Reese, 2010). Older alternatively certified teachers have an understanding to meet the students where they are (Reese, 2010).

Alternative route certified teachers were asked if they would have entered the teaching profession if there were no alternative certification route available (Reese, 2010). Reese (2010) reported 47% of them replied *no*. Reese (2010) concluded, "[If the] statistic is even close to accurate, then we are losing half of the teaching professionals before they get a chance to teach. That is not good for a profession in need already" (p. 18). Bringing new teachers into the profession is vital (Reese, 2010). How the teachers come in does not matter as much as what educational leaders do with them when the novice teachers arrive (Reese, 2010). Showing beginning educators the rewards of teaching and helping them overcome the challenges that come with the first years of teaching will be the key to keeping good teachers (Reese, 2010).

Research Findings

While multiple priorities exist within the field of education, classroom management is cited as one of the top priorities (Kratochwill, 2011). Kratochwill (2011) reported, **"**Classroom management, often called classroom discipline, has been a priority for teachers for nearly 40 years, or for as long as there have been opinion surveys of educational priorities" (p. 1). According to Emmer and Evertson (1981), "Kounin started the modern era of research on classroom management" (p. 1). Kounin and Gump (1958) were concerned about beginning teachers and their struggles with classroom management. Even more concerning, according to Kounin and Gump (1958), was the fact most beginning teachers who asked for help would probably get some type of advice that was founded mainly in opinion rather than researched fact.

Kounin studied 49 different classrooms through the use of videotape (Emmer & Evertson, 1981). He coded the different behaviors he witnessed among teachers who had effective classroom management (Marzano et al., 2003). Kounin and Gump (1958) stated, "We are paying special attention to the 'ripple effect,' or the influence the control techniques have, not on the children who are being disciplined but on the other children who are watching and listening" (p. 158). The behaviors Kounin recorded were withitness, smoothness, and momentum, teaching students the correct behavior, and choosing a variety of the proper challenging assignments for students (Marzano et al., 2003). Kounin and Gump (1958) found using these behaviors in the proper order or with the proper student audience could yield an all-class conformance rate.

Marzano et al. (2003) went on to write about studies by Brophy and Evertson who followed the model set up by Kounin. Brophy and Evertson's study focused on 30

different videotaped classrooms and the same behaviors recorded by Kounin (Marzano et al., 2003). According to the meta-analysis by Marzano et al. (2003), one of the findings by Brophy and Evertson supported Kounin. Marzano et al. (2003) wrote about three different studies by Emmer, Evertson, and Sanford in 1984, 1981, and 1982, which were conducted in the same manner as Kounin's original 1950s study. These studies all supported Kounin's original results (Marzano et al., 2003). Clements began correlative studies in 1983 and 1984 and produced research to support Kounin about teachers' behaviors and their relationship to the effective classroom manager (Marzano et al., 2003).

Wang, Haertel, and Walberg (1994) published a study about how classroom management was believed to be the biggest factor in student achievement. In their study, Wang et al. (1994) listed several frameworks that included 28 different categories for impacting student achievement. The Wang et al. (1994) study is foundational to modern classroom management studies because of the way the researchers reached conclusions. It was one of the first studies to utilize the meta-analysis method (Marzano et al., 2003; Wang et al., 1994). Meta-analysis is the term used to define a study taking multiple findings from a variety of studies and comparing them to one another to find patterns (Marzano et al., 2003; Wang et al., 1994).

In a study by Wang et al. (1994), a survey was created and dispersed to experts in the field of education. Wang et al. (1994) found, "The most influential category, classroom management, includes group alerting, learner accountability, smooth transitions, and teacher with-it-ness" (p. 76). Wang et al. (1994) went on to state in their findings, "Effective classroom management increases student engagement, decreases

disruptive behaviors, and makes good use of instructional time" (p. 76). Marzano et al. (2003) summarized the findings of multiple years of research by stating, "The research over the past 30 years indicates that classroom management is one of the critical ingredients of effective teaching" (p. 16).

Teachers have perceptions about how prepared they are or were for handling classroom management in the beginning of their careers (Rose & Gallup, 2010). The Gallup Poll cited classroom management/school discipline as one of the biggest issues facing teachers (Rose & Gallup, 2010). Upon completing student teaching or a practicum, just prior to entering the classroom, beginning teachers feel they need more understanding of child psychology, more varied teaching situations to practice in, and more knowledge of contemporary teaching methods (Atici, 2007). Atici (2007) went on to say by the time student teachers were done with their practicums, they did feel more efficient in what they were doing. In a survey of 3,324 beginning teachers, Jackson, Simoncini, and Davidson (2013) found only 1,123 (33.78%) of them reported being moderately prepared for classroom management. The rest felt significantly less prepared (Jackson et al., 2013).

According to Garland et al. (2013), "Teacher quality is the single most accurate indicator of students' academic success and teachers who leave the profession often cite a lack of adequate preparation as one of their reasons for departure" (p. 133). In a survey of over 2,300 educators, teachers reported classroom management and instructional skills as their biggest struggles (Kratochwill, 2011). Classroom management or student discipline has been cited as one of the largest reasons for teacher attrition in recent surveys (Kratochwill, 2011).

Kratochwill (2011) also reported teacher safety, which is a result of management, is also a reason teachers leave the field of education early in search of other careers. While classroom management is cited multiple times as being one of the top three reasons for teachers to leave the profession, Sass, Flores, Claeys, and Perez (2012) recognized age, gender, race, and teaching assignment are factors as well. Females are 37% more likely to leave the profession than males (Sass et al., 2012). While females outnumber males, males tend to stay in education longer; however, males often do not remain in the role of teacher. Males are more likely to climb the career ladder than females (Sass et al., 2012).

Sass et al. (2012) reported the teacher attrition rate among older teachers is 12%, which is largely due to retirement. Retirement attrition is not as significant as the new teacher or beginning teacher attrition rate of 37% (Sass et al., 2012). Newer teachers are leaving at a much faster rate than those retiring (Sass et al., 2012). As attrition rates relate to race, Sass et al. (2012) found White females and African males have the highest attrition rates for beginning teachers, especially those with up to 17 years of experience, followed by White males. Considering the majority of teachers have traditionally been White, this is no surprise (Sass et al. 2012). What is alarming, according to Sass et al. (2012), is that as the minority teacher population rises, its attrition rate rises faster than that of the white teaching population. Garland et al. (2013) suggested teachers who are trained in the science of instruction, classroom organization, and behavior management not only offer a greater chance for students to be academically successful, but also stay in the profession longer than those who are not.

Teacher Attrition

In the United States, general employee attrition or turnover was at an average rate of 12% annually, according to the American Institute for Research (AIR) (2012). The cost to train and retain employees can run employers anywhere from 20% to 200% of the organization's average salary (AIR, 2012). The contributing factors shown to lower attrition rates include investing in recruitment, individualized training, and deep attention to reviews in performance (AIR, 2012). Larger corporations have analysts who calculate the cost-benefit trade-off between investing in employees and employee retention (AIR, 2012). One of the ways to fight attrition in the workforce is to focus on the issues causing individuals to leave (AIR, 2012).

According to Ingersoll, Merrill, and May (2014), some turnover is normal and inevitable. They went on to report some turnover or attrition is even beneficial (Ingersoll et al., 2014). Whether or not teachers leaving education has a positive or negative effect on the teaching profession, both come with a cost (Ingersoll et al., 2014). The cost is incurred when staff must be replaced, which takes several resources from the field, including time and money (Ingersoll et al., 2014).

Early exiting from the education career field is reported to have reached epidemic proportions and has the appearance of being unfixable, according to Gallant and Riley (2014). However, in a study comprised of teacher interviews, Hamburg (2012) asked teachers what changes could be made to make their jobs easier. Hamburg (2012) cited better mentoring programs, better feedback, and more administrative support. Teachers wanted small groups to visit collegially about issues faced on a daily basis (Hamburg, 2012). Many of these issues were directly related to classroom management (Hamburg,

2012). The administrative support sought by teachers, according to Hamburg (2012), was that of being a support in the classroom. Hamburg (2012) reported teachers who send students to the office for classroom discipline issues want to see students disciplined, which is simply not always the case. Teachers feel as though this support is lacking and therefore power is taken away from them in the classroom (Hamburg, 2012).

Teachers today are facing more issues than ever before (Le Cornu, 2013). Davis and Palladino (2011) stated:

> In an age with increased teacher preparation requirements, and ever-growing student populations, a great need exists to adequately train and retain highly qualified teachers. Education is a profession that has long been plagued by shortages of qualified personnel. Many factors contribute to the shortfall of educators in this field. One of the most significant contributing factors to teacher attrition is "burnout" or excessive stresses that can cause a teacher to leave the field. (p. 2)

One of the excessive stresses teachers face is that of being effective with classroom management (Davis & Palladino, 2011). Eisenman, Edwards, and Cushman (2015) concluded classroom management is such a difficult task to teachers because of the lack of attention given to the subject itself in training programs. According to Jackson et al. (2013), beginning teachers constantly cite classroom management as one of their biggest problems.

According to Kaiser (2011), 10% of the teachers teaching during the 2007-2008 school year were not teaching in the 2009-2010 school year, and another 12% were not teaching during the 2010-2011 school year. Pirkle (2011) reported the high rate of teacher

attrition is a chronic issue that needs desperate attention. When Pirkle (2011) asked teachers about their concerns, she reported over 50% noted survival as being their top concern. Survival is being able to survive the classroom, according to Pirkle (2011).

Pirkle (2011) went on to report the next two highest concerns of beginning teachers are self-adequacy and self-impact. Pirkle (2011) reported all three of the beginning teachers' concerns are rooted in classroom management. Pirkle (2011) elaborated on her findings by stating, "Thirty to fifty percent of new teachers get stuck at the anxiety ridden Survival Stage, fail to bond to the students and greater school community and abandon teaching during their first three years" (p. 42). Pirkle (2011) determined self-adequacy and teaching impact are both driven by the ability of the teacher to control the classroom environment.

Teachers are faced not only with classroom management issues but are also trying to stay up-to-date in a profession that is constantly changing its best practices in instruction and engagement (Le Cornu, 2013). Administrators and teachers report classroom management as a competence indicator (Jackson et al., 2013). Le Cornu (2013) suggested relationships and classroom respect are perhaps the most important aspects to creating a healthy classroom culture in which management is minimal.

Kaiser (2011) reported of the teachers who were assigned a mentor during the 2007-2008 school year, only 8% were not teaching during the 2008-2009 school year and another 10% in 2009-2010. Contrarily, Kaiser (2011) reported of those teachers in 2007-2008 who were not assigned a mentor, 16% were not teaching in 2008-2009, and 23% were not teaching during the 2009-2010 school year. Seemingly, therefore, relationships can exist among the teacher and students, the teacher and supervisors, and the teacher and

colleagues (Le Cornu, 2013). Le Cornu (2013) went on to suggest each relationship plays a very important role in the success of beginning teachers. Teachers who feel connected and supported by their colleagues reported being happier and more resilient than those who did not have a connection with colleagues (Le Cornu, 2013).

Pirkle (2011) stated to improve conditions related to teacher attrition, teachers need to feel a sense of belonging. The best way to do this is through mentoring (Pirkle, 2011). Specifically, Pirkle (2011) reported:

> Mentoring will be of benefit to both novice and the veteran teachers. The veteran teacher who mentors gains affirmation, professional advancement, participation in administrative decisions, and seeing the rewards from guiding a novice through the anxiety ridden early stages of development in the teaching profession. New teachers gain the assistance and guidance of the experienced, wiser professional, instructional support and assistance, and diminished isolation. Professional development becomes a two-way support between novice and experienced teachers. (p. 45)

Pirkle (2011) went on to report when teachers feel a partnership with one another they depend on one another. This dependence deepens professional relationships that foster trust and support for one another (Pirkle, 2011).

Buchanan et al. (2013) stated teacher attrition is not any greater in the teaching profession than any other profession, but teacher attrition has a larger impact on the teaching profession than on other professions. Buchanan et al. (2013) reported the impact is on student learning. Likewise, Ashiedu and Scott-Ladd (2012) described the findings of a 1,700 teacher respondent survey about teacher attrition. The researchers identified

behavior management problems, teacher workloads, poor pay, and large class sizes as the top four reasons given for leaving the profession (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012). As the need for skilled labor in the private sector increases, the number of teachers leaving the education profession increases to meet that need because of the opportunity to make more money (Ashiedu & Scott-Ladd, 2012).

Plunkett and Dyson (2011) supported Buchanan et al. (2013) when they submitted the idea of teacher attrition being not unlike attrition in similar fields. In their study, the fields compared to teaching are those that require a college degree (Plunkett & Dyson, 2011). Plunkett and Dyson (2011) reported teacher retention is a little higher than nurses and lower than turnover seen in the accounting and social working fields; however, there is an agreement between Plunkett and Dyson (2011) and Buchanan et al. (2013) that the impact of teachers leaving the field of education had higher repercussions than that of other professional fields. In a survey of 1,351 beginning teachers, 93% stated they enjoyed teaching, but 24% planned on leaving the teaching field within the next five years (Plunkett & Dyson, 2011).

When looking at teacher attrition, Sass et al. (2012) specifically searched statistics of schools that tend to have higher teacher attrition rates. Sass et al. (2012) hypothesized schools with students from low socio-economic backgrounds in a highly culturally-diverse setting are the schools teachers leave for other schools or leave the profession altogether. Sass et al. (2012) confirmed their hypothesis, and in doing so purposefully collected other relevant data to teacher attrition. Sass et al. (2012) analyzed which personal teacher traits and which school characteristics existed among different teachers leaving the field of education (Sass et al., 2012). Sass et al. (2012) looked at age, race,

years of experience, and gender as the teacher personal traits. For the school characteristics, testing, accountability, type of school, and level of school were analyzed (Sass et al., 2012).

Sass et al. (2012) found even though there are more females than males in education, males leave education much more frequently than females. The researchers went on to report the later in life an individual enters the educational field, the less likely they are to leave (Sass et al., 2012). The teacher characteristics with the highest attrition rate were young in age, White in ethnicity, male in gender, and teaching foreign language as content (Sass et al., 2012). According to Sass et al. (2012), "Teacher attrition is linked directly to curricular guidance. Mathematics receives 80% more guidance than science, social studies, and language arts teachers" (p. 18).

Lowe (2006) reported teachers who are professionally developed and guided through content are less likely to leave the profession early. DeAngelios (2013) reported research shows 25-30% of teachers who leave education return to the profession at some point. Usually this return to the field of education is just after a short absence of a few years (DeAngelios, 2013). While numerous and significant studies exist extending knowledge of teacher attrition and retention, little is known about the group of teachers who seem to come back to education after leaving the profession (DeAngelios, 2013). DeAngelios (2013) analyzed the extent to which teachers who return to the profession conversely affect the attrition and retention rates. DeAngelios (2013) found of the teachers who leave the profession, up to 33% would return within five years. Those who stay out of the profession for more than five years are significantly less likely to return to education (DeAngelios, 2013).

Teacher Retention

According to Sass et al. (2012), "If society seeks to strengthen school systems, they must begin by examining the issues that influence educators" (p. 2). The National Center for Educational Statistics estimated teacher turnover at 17%; in urban schools, it was near 20% (Kopkowski, 2008). Kopkowski (2008) supported Berry (2010) by reporting one-third of all teachers leave the profession within the first three years, and 46% leave within the first five years. When looking at schools with students from low socio-economic backgrounds, the attrition rate moves up to 50% (Green & Ballard, 2011). Green and Ballard (2011) pointed out teachers who are under 30 years of age make up 40% of all teachers who are leaving the profession. This is like pouring sand into a bucket with holes at the bottom of it (Green & Ballard, 2011). As fast as it is poured in, it comes out (Green & Ballard, 2011). This is similar to the rate of teachers entering and leaving the profession (Kopkowski, 2008).

School leaders must create schools that are teaching and learning-friendly in order to attract and retain quality teachers (Lowe, 2006). School leaders must also realize beginning teachers are not finished products, but rather works-in-progress who need continual feedback, molding, and shaping (Lowe, 2006). Taking a few courses in education and doing a few weeks of student teaching just does not cut it (Green & Ballard, 2011). Likewise, teachers should not be given a mentor for a year; they should be given a mentor for the first three years and then slowly released into the teaching world (Green & Ballard, 2011). Even then, Lowe (2006) suggested mentees should become mentors. States with schools that have quality teacher induction programs have lower teacher turnover rates (Kopkowski, 2008).

Generation Y, identified by Coggshall, Ott, Behrstock, and Lasagna (2010) as the generation born between 1977 and 1995, makes up 18% of the total teaching force. In fact, Generation Y reported professional development and feedback are the most important parts of being a teacher (Coggshall et al., 2010). A staff that develops together, stays together, according to Lowe (2006). Building a community of trust among a group of teachers and allowing them to develop their professional craft through those relationships tends to keep them from leaving the profession (Lowe, 2006). This network of professionals offers a layer of support from colleagues that cannot be recreated by any one person (Lowe, 2006).

Schools are also offering incentives for teachers to remain within the teaching field (Lowe, 2006). According to Lowe (2006), schools are increasing the amount of tuition reimbursement allotted for teachers, helping offset some housing costs with moving bonuses, welcoming new teachers with welcoming committees to introduce them to the community, and even implementing a high level of raises each year based on how many years a teacher has been with a district.

In a study of teachers' perceptions of themselves as effective or ineffective, those who perceive themselves as effective see fewer drawbacks to the profession (Coggshall et al., 2010). Conversely, those teachers who see themselves as ineffective have more negative responses to the teaching profession, citing student disrespect, low pay, and high-stress working conditions as their top reasons for leaving (Coggshall et al., 2010). The most alarming find, however, is the fact the teachers who see themselves as ineffective also imagine staying in the profession for just as long as others (Coggshall et al., 2010).

Besides perception data, Coggshall et al. (2010) found when professional development is given to teachers and is intensely focused and sustained on teaching and learning, teachers not only stay in the profession longer, but also remain in their current districts longer. Lowe (2006) supported the ongoing professional development model that seeks to develop the whole teacher in all aspects of teaching rather than just parts. Besides professional development for teaching and learning, teachers have specifically asked for strategies to deal with student misbehavior (Coggshall et al., 2010). Providing opportunities to grow understanding in why students misbehave and how to deal with misbehavior could help some teachers decide to stay in the profession longer.

Schaefer, Long, and Clandinin (2012) suggested another approach to retaining teachers. That is to not only include trying to retain teachers at the teacher level, but also concerning how administrators are able to sustain the teachers in their districts (Schaefer et. al., 2012). Schaefer et al. (2012) suggested looking at individual factors such as burnout and self-efficacy along with the contextual factors surrounding teacher retention such as support and salary to deduce ways to sustain the educational workforce.

Arguably, Darling-Hammond and Ducommun (2011) stated there is no teacher shortage. There are many certified teachers who refuse to work in poor working conditions for low pay (Darling-Hammond & Ducommun, 2011). Feedback and support were not answers to teachers leaving the field of education, but instead, increasing teacher pay and creating more positive work environments would help with teacher retention (Darling-Hammond & Ducommun, 2011).

Summary

Classroom management has been studied in the field of education intensely for the last 40 years. With foundational studies and theories from Kounin, Canter, Dreikurs, and Gordon, classroom management ideas are pieced together (Marzano et al., 2003). It is not enough to have knowledge of one of the classroom discipline models. Examining the literature helps the researcher support reasons teachers stay and leave the education profession.

How teachers become certified to teach may have a direct impact on how long they stay in the field of education (Friedrich, 2014). Because the repercussions to the future of the field of education are so great, guided programs must exist to teach beginning teachers to practice successful research-based models of classroom management (Friedrich, 2014). Programs at the university level, accompanied with on-the-job training, are necessary to sustain teachers in the field of education. Insight gained by analyzing the perceptions of teachers on their preparedness in classroom management will help guide decisions made for teacher preparatory programs and mentoring programs (Blazer, 2012).

While understanding educational leaders cannot control the personal traits of incoming beginning teachers, current educators can create inviting schools that welcome teachers and embrace the things education can do to support teacher retention (Reese, 2010). Those insights aid educational leaders in making decisions on how to train new and pre-service teachers for the classroom (Green & Ballard, 2011). Those same perceptions will help decide the emphasis for teacher training in the years to come (Green & Ballard, 2011).

Classroom management is a specific struggle for beginning teachers (Kratochwill, 2011). Questions were generated to gain insight of the perceptions beginning teachers have about being prepared and effective in handling classroom management. This information is important, because classroom management is cited as one of the reasons teachers leave the profession in the first three years of their careers (Berry, 2010). Teacher attrition is higher than retention (Sass et al., 2012).

Chapter Three focuses on how acquiring perceptions and using different types of data collection methods can help show the commonalities between how beginning teachers felt they were prepared to handle classroom management, how effective beginning teachers feel their classroom management is currently, and what they perceive as reasons for being prepared. Chapters Four and Five include the recorded response data from the survey and the interview used in the research. Relationships between the recorded response data and the literature review are reported, along with outcomes of the study related to the research questions. Implications for practice and recommendations for further research are also reported in Chapter Five.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Whether called classroom management or classroom discipline, the ability of teachers to manage the discipline of students, along with the other frameworks of classroom management, has been cited as an indicator of teacher success or failure within the first years of teaching (Rose & Gallup, 2010). Teacher preparedness to handle classroom management situations is a challenge. One of the most common factors cited as being directly related to job burnout for the first-year teacher (and a leading cause of attrition) is the lack of learning effective classroom management techniques or programs (Kratochwill, 2011). The lack of preparedness to handle classroom management has as many as 30% of beginning teachers leaving the profession within their first three years (Berry, 2010).

Problem and Purpose Overview

The problem targeted by the research is that teachers are leaving the profession early and in large numbers. The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the perceptions of beginning teachers in regards to their preparedness and effectiveness in the use of classroom management strategies. By seeking these perceptions and comparing the responses of multiple beginning teachers, the problem can begin to be addressed. Comparing perceptions of beginning teachers who felt prepared for classroom management to those who may not have felt prepared will show what beginning teachers attribute to their preparedness, or lack thereof, to handle classroom management.

Identifying and describing the perceptions teachers possess in their preparedness to handle classroom management situations will provide scholarly information from which to make informed decisions concerning teacher training programs (Berry, 2010).

This study involved examination of perceptions of beginning teachers as to how well they feel they were prepared to handle classroom management. Specifically, how effective beginning teachers perceived themselves to be as classroom managers and what reasons they had for being prepared to handle classroom disruptions were analyzed. Data gathered, analyzed, and described are beneficial to teachers and administrators in public schools as well as teacher training programs in post-secondary schools. By analyzing teacher perception data, insight is provided to how well teachers feel they were prepared in their undergraduate programs or through on-the-job training. By examining different methods to certification and gathering perceptions of teachers who have utilized the different methods, the best method for positive perceptions of classroom management appeared through the data.

Research questions. Teachers are leaving the profession in large numbers and are doing so early in their careers (Berry, 2010). Forty years of surveys have consistently cited classroom management as the reason teachers are leaving the profession (Kratochwill, 2011). Classroom management techniques are taught at university training programs, and in most cases, are reinforced in schools through mentoring (Coggshall et al., 2010). As a result, the following research questions guided the study:

1. Within the first three years of teaching, to what degree do teachers perceive they were prepared to handle classroom discipline?

2. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive is their level of effectiveness is in handling classroom discipline?

3. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive as the reasons for their preparedness in handling classroom discipline?

Research Design

Research can either be designed to collect data in a qualitative manner or in a quantitative manner, according to Roberts (2010). Roberts (2010) compared qualitative and quantitative research by stating, “Rather than using numbers (quantitative), the data are words (qualitative) that describe people’s knowledge, opinions, perceptions, and feelings as well as detailed descriptions of people’s actions, behaviors, activities, and interpersonal interactions” (p. 143). A mixed method design was utilized in this study to provide educational leaders with a deeper understanding of teachers' perceptions of preparedness in the area of classroom management. By gaining this insight, school leaders will be able to analyze policies in practice and make changes to existing programs or create new ones to enable beginning teachers in the area of classroom management.

Qualitative and quantitative data were used to identify and describe the perceptions teachers have about their preparedness to enter the classroom as it relates to classroom management. According to Roberts (2010), "Qualitative research focuses on the experience of people and their perspectives of a given issue" (p. 143). Roberts (2010) identified the characteristics of qualitative data as “making observations, conducting in-depth, open-ended interviews, or looking at written documents” (p. 143).

Roberts (2010) referred to quantitative data as being numerical. This numerical data can be retrieved from surveys, tests, or experiments (Roberts, 2010). Both survey and interview data were compared to the literature for validations and to create a triangulation point for all findings. The mixed method type of research design is becoming more popular (Roberts, 2010). According to Roberts (2010), "Qualitative and quantitative approaches in a single study complement each other by providing results

with greater breadth and depth" (p. 145). Roberts (2010) went on to discuss the richness and impact added to a study when qualitative and quantitative data are combined. The data triangulation allowed for answers to the research questions proposed in Chapter One.

Population and Sample

There are currently 3.3 million teachers in America, according to the National Center for Educational Statistics, or the NCES (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2011). Of those, 8% leave the profession every year. In a multi-year study conducted by the MODESE, approximately 17% of teachers left after their first year of teaching in Missouri (Kopkowski, 2008). As teachers approach their second and third years, the attrition rates are 33% and 46%, respectively (Kopkowski, 2008). Springfield R-X School District is the largest school district in southwest Missouri and reported a turnover rate of 40.23% in teachers' first years, 58.62% in their second, and 70.11% by year three (MODESE, 2013). The statistics in southwest Missouri for those teachers leaving the profession in large numbers early in their careers are higher than the statistical average (Kopkowski, 2008).

The population for this study included beginning teachers. Beginning teachers are defined as "teachers within their first three years of teaching" (Choy et al., 2013). According to Meador (2014), there are approximately 66,000 teachers in Missouri. If southwest Missouri makes up 15% of the state's population density, then the estimated number of teachers in southwest Missouri is 3,750 (Meador, 2014). If 10% of all teachers are in their first through third years of teaching, then the population for this study is 375 novice teachers in southwest Missouri. To get a margin of error at 5% or .05, and a

confidence interval of 95% (Salkind, 2010), the sample size needs to be at least 300 teachers.

By having a large sample, the standard error or standard deviation can be found (Fink, 2010). The standard deviation is the statistic used to describe sampling error (Fink, 2010). According to Fink (2010), standard error should drive decisions regarding sample size. While a researcher can remove much of the error with sampling a larger population, it cannot be eliminated entirely (Trochim, 2011). The confidence interval is the range of percentage points on either side of any given answer to a survey item (Trochim, 2011). According to Fink (2010), the confidence interval needs to be made as small as possible. The larger the sample, the smaller the confidence interval should be (Fink, 2010).

This study included all beginning teachers with three years or less of teaching experience within southwest Missouri. A sample was drawn from this population. According to Fink (2010), "A random sample is selected by an objective method and you can calculate each person's chances of selection. A nonrandom sample is convenient; you select only those respondents who are nearby and willing and available to complete the survey" (p. 51). A convenience sample is one in which participants in a survey are available and willing to participate when the researcher needs them to be (Fink, 2010). A response rate of 20-30% is abundant, while 10-15% is more realistic (Salkind, 2010); therefore, a 10-15% response rate from the nonrandom convenience sample was considered ideal for this study. This means the target number of participants in the study should have been higher than 370, to meet the response rate of 10%. The number of responses needed to meet the response rate of 30% was 1,110.

An email containing the survey and an invitation to participate in an interview was sent to all principals in southwest Missouri. The principals were asked to forward the email to all teachers within their buildings who were in their first through third years of teaching as a way to either choose to participate in the study or choose to abstain from the study. Some beginning teachers chose not to respond to the survey. The sample included those teachers who chose to respond. The population and sample were based on results from a review of the literature.

The sample for the interviews included teachers in their first through third years of teaching. This sample was drawn from the same population of beginning teachers across southwest Missouri. Because the teachers had to agree to be interviewed, the sample was not random (Roberts, 2010). Instead, the sample of teachers who were interviewed was a convenience sample of the population (Roberts, 2010). An invitation was sent out to school administrators asking for permission for their beginning teachers to participate in an interview. When accepted, invitations were then sent to individual teachers explaining the purpose of the interview and how the results would be used. When interviewees chose to participate, their names were put into a randomizer using an Excel spreadsheet. Once all interviewees agreed to participate, a list was created. The list was designed to select 10 random individuals to be interviewed. However; only six teachers volunteered to be interviewed, so all were interviewed for this study. The one constant was that all teachers were in their first through third years of teaching.

Because a 10%-15% response rate is realistic (Fink, 2010) of the population of respondents from the survey, then 10%-15% of those who were eligible for the survey were interviewed. This means an ideal amount of interviews would be 33, while 11 is

more realistic (Fink, 2010). For the purpose of this research project, eight to 14 interviews were needed to keep the margin of error low and the confidence interval high.

Six interviews were conducted during the study, resulting in a margin of error higher than anticipated. Likewise, the confidence interval was lower than anticipated. Because the six participants fell short of the range of a realistic sample of the population, according to Fink (2010), the results were not as reliable. The confidence interval for the interviews was 60%, and the margin of error was .40.

Instrumentation

Survey. An online survey was created to collect the perceptions of educators concerning preparation for and handling of classroom management within their first three years of teaching. Additionally the survey attempted to find what teachers attribute to their success or lack thereof. The survey used was designed to gain perception information from teachers who fit the sample group in a large region. It was to take as little time as possible for those involved in the study. An online survey is convenient because of the accessibility it offers to participants (Wyse, 2012). The survey instrument was also used so a larger sample was able to participate. Fink (2010) gave three reasons for administering surveys. One reason is to change a policy or plan a program, another is to evaluate the effectiveness of programs, or lastly, to get information to help guide studies and programs (Fink, 2010).

To make the online survey valid, two surveys were administered. One was field tested and reviewed with the dissertation advisor. Changes were made as needed. Once the survey questions were created and approved and a test survey was administered, it was given to educators fitting the exact characteristics for the population and sample. The

results of the test survey were not combined with the data gained from the survey given to actual participants or test subjects. Instead, individuals responding to the field test were looking for the following issues as outlined by Roberts (2010): clear instructions and wording, adequate answers to choose from, detail in the survey, any difficulties that exist, irrelevant questions to the topic, as well as the length and convenience of the survey. The test survey asked for any other feedback pertaining to the ease of the survey. Revisions and recommendations were then taken back to the dissertation advisor for a final decision. Once revisions were incorporated, the survey was sent to the research population.

Confidentiality is a priority, and therefore answers from specific individuals were not shared with anyone. An online survey site known as SurveyMonkey was used to create the survey tool and to record responses confidentially. Furthermore, the use of SurveyMonkey took away the weaknesses of instructions along with presentation, layout, and hardware and software problems.

Interview. An interview was used to gather qualitative data. The interview was personal in nature, allowing interviewees to express concerns about preparedness in classroom management. Questions encouraging explanations or extended responses were used. Just like surveys, interviews have their own strengths and weaknesses (Hannah, 2007). Using multiple instruments (survey and interview) to gain insight on one particular issue or challenge makes a study more valid (Hannah, 2007). Most data collection tools are criticized (Hannah, 2007), so using more tools to collect data takes away assumptions of findings not being reliable or valid.

The strength of the interview lies in the potential deep and personal responses given firsthand to the interviewer by the interviewee (PARE, 1997). When using an interview, opportunities exist to obtain firsthand information from a primary source (PARE, 1997). The interview was used in a smaller sample of the population. Data from both collection instruments were kept separate and analyzed in the data analysis. Both forms of data were combined, compared, and analyzed to see if any commonalities exist between the two.

The same process for creating the survey tool was used when creating the interview tool. Interview questions were created and reviewed with the dissertation advisor. Once interview questions were selected, they were given to a test group from a small population of educators fitting the exact or similar characteristics as the population and sample. The results of the test interviews were not used in the data gained from the interview given to actual participants or subjects. The same field test process was used for the interview as for the survey.

The process of field testing the interview questions matched that of the survey. A mock interview was conducted on a small sample of the target population. The purpose of this interview was not to collect data and responses, but to test the questions to see if they were easily understandable, made sense, and did not lead to misrepresented responses. Once field testing was finished and changes were made, the data gathering interviews took place.

Data Collection Procedures

Survey. An email was sent to all southwest Missouri principals introducing the researcher, researcher's organization, the purpose of the study, and asking permission to

survey teachers via email in their school districts (see Appendix A). The survey was attached to an email of introduction. By sending the email to the teachers within their first three years of teaching, the principal agreed to allow the research to take place. The email sent to all principals contained an attached informed consent letter (see Appendix B). Finally, a link to the survey was contained in the email so participants could easily access it. Individuals taking the survey had three weeks to complete it, and a thank you screen was seen at the end of the survey. Aggregated data will be provided to those who made the request. This procedure ensured confidentiality of all respondents.

The survey (see Appendix C) recorded responses from participants using the Likert scale, keeping research findings accurate (McLeod, 2011). By having the same response options to all questions, respondents are required to rank their thoughts or opinions (McLeod, 2011). The Likert scale is used over other scales to identify attitudes (McLeod, 2011). According to McLeod (2011), "A Likert scale assumes that the strength/intensity of experience is linear, i.e. on a continuum from strongly agree to strongly disagree, and makes the assumption that attitudes can be measured" (p. 4). This type of measurement can easily assign median and mode quantities to qualitative research (McLeod, 2011). A bar chart may also be used to display research findings (McLeod, 2011). While 20-30% is ideal, the realistic 10-15% return rate of surveys is acceptable (Fink, 2010).

Interview. The interview (see Appendix D) was conducted with six teachers who fit the sample and were from the southwest Missouri region to answer predetermined interview questions. The interview process was flexible enough to allow the interviewees and interviewer to stray from the predetermined questions if the responses from

interviewees made it reasonable to explore the teachers' perceptions more in-depth. The interviewees were given informed consent forms and told exactly how their responses would be used. A window was used to conduct all interviews. Upon completion of the interview and the data analysis, the interviewees were provided with the findings of the study. Interviewees were sent thank you cards for their help and answers.

Interviewees were audio recorded. Audio, unlike video, kept the identity of the interviewees anonymous, giving more reliability to answers given. From the audio, all conversations were transcribed. These written documents allowed for the search of commonalities among answers in different interviews. All respondents were provided copies of their transcripts and the opportunity to make adjustments if they felt their perceptions were not properly captured. A window of time was offered to respondents for this opportunity.

Data Analysis

Data were not collected or analyzed until after the University IRB approval was obtained (see Appendix E). Perceptions were gathered from teachers on how effective they feel they are in handling classroom discipline. These data deepened the understanding of how beginning teachers view their efficacy for handling classroom behaviors. Additionally, reasons were found why teachers did or did not feel prepared to handle classroom management. Data gathered were compared to find commonalities between whether or not teachers felt prepared to handle classroom discipline, how effective beginning teachers felt their classroom discipline was, and how teachers felt they were prepared to handle classroom discipline. Looking at how teachers were

prepared for the profession allowed conclusions to be made about different teacher preparation programs and perceived readiness to handle classroom discipline.

Responses to the survey were specific. Each question was shown in a table with the frequency of specific responses shown in a ranked format. The ranking was representative of how often a particular response was chosen. Responses from the interviews were then referenced for the frequency of specific responses given on the survey. By finding the most frequent or common response or responses, recommendations were made. This was done to validate the findings in the data analysis. Lastly, the in-depth analysis was written with recommendations to solve any problems found and with suggestions for further research if needed.

Interview data were analyzed using multiple steps. Roberts (2010) warned because qualitative data gathering can lead to a large amount of textual data, it is important to have a systematic data break down plan. Responses to the interviews were divided two ways. First, the data were analyzed to find common ideas among interviewees about how well participants felt they were prepared and how effective they thought they were with classroom management. Second, the data were analyzed to search for specific common words, or jargon, specific to the field of education.

When data were first analyzed, the responses from the interviews were summarized into main ideas. Main ideas were listed in the left column of a T-Chart and numbered. A number at the end of a main idea, found in the interview, dictated how often the particular idea was given as a response. This was accomplished for every question in the interview.

In the right column of the T-Chart was educational jargon commonly used to answer questions as part of the interviews. Educational jargon used in responses was assigned a letter. A number at the end of each word designated how many times the specific word was mentioned in a response. A code was formed using this method to create a matrix of responses. This matrix was used to analyze data by seeking out commonalities among responses. For example, if three interviewees had the same big idea as a summarized answer, the first part of the code was noted as 1.3. The numeral one in the code referred to the first summarized idea on the chart, and the second number referred to the number of interviewees who had the same big idea. When the same interviewees used a word specific to education, it would be recorded in the T-Chart.

Once the matrix was created, an in-depth data analysis was conducted to identify commonalities in the perceptions of multiple beginning teachers. The big ideas were ranked from the most common to the least common. The jargon was ranked from the most used words to the least used per question. This allowed conclusions to be drawn about teachers' perceptions of preparedness and effectiveness as classroom managers. The matrix was also used to find what teachers attribute to their perceived preparedness or effectiveness as classroom managers.

Interviewees were assigned a letter and number. They were assigned the letter I to denote the response was from an interviewee. The number referred to the number assigned to the interviewee and represented no particular order. I1 would refer to the interviewee who was assigned the number 1, so responses could be grouped by the individual who had given the response.

Ethical Considerations

To keep the anonymity of the respondents, an online survey tool was used. Through SurveyMonkey, names, IP addresses from computers, and school district locations were not recorded. The data were printed and stored in a locked file cabinet to be destroyed at a later date.

To keep interview responses secure, the audio recordings of interviewees were erased after being transcribed. Once transcriptions were reviewed and recorded in the matrix, they were locked in the same file cabinet as the survey data to be destroyed after three years. The Excel spreadsheet that was used to randomize potential interviewees and to keep track of those who agreed to be interviewed was destroyed after interviews were conducted. This was to ensure names or other identifiers could not be placed with interview responses. For reporting purposes, interviewees were assigned a number rather than a name. The interviewees are only identified by a capital letter I to indicate they were an interviewee and a number to indicate which interviewee response was reported.

Summary

Classroom management is cited as one of the reasons teachers leave the profession in the first three years of their career (Berry, 2010). Beginning teachers struggle with classroom management more than any other area of teaching (Kratochwill, 2011). Teacher attrition is higher than retention (Sass et al., 2012). Honing in on different classroom management strategies and theories teachers have used in the past for dealing with classroom discipline has led to a deeper understanding of classroom management issues. Analyzing teacher attrition rates along with different ways for teachers to become certified may hold the key to teacher retention (Sass et al., 2012).

A qualitative study allows data to summarize the actions and feelings of an individual (Roberts, 2010). The use of one tool may lead to a one-sided finding of a problem (Roberts, 2010). Using the survey and the interview allowed a system of checks and balances to be placed on the data collected. Through a comparison of the data, the findings will become validated.

Survey and interview questions complemented each other so data were compared from both sources. Analyzing the data in a scientific manner made it easier to compare data gathered from each tool. Through the use of charts, percentages of specific answers given to survey questions were put into a form that was easy to interpret. The use of a coding system for interview questions allowed data to be put into a matrix for interpretation.

Both the chart and the matrix were compared to one another for analysis of data. Using multiple ways to interpret qualitative data made the data valid (Roberts, 2010). Only after data were analyzed, as presented in Chapter Four, did the questions about beginning teachers' perceptions of preparedness and effectiveness in classroom management begin to be answered. These answers or findings were reported in a manner as to allow other studies to build upon the knowledge created. Chapter Five summarizes research results that were used to make specific recommendations for further research.

Chapter Four: Analysis of Data

The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the perceptions of beginning teachers in regard to their preparedness and effectiveness in the use of behavior management strategies. Three research questions guided this study. Perception data about the extent teachers believed they were prepared to handle classroom discipline helped to deepen the understanding of the how well teachers felt prepared to handle classroom management issues. The extent to which teachers felt they were prepared also helped to identify best practices in teacher training.

Two instruments were used in data collection. A survey to gain quantitative data and an interview to gain qualitative data created two sets of data to compare. A third set of data was gathered from a review of current literature and described in Chapter Two as well as in the triangulation section of this chapter.

In this chapter, the research questions addressed are reviewed as well as the demographics of the subjects used in the study and their responses. An in-depth look at responses through summaries of both instruments provided insight that is able to be triangulated with current literature. Agreements and arguments were found and are shared in this chapter, followed by a comprehensive summary.

Research Questions and Demographics of the Study

While analyzing the data gathered, the following research questions were used as conduit to arrive at conclusions:

1. Within the first three years of teaching, to what degree do teachers perceive they were prepared to handle classroom discipline?

2. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive is their level of effectiveness is in handling classroom discipline?

3. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive as the reasons for their preparedness in handling classroom discipline?

The population size was 3,000 teachers in southwest Missouri. For a sample with a confidence interval of 95%, there needed to be 300 survey responses. After three invitations to participate, a total of 121 respondents completed the survey. This was a response rate of 40% of the sample size. Table 1 show ages of those who participated in the survey.

Females outnumbered males in this study by 60% with a standard deviation of .40. This supported the findings of Sass et al. (2012) that women outnumber men in the teaching profession. The reason given by Sass et al. (2012) is that the attrition rate among men is higher than that of women. Also, men tend to move up the career ladder more often than women (Sass et al., 2012).

Table 1

Age of Survey Participants

Age	Percent of Sample	*n*
21-24	15.83	19
25-34	40.83	49
35-44	25.00	30
45-54	13.33	16
55-64	4.17	5
65+	0.83	1

For a confidence interval of 95% and a margin of error of .5% or less, five to 10 interviews were needed. The percentage of that sample target interviewed was 60.6%. Demographic data from the interview are shared in Table 2.

Table 2

Age of Interview Participants

Age	Percent of Sample	*n*
21-24	33.33	2
25-34	33.33	2
35-44	16.67	1
45-54	16.67	1

Participants in the survey were asked what teacher preparation programs they completed or how they became certified. Table 3 shows the number of participants and their certification routes. All certification methods were used to answer all the questions in the survey.

Table 3

Teacher Routes to Certification

Route	Percent of Respondents	*n*
Online Program	4.20%	5
Traditional (4 year degree)	79.83%	95
ABCTE	3.36%	4
MAT	6.72%	8
Temporary Certification	5.88%	7
Hardship	0.00%	0
Doctoral	0.00%	0

Data Analysis of Survey and Interview Data

Survey results. The first research question addressed in the survey asked within the first three years of teaching, to what degree do teachers perceive they were prepared to handle classroom discipline? Table 4 shows the results of the survey which pertained to this question. Teachers were asked whether an undergraduate program or practical experience prepared them more to handle classroom management issues. Other questions in the survey addressed other experiences that might have helped teachers feel as though

they were prepared for classroom management. These experiences were related to how well the district helped teachers with strategies to handle classroom management issues, and how well teachers felt prepared for classroom management issues currently.

Table 4 includes the perceptions of teachers as to what prepared them to handle classroom management. Research question one is addressed through this table. Answer options were in a range from strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree. Table 4 shows teachers feel as though they were prepared to handle student discipline issues as they arose; however, most strongly disagreed that their undergraduate program helped them to gain that preparedness with a mode of 2. In fact, the least amount of preparedness of the options given was reported to be from the undergraduate or degree program with a frequency rate of 52.92% of respondents stating their undergraduate degree programs did not help them handle classroom management best.

Most teachers agreed or strongly agreed that after one year of teaching they were adequately prepared to handle classroom management issues with a frequency rate of 51.24%. More preparedness was perceived to come from prior experience, continued support from the school district in which they taught, and experiences before teaching, than from the undergraduate program itself. Data also showed teachers were prepared to handle classroom management at the time of the survey with the highest frequency rate agreeing at 65.83%.

Table 4

What Teachers Perceive Prepared Them to Handle Classroom Management

Question	*Mo*	Frequency	*n*
I was prepared for classroom management prior to teaching.	3	46.72%	121
After one year of teaching, I was adequately prepared for classroom management.	3	51.24%	121
I am prepared to handle student discipline issues as they arise.	3	65.83%	120
My school district has prepared me the most to handle classroom management issues.	3	46.55%	116
My school district continues to help with strategies to handle classroom management issues.	3	55.00%	120
My undergraduate or degree program has helped me handle classroom management the best.	2	52.92%	121

Note. 1 = Strongly Disagree; 2 = Disagree; 3 = Agree; 4 = Strongly Agree.

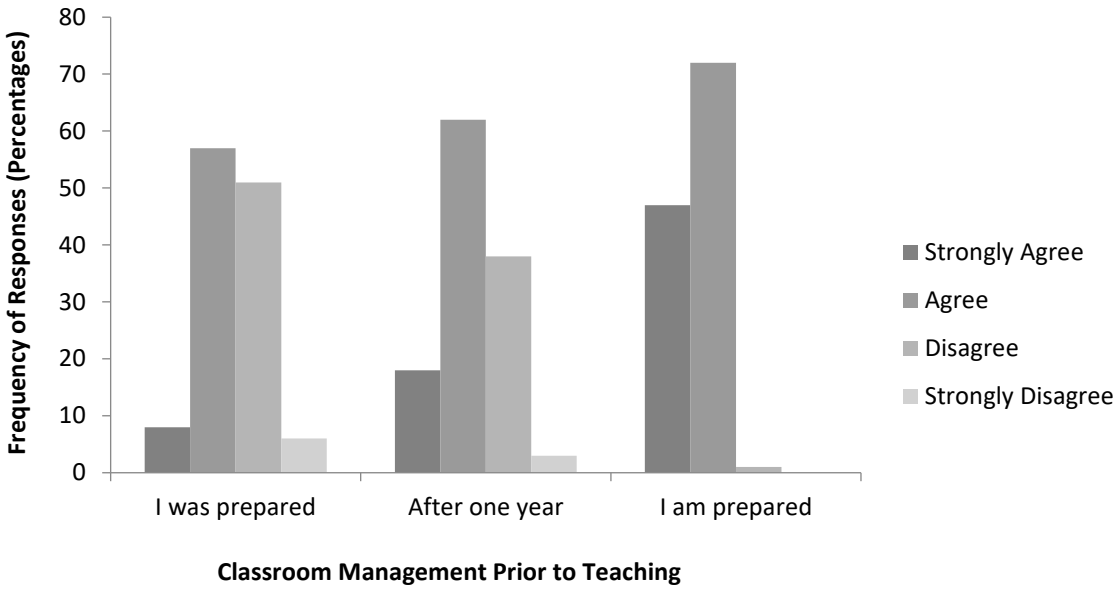

Figure 1. Preparation for classroom management prior to teaching. Shown are the frequency of responses of *strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree*.

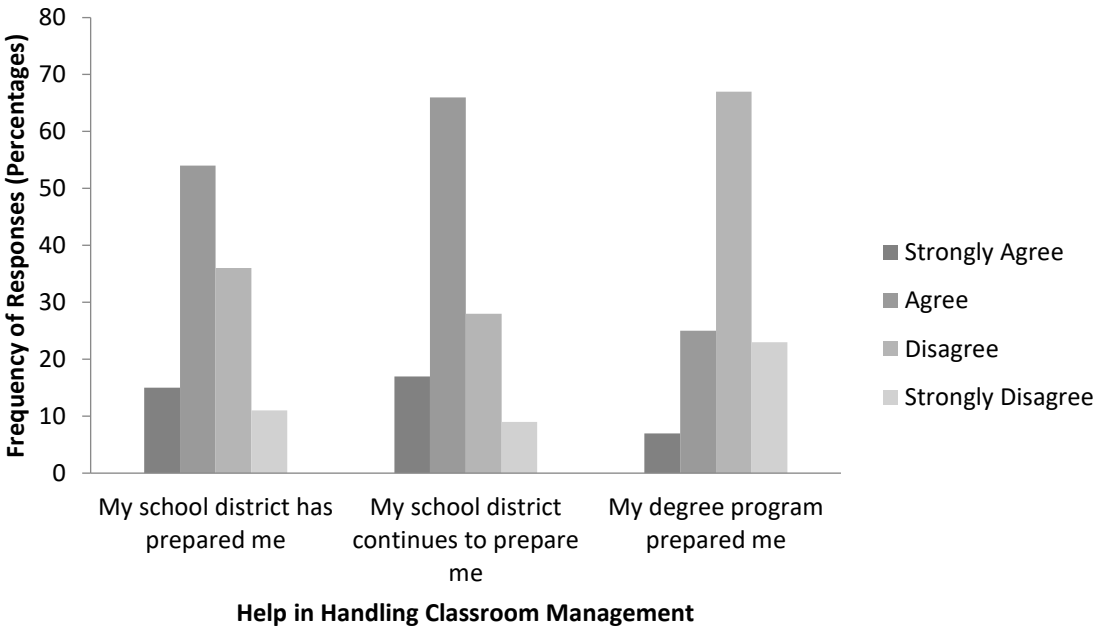

Figure 2. Help in handling classroom management. Shown are the frequency of responses of *strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree*.

Results shown in Table 5 help to answer the second research question. Table 5 shows the perceived reasons for current preparedness in handling classroom management. Figure 3 and Figure 4 show the frequency of all available responses in Table 5. On-the-job training helped the most with classroom management with 58.20% of respondents strongly agreeing. Teachers also strongly agreed student relationships helped the most to prepare them for classroom management preparedness with 56.54% of respondents strongly agreeing. Engaging lessons also ranked high in helping with classroom management with 52.07% of respondents agreeing. On-the-job training, student relationships, and engaging lessons were perceived to have helped the most with classroom management issues.

Parental communication had a frequency rate of 57.38% of teachers agreeing the communication helped with classroom management issues. Parental communication had a higher frequency rate of respondents agreeing than the other reasons on the survey to record what teachers felt prepared them to handle classroom management. Mentoring had a frequency rate of 46.61% of teachers agreeing it helped prepare them for classroom management, and administrative communication followed with 43.44% of respondents agreeing. The perception was on-the-job training, student relationships, and engaging lessons helped with classroom management issues more than parental communication and mentoring.

Classroom assessments were perceived to help the least with classroom management with 63.33% of the respondents disagreeing. Following classroom assessments was the perception of teachers being prepared for classroom management prior to teaching with 48.36% agreeing. Administrative communication had more respondents record responses of agree than any other response, but the agreeing response rate was only 43.44%. More teachers felt as though they were more prepared for classroom management prior to teaching than the preparation they received from administrative communication and from what classroom assessments could offer.

Table 5

Teacher Perceptions as the Reasons for Preparedness

Question	*Mo*	Frequency	*n*
On the job training has helped me the most with classroom management.	4	58.20%	121
A mentoring program helped me the most with classroom management issues.	3	46.61%	118
Parental communication helps with classroom management issues.	3	57.38%	121
Administrative communication helps most with classroom management issues.	3	43.44%	121
Engaging lessons help the most with classroom management issues.	3	52.07%	121
Student relationships help the most with classroom management issues.	4	56.56%	121
Classroom assessments help most with classroom management issues.	2	63.33%	120
I was prepared for classroom management prior to teaching.	3	48.36%	121

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Agree; 4=Strongly Agree

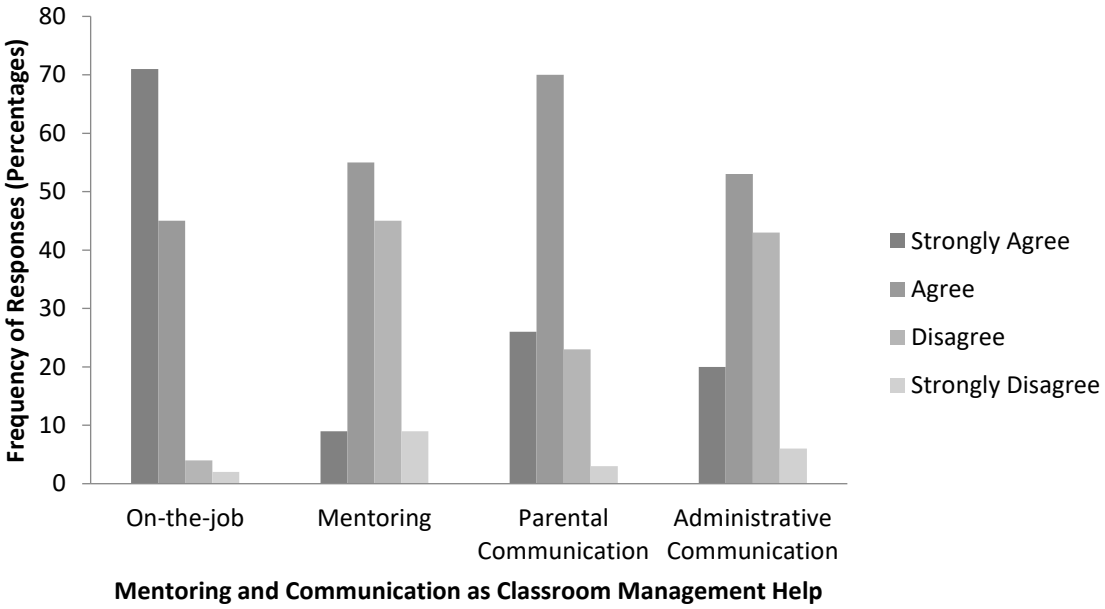

Figure 3. Mentoring and communication as classroom management help. Shown are the frequency of responses of *strongly agree*, *agree*, *disagree*, *and strongly disagree*.

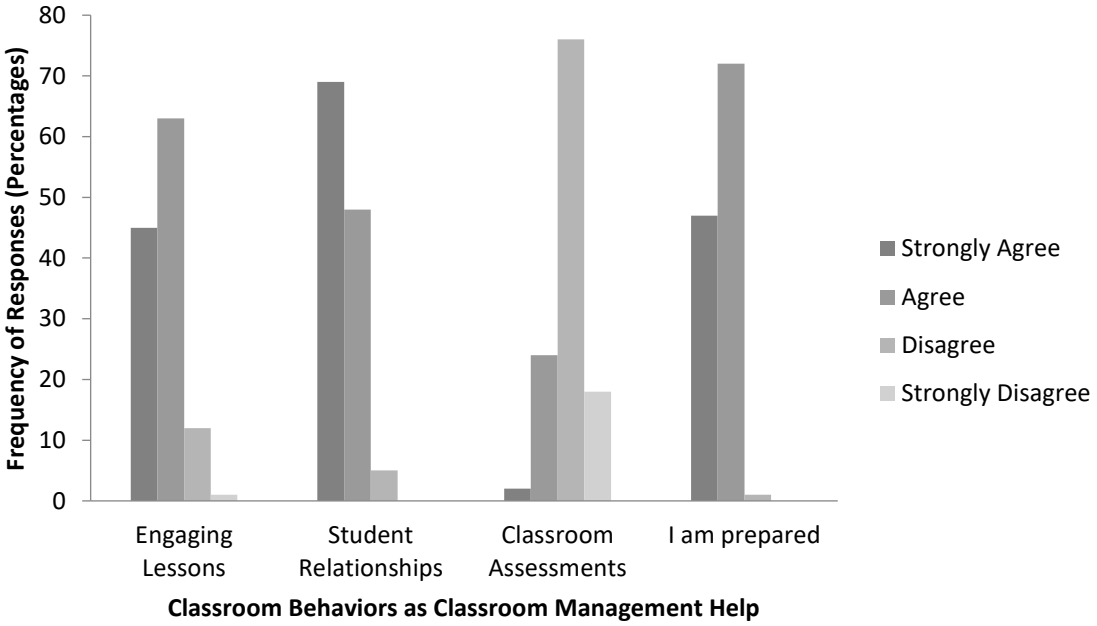

Figure 4. Classroom behaviors as classroom management help. Shown are the frequency of responses of *strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree*.

To answer the final research question in the study, two survey questions were asked. The extent or degree of effectiveness in handling classroom management was found by asking whether or not classroom management was the hardest part of a teacher's job. Finally, participants were asked if classroom management would be a reason for leaving the profession. Table 6 shows these findings, while Figure 5 shows the frequency of all possible responses in the survey as outlined in Table 6.

The choices available were strongly disagree, disagree, agree, and strongly agree. The mode shows more participants agreed, with a frequency of 48.36%, classroom management would be a reason to leave the profession. More respondents disagreed that classroom management was the hardest part of their job with a frequency of 37.70%. This

lower frequency on the most common response given confirms that answers were close to evenly distributed among all four response choices. When asked if classroom management would be a reason to leave the teaching profession, a mode of 3 was recorded, meaning more teachers agreed or strongly agreed than disagreed.

Table 6

The Degree of Effectiveness Teachers Feel in Handling Classroom Management

Question	*Mo*	Frequency	*n*
Classroom management is the hardest part of your job.	2	37.70%	121
Classroom management would be a reason to leave the profession.	3	48.36%	121

Note. 1=Strongly Disagree; 2=Disagree; 3=Agree; 4=Strongly Agree.

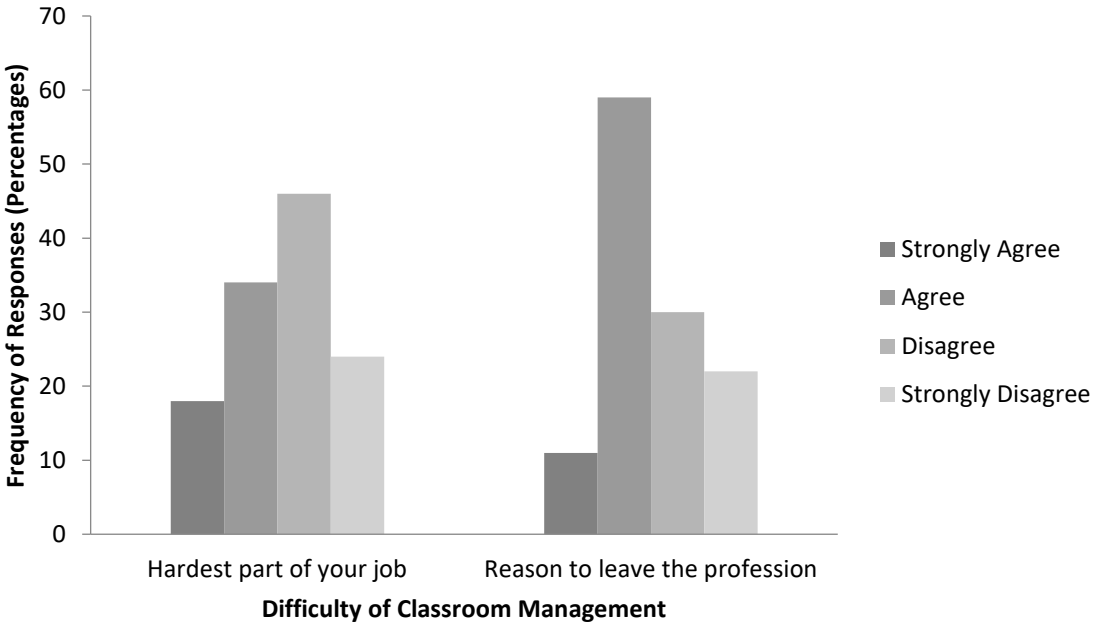

Figure 5. Difficulty of classroom management. Shown are the frequency of responses of *strongly agree, agree, disagree, and strongly disagree*.

Interview results. To gather qualitative data, a matrix code was created for each set of responses to questions to measure the frequency of phrases used or ideas shared when answering specific questions. By ranking these frequencies, a hierarchy was created. This matrix code was analyzed to rank common ideas and phrases used in responses to interview questions. As stated in Chapter Three, a custom matrix was created to record educational jargon and the frequency of the educational jargon among interviewees.

When data were first analyzed, the responses from the interviews were summarized into main ideas. Main ideas were listed in the left column of a T-Chart and numbered. A number at the end of a main idea, found in the interview, dictated how often

the particular idea was given as a response. This was accomplished for every question in the interview.

In one column of the T-Chart was educational language which frequently came up during the interview process. Educational language used in a response was assigned a letter as the first part of the matrix code. The frequency of the language used was given a number to indicate how often the word or phrase was used. This code formed the matrix of responses for each question. First, recorded interviews were transcribed. Next, commonalities were found throughout each of the transcriptions. Commonalities were recorded to cross reference findings from survey data. For example, if eight interviewees shared a common idea through the use of similar educational language as a summarized answer the first part of the code was noted as A.8. The letter represents the first big idea or educational term, and the eight represents how often the same word or phrase was used. When the same interviewees used a word specific to education it would be recorded in the T-Chart.

Within the first three years of teaching, to what degree do teachers perceive they were prepared to handle classroom discipline? The first question asked was what teachers felt prepared them to handle classroom management. Four common ideas for reasons for preparedness were given. Table 7 shows the ideas shared and the frequency with which the ideas surfaced throughout the interviews. Most participants were traditionally certified teachers. Only one of the interviewees was non-traditionally certified. Five of the participants received teacher preparation training through a traditional certification route.

Three of the participants reported working with children in other capacities prior to teaching stating, Participant I1 stated, "I worked at the Boys and Girls Town with kids who weren't always the easiest to deal with," and, I2 stated "I got into teaching to coach. Coaching has definitely helped me relate to the kids and start teaching with a little bit of a reputation." Two of the interview participants indicated they were not ready to handle classroom management issues or not prepared at all.

Table 7

Matrix Code for Teacher Perceptions of the Reasons for Preparedness in Handling Classroom Discipline

Common Idea	Frequency	Matrix Code	*n*
Traditional Training	5	1.5	6
ABCTE Route to certification	1	2.1	6
Coaching and/or other prior experiences with children	3	3.3	6
Not ready or prepared at all	2	4.2	6

Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive is their level of effectiveness is in handling classroom discipline? The second research question asked what teachers perceive prepared them to handle classroom discipline. The matrix in Table 8 shows the common ideas and phrases shared by interviewees throughout the interviews. When asked, interviewees cited relationships and feedback

most frequently as to what prepared them most in handling classroom management issues. Two interviewees said they only receive feedback from administration when they specifically ask for it. The feedback given by administration to the teachers was perceived to help prepare them to handle future, negative classroom management incidents in the classroom.

Throughout the interview process it was clear positive relationships with students and feedback from other teachers and administrators are perceived to be the reasons teachers felt prepared to handle classroom management as noted in Table 8. During the interviews it was specifically stated by I1, "Feedback from my mentor is the easiest for me to get. He [the mentor] is right across the hall so anytime I have questions about anything he's [the mentor] pretty handy." Feedback from administrators was mentioned by four different interviewees as being helpful with a matrix code of 1.4. However, matrix code 2.2 indicated two of the interviewees only received feedback from administrators when the administrators were specifically asked for it. From interviewee I1, "I've asked for feedback from them [the administrator] and when they've got the time for me, what they say usually helps. I've used some of their suggestions in my class and had some success with them." Feedback from administrators and other teachers was mentioned the most throughout the interview process among all interviewees.

Interviewees cited positive student relationships as a way to help prepare for difficult classroom management situations. Interviewee I6 stated:

> If you work at your relationships with kids, they respect you, and they are more likely to do the things you ask them to do. They don't want to disappoint you, and they tend to behave better than the ones you don't have a good relationship with.

While relationships were mentioned by interviewees in regards to both students and colleagues, it was the strong relationships with students interviewees alluded to during each interview. According to interviewee I5:

> You can't tell 'em [the students] you love 'em, you have to show 'em. Once they know you care, they'll care. Once that relationship is established, kids will perform for you on levels that go way beyond state standards and learning objectives. That's the key. If they're busy trying to perform for you, they don't really have the time to misbehave.

When asked about student relationships, every interviewee supported the idea positive relationships with students helps reduce the amount of disruptive classroom management behaviors.

Interviewees shared the perception classroom management preparation is a trial by fire or achieved through, according to I1:

> Trial and error. I try new things based on the kid. If I come up with a new strategy or something from a conference or even from another teacher, then I think of a kid who might benefit from that, and I'll go back to my classroom and try it out. If it works I keep using it, if it doesn't then I try to find something else.

Another (I6) went on to state, "They try to teach you what to do in school, but they don't teach you anything that prepares you for classroom management...that [classroom management] is learned one way, get in there and mess up." Three phrases were used with five different interviewees to describe how on-the-job training helped prepared them for classroom management. Trial by fire, trial and error, and sink or swim were all phrases used to describe the on-the-job experience of different interviewees.

When interviewees were asked about parental contact, teachers in the secondary or higher-level grades did not place as much importance on its role in classroom management as those teachers did in the lower or elementary grades. Interviewee I1 stated, "I think parents need to be notified when kids are younger. By the time they get to middle school they are preparing for high school and behaviors are just part of the school routine." Adversely, interviewee I5 responded by stating, "YES! If kids know you're gonna call their parents, they will behave a whole lot better for you in the classroom and in school in general."

The interviewees were split in half in support of parental contact as a method of preparing for classroom management. Interviewee I4 said:

> They tell you in college to call parents before school starts. I didn't do it last year, but this year I called every kid's parents in my class at the beginning of school. Some of the kids knew it cause they asked me like, 'Did you call my home?,' or 'Hey, my mom said she talked to you.

The same interviewee (I4) went on to say, "It makes the times you have to call home a little easier cause you've already established a line of communication with the parent and they [the parent] know you're on their side and only want what's best for their child." While parent communication was not perceived to be as much of a preparation factor in helping teachers prepare for classroom management with a lower matrix code than feedback and mentoring, those who did make frequent parental contact felt very strongly that it did.

Table 8

Matrix Code for What Teachers Perceive Prepared Them to Handle Classroom Discipline

Common Idea	Frequency	Matrix Code	*n*
Feedback I get from admin	4	1.4	6
I only get feedback if I ask specifically	2	2.2	6
The younger the age the more important the parent contact	3	3.3	6
Mentoring provides the most honest and instant feedback	4	4.4	6
Relationships are the key to smooth running classrooms	6	5.6	6
Sink or swim/trial by fire/trial by error	5	6.5	6
Feedback	6	6.6	6

Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive as the reasons for their preparedness in handling classroom discipline? Table 9 indicates the frequency of the answers to interview questions regarding the perceived effectiveness of teachers' classroom management. Answers to this last research question allowed the researcher to determine whether or not the lack of effectiveness would be a reason to leave the profession of teaching.

While three interviewees said classroom management issues would not be the sole reason to leave the profession of education, two of the responses indicated classroom management issues would be. When asked if classroom management issues would be a reason to leave the profession, interviewee I2 reported:

> I'll admit it's tough. With all the things we are expected to do and get done, disruptive students can throw you over the edge. Especially if you have had a rough or stressful day. I don't think I would ever quit teaching because of it though.

However, a matrix code of 1.2 in Table 10 indicated two teachers said they would leave the profession because of classroom management issues. Interviewee I5 stated, "Everyone says it's supposed to get easier and it hasn't. You get your students trained and then the next year you have to train a whole 'nother set. It is exhausting to think about." Two of the interviewees stated they would quit teaching altogether because of classroom management.

Adversely, interviewee I6 shared:

> Having a super high level of energy that either matches the kids' or is higher than the kids' is the key. If you have that, and some common sense, then kids aren't going to misbehave in your room. So no, I wouldn't leave just because of disruptive or misbehaving kids. I would feel as though I lost and they won.

Having a high level of energy had a matrix code of 3.1; however, the individual felt very strongly working hard to have a high level of energy was the key to handling classroom management issues effectively.

Table 9

Matrix Code for Effectiveness Teachers Feel in Handling Classroom Management

Common Idea	Frequency	Matrix Code	*n*
I would leave for classroom management alone.	2	1.2	6
It could be a factor along with others for leaving	3	2.3	6
A high level of energy	1	3.1	6

Triangulation

To validate the research findings from both the surveys and the interviews, the findings were compared to those listed in Chapter Two's review of the literature. This created triangulated data to add to the validity and reliability of the survey and interview. All three research questions were used as the conduit to derive relationships between current research and the data collected throughout this study.

On-the-job training and feedback from others were reported to help with classroom management the most with a mode of 3.52 and 2.55, respectively. While there were higher modes for other responses throughout the survey, on-the-job training and feedback were mentioned more frequently with matrix codes of 6.5 and 6.6, respectively, in the interviews. Both responses from the survey and answers in the interview supported on-the-job training and feedback helped most to prepare teachers to handle classroom management.

Blazer (2012) supported programs at the university level accompanied with on-the-job training are necessary to sustain teachers in the field of education. Likewise, Huling and Resta (2001) reported, “178 mentor teachers were surveyed and more than two-thirds responded definitely to the statement that participation in the mentoring programs provided positive professional growth for me" (p. 2). According to Boreen et al. (2010), mentoring can significantly reduce attrition among teachers. While mentor teachers help mentees improve teaching, the mentee level of professional competency improves (Huling & Resta, 2001). Boreen et al. (2010) reported the findings of a 1992 Odell Study when they stated, “The attrition rate for teachers receiving one year of mentoring was only 16% after four years of teaching, about half the national attrition rate at that time” (p. 7).

The survey recorded a mode of 2.13 for undergraduate programs preparing teachers for classroom management. The interview matrix indicated a code of 1.5 to support most teachers interviewed received traditional certification. A matrix code of 4.2 designated the interviewees were not prepared for classroom management at all prior to teaching. Of the six interviews, a matrix code of 3.3 reported coaching or other prior experiences helped prepare teachers for classroom management. While most teachers in the study were traditionally certified, Jacob (2012) reported there is not enough research at this time to conclude which type of certification yields the best results. However, Blazer (2012) supported there was enough research. Blazer (2012) concluded more teachers are becoming certified through alternative methods. If teacher success was placed solely in student achievement, then as the number of teachers with alternatively certified routes to education increased and the number of teachers with traditional routes

to education decreased, the alternatively certified teachers would begin to become more successful than their counterparts by sheer numbers alone (Blazer, 2012).

According to Kim (2011), the beliefs of teachers in the field have outweighed those of the pre-service or beginning teachers in the past. Kim (2011) went on to note teacher preparation programs have the biggest impact on a teacher's beliefs and practices in the classroom. Kim (2011) suggested, "Once a teacher's beliefs and practices are shaped, they are hard to change" (p. 13). The best time to train teachers in handling classroom management is during the pre-service or beginning teacher stage of careers (Kim, 2011).

To measure perceived effectiveness of classroom management, the survey and interview questions asked if teachers would leave the profession because of issues with classroom management. The results yielded were a mode of 2.49 and a matrix code of 1.2 respectively. A matrix code of 2.3 indicates teachers would consider leaving the profession with other reasons added to classroom management. Likewise, a mode of 2.38 indicated classroom management is the hardest part of the teaching job. This indicates more teachers agree and strongly agree classroom management is a reason to quit teaching than disagree or strongly disagree.

According to Kratochwill (2011), one of the most common factors cited as being directly related to job burnout for the first-year teacher (and a leading cause of attrition) is the lack of effective classroom management training programs. According to Berry (2010), "Over 30% of new teachers leave within the first five years of teaching, and over 50% of novices who teach in urban schools leave within the first three years" (p. 6). Likewise, Gonzalez et al. (2008) stated, "Teachers leave the profession early because of

their struggles with classroom management" (p. 2). Primarily teachers leave within the first three years of entering the profession, according to a study by Berry (2010). Berry (2010) also found teachers willing to leave for higher pay; however, these jobs were only slightly higher paying. Most jobs were less stressful and required less responsibility when it came to management (Berry, 2010).

Summary

Data were gathered through a mixed method of using a quantitative data-gathering tool through the use of a survey with a qualitative data-gathering tool through a series of interviews. The survey was administered using a Likert scale which assumes attitudes can be measured and recorded on a continuum (McLeod, 2011). In this case a mode was used. The interviews were summarized by a custom matrix which recorded the frequency of common ideas or phrases. After analyzing and recording both sets of data, they were compared together and then with current literature to create a triangulation of data.

Research findings were compared to find connections between responses as they related to the research questions. The major findings in this data analysis included the following:

1. On-the-job training is perceived to be the best training in classroom management.
2. Feedback is valued among teachers from mentors and administrators.
3. While most teachers in the study were traditionally certified, a significant number reported being prepared to handle classroom management through other experiences prior to teaching.

4. More teachers will consider leaving the profession of teaching because of their ineffectiveness in classroom management than will stay as ineffective classroom managers.

While other relationships within the data exist, these answer the research questions most clearly and have the largest mode and matrix codes.

Chapter Five includes more detail with discussion and summarizing the results of the data analysis. Other findings in the data are discussed. Lastly, Chapter Five includes implications for practice in the field of education and recommendations for further research.

Chapter Five: Summary and Conclusions

After presenting data from the study and analyzing connections in data between both the survey and interview tools, this chapter includes a summary of how data were gathered from the beginning of the study to the end. A review of the purpose of the study, along with research questions and methodology, provides groundwork for the summary. Findings from the data related to the research are guided through the research questions to articulate outcomes of the study. Conclusions include implications for practice and recommendations for further research.

Summary of the Study

Review of the purpose of the study. The purpose of the study was to first address the problem of a large number of teachers leaving the teaching profession early in their careers (Berry, 2010). The conceptual framework of the study encompassed classroom management as behavior management. Although there are many different approaches to classroom management, the behavior component of total classroom management is the key issue (Kratochwill, 2011). According to Kratochwill (2011), a poll of 2,300 teachers from kindergarten to twelfth grade revealed, "Teachers wanted assistance with classroom management because of their concerns about student safety and their desire for strategies to deal effectively with students' negative and/or disruptive behavior" (p. 3). Safety is one concern, while addressing and managing behavior is another (Kratochwill, 2011).

Kratochwill (2011) also addressed this problem when he explained 30% of new teachers will leave the profession within the first three years of teaching. Kratochwill (2011) also claimed from years of Rose and Gallup Polls (2010) that teachers cited

classroom management and management issues as one of the top reasons they would leave the profession. The purpose of this study was to identify and describe the perceptions of beginning teachers in regard to their preparedness and effectiveness in the use of behavior management strategies.

Conclusions were drawn to help deepen the understanding of how beginning teachers felt toward their efficacy in handling classroom discipline. Perceptions were also used to find the extent to which teachers felt they were prepared to handle classroom management issues as they arose. Lastly, the data were analyzed to find what teachers perceived helped them to handle classroom management issues.

Review of the research questions. The following research questions guided the study:

1. Within the first three years of teaching, to what degree do teachers perceive they were prepared to handle classroom discipline?

2. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive is their level of effectiveness is in handling classroom discipline?

3. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive as the reasons for their preparedness in handling classroom discipline?

Review of the methodology. The design of the research included a mixed method. The data were gathered using both quantitative and qualitative tools. Quantitative data were gathered using a survey. Twenty survey questions guided each respondent through all three overriding research questions. These data were gathered using a Likert scale. A Likert scale assumes attitudes can be measured along a continuum

(McLeod, 2011). Using a mode, or most frequent responses, allows the researcher to gather the attitudes of the whole along the continuum (McLeod, 2011).

The qualitative data were gathered using an interview. The interview allowed or a deeper dive into the responses of participants by asking follow-up questions. Interviews were recorded and transcribed to find common ideas and phrases among participants. These common ideas were recorded in one column of a matrix. The frequency of these ideas was then recorded in another column. A custom matrix code was created to put a weight of measure on the phrases used to answer questions from the interview. The frequencies of responses were used to imply which common ideas the interviewees perceived to be the best reasons for either preparedness or effectiveness in handling classroom management.

Both tools were compared to each other and to the current research in the literature review to create a final leg of validated data. Utilizing the research questions as the conduit, findings from the surveys and interviews allowed major agreements and arguments to be cross-referenced with the literature review. These were referenced for support or disagreement of the data gathered and are reported later in the chapter.

Review of the population and sample. The population for the study included teachers in southwest Missouri within their first through third years of teaching. There are approximately 375-425 beginning teachers in southwest Missouri, according to Meador (2014). For the confidence interval of 95% and a margin of error of 5% or .05, the sample needed to be approximately 300 teachers.

Using the recommendations of Fink (2010) and Salkind (2010), a target of 20-30% of the sample was sought. However; 10-15% was realistic even though the

confidence interval would go down and the margin of error would go up slightly (Salkind, 2010). Using these figures, 370 respondents to the survey and 11-16 participants in the interview would have been enough to meet the 5-10% realistic return on data, according to Fink (2010) and Salkind (2010).

Bias and limitations. One limitation to the study was the smaller population and size. While sampling more teachers from Missouri and other states might have provided a higher confidence interval and smaller margin of error in the data, it would not have been as useful to teachers in the immediate area. Sampling a smaller group from southwest Missouri helped to keep the outcomes reliable and viable. Bias in the data could have come from the size of the sample, the timing of the instrumentation, being truthful when asked questions, or a combination of each.

Outcomes of the Study

The literature review in Chapter Two was used in conjunction with the survey and interview results to validate data. Connections existing in the data from the survey and interviews were compared to those in the literature review to create a triangulation of data. While disagreements were not found between the literature review and data gathered, it is noted they could exist if data were collected in other ways. The research questions guided the findings related to the literature.

Outcome 1. Teachers with a traditional certification are not necessarily more or less prepared to handle classroom management than those with alternative routes to certification. However, the alternative route certified teachers tend to have more life experiences prior to teaching that may lend themselves to dealing with classroom management with a different set of skills.

Data collected show 79.83% of respondents became certified teachers through a traditional four-year university degree program. On the one hand, this is a bias of traditionally certified teachers. On the other hand, only one interviewee stated their prior experience to teaching had helped them better prepare for handling classroom management issues. Specifically, I1 mentioned the work accomplished through a previous work experience had helped handle students of the age group I1 was currently working.

According to Rockoff, Jacob, Kane, and Staiger (2011), effective teacher characteristics have nothing to do with traditional versus nontraditional teacher certification and have more to do with other qualities. Rockoff et al. (2011) supported the cognitive and non-cognitive skills of a teacher have more to do with teacher effectiveness. The effectiveness of the teacher does not depend on how they were trained, but instead on the skills already possessed by the teacher upon entering the field of education (Rockoff et al., 2011).

Teach for America (TFA) is one organization that goes out of its way to find nontraditional route teachers to place in more low-income rural areas (Heilig & Jez, 2010). While in one study, Heilig and Jez (2010) found TFA teachers are significantly less effective than their traditionally certified counterparts, it was also noted the study was conducted in schools where classroom management effectiveness as well as test scores were not as high as in districts with a higher socio-economic clientele. Upon further study, Heilig and Jez (2010) concluded the effectiveness of TFA teachers cannot be concluded due to other outlying factors. Teach for America teachers do have a higher

attrition rate; therefore, the cost of training for districts choosing to hire them will remain high (Heilig & Jez, 2010).

Sass (2011) claimed the number of alternative certified teachers has skyrocketed in recent years. Sass (2011) found alternatively certified teachers are more effective in the classroom and have larger effects on student achievement than those who are traditionally certified. In a longitudinal study by Sass (2011), he found traditional teacher preparation programs do not produce teachers as effective as the programs certifying teachers alternatively. One finding of the study indicated nontraditionally certified teachers generally have more science courses throughout their college careers than do traditionally certified teachers (Sass, 2011). Sass (2011) suggested this type of scientific thinker might be better suited for teaching than those thinkers who complete the traditional four-year degree. According to Darling-Hammond (2010), the power to transform teaching and learning lies within the context of teacher preparation and education.

Outcome 2. Teachers with mentors feel as though they are better prepared to handle classroom management because they are not alone. They feel a sense of collegiality with others and have someone to lean on for support and help in the classroom. Mentoring programs are resources for teachers to learn through new ideas gained from other teachers.

In the survey, 46.61% of respondents agreed a mentoring program helped most with classroom management issues. Likewise, interview data supported mentoring as a method to help prepare teachers for classroom management with a matrix code of 4.4. Mentoring was not the highest scoring on either the survey or the interview, but it was not the lowest, either. The literature further supported mentoring.

Teacher mentoring is the equivalent to extending the learning of a beginning teacher beyond the university, according to Onchwari and Keengwe (2010). Onchwari and Keengwe (2010) found reading and writing scores to increase in instances where a mentor or colleague coaches were present, making the teacher more effective. Learning opportunities for beginning teachers are continued through professional development well after a teacher accepts his or her first assignment (Onchwari & Keengwe, 2010). Teacher identities are also formed when beginning teachers are paired with effective mentors (Devos, 2010). Pairing beginning teachers with effective teacher mentors who hold high professional standards creates identities in the beginning teacher conducive to a higher effectiveness in the classroom (Devos, 2010).

Teacher mentoring programs with clearly defined goals help aid in teacher retention, according to Barrera, Braley, and Slate (2010). Barrera et al., (2010) emphasized the importance for support for mentees as a means to develop new teachers' strategies for effectiveness in the classroom. Time devoted to developing new teachers through targeted mentoring has a direct and positive effect on the effectiveness of beginning teachers in the classroom and their retention (Barrera et al., 2010).

Outcome 3. Teachers feel as though feedback from a mentor or administrator helps them to make good decisions about classroom management. This helps with the perception of efficacy in classroom discipline and provides confirmed ways of dealing with issues as they arise in the classroom. There are growth opportunities for teacher effectiveness through feedback.

Teachers agreed (43.44%) in the survey that administrative communication helps most with classroom management. Respondents of the survey also agreed the school

districts they worked in helped prepare them to handle classroom management issues by agreeing at a frequency of 46.55%. Likewise, 55% agreed their schools continue to help with strategies to handle classroom management issues. During interviews, a matrix code of 6.6 indicated teachers perceived feedback to help most with classroom management. A matrix code of 1.4 supported feedback from administration was important, even though the matrix code of 2.2 confirmed feedback was generally only given when asked for by the teacher.

According to Cant and Cooper (2011), feedback is vital in fields where experiences can be changed. To be effective, feedback needs to be structured and facilitated (Cant & Cooper, 2011). Cant and Cooper (2011) affirmed the more experience the individual giving feedback has at facilitating a debriefing, the more effective the feedback will be. Feedback can be tailored to fit the need of the individual receiving it for the most effectiveness, according to Solomon, Klein, and Politylo (2012). Used correctly, feedback has been found to increase effective behaviors for teachers and to reinforce those that are already effective (Solomon et al., 2012).

Contrarily, Muralidharan and Sundararaman (2010) supported feedback has no effect on the learning outcomes of students. Teachers work harder when being observed, because they know there will be feedback (Muralidharan & Sundararaman, 2010). The act of exerting more effort when being observed has been found to have little or no impact on achievement levels of students, according to Muralidharan and Sundararaman (2010).

Outcome 4. On-the-job training is invaluable. Teachers feel as though the training from being in the classroom as a trial-and-error experience is the best way to

learn to handle classroom management issues. Putting more practicum-type classes into teacher training may provide the opportunities for teachers to gain a quasi-on-the-job experience prior to teaching.

Respondents to the survey stated on-the-job training prepared them the most to handle classroom management issues with 58.20% strongly agreeing. A matrix code of 6.5 indicated related experiences prepared teachers for classroom management through; sink or swim, trial-by-fire, and trial-and-error. These responses support practicum experiences as an invaluable part of teacher training.

Parise and Spillane (2010) supported changes in teacher education focusing on practical experiences to better prepare teachers. At the same time, Parise and Spillane (2010) recommended continued training for those teachers who are already working in the field of education. Pressure is put on schools to train on new instructional strategies and management strategies to the thousands of teachers who are already in the field of education (2010). This approach generally leads to on-the-job training (Parise & Spillane, 2010). Musset (2010) supported Parise and Spillane (2010) through policy designed to train teachers with competencies designed to manage the learning environment and help students.

Klassen and Chiu (2010) found relationships among self-efficacy, age, gender, and job stress specifically as it relates to classroom management. Teachers with a higher workload reportedly have better classroom management skills (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Teachers in elementary schools who are in the middle of their careers tend to have better classroom management skills (Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Lastly, Klassen and Chiu (2010) found female teachers in lower socio-economic classrooms reported lower self-efficacy

in handling classroom management issues. Knowing these statistics can help administrators place beginning teachers in environments where they can be most successful while gaining on-the-job training (Klassen & Chiu, 2010).

Teaching is stressful, and teachers need to learn ways to cope with the stress of educating students, according to Roeser, Skinner, Beers, and Jennings (2012). Unfortunately, teachers are often left to develop these coping strategies on-the-job or leave the profession (Roeser et al., 2012). Schools utilizing mindfulness training while teachers are on-the-job are improving teaching in public schools (Roeser et al., 2012). However, implications and the need for future research in the area of teaching beginning teachers to cope with the stress of the teaching profession takes up the bulk of the study due to the newness of the movement (Roeser et al., 2012).

Conclusions

Research question one. The first research question to be answered was as follows: Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive as the reasons they were prepared to handle classroom management issues? The data from the survey pointed to on-the-job training at a school district and student relationships as reasons teachers were prepared to handle classroom management, with teachers mostly strongly agreeing at a 58.20% and 56.56% frequency, respectively. This means more teachers strongly agreed than disagreed or strongly disagreed with the effectiveness of on-the-job training and the school district preparing teachers to handle classroom management issues. In the interview, a matrix code of 3.3 supported with a mode of 3 indicated teachers felt as though their experiences prior to teaching prepared them more for classroom management than other training. Furthermore, a matrix code of 6.6 showed

teachers valued the feedback they received from mentors or administrators as equally helping them feel prepared to handle classroom management issues. Interviewee I1 stated, "Feedback from my mentor is the easiest for me to get. He [the mentor] is right across the hall so anytime I have questions about anything he's [the mentor] pretty handy."

According to Kratochwill (2011), one of the most common factors cited as being directly related to job burnout for the first-year teacher (and a leading cause of attrition) is the lack of effective classroom management training programs. According to Boreen et al. (2010), mentoring can significantly reduce attrition among teachers. Kaiser (2011) asserted the attrition rate could be cut in half by assigning a mentor to a novice teacher. While mentor teachers help mentees improve teaching, the mentee level of professional competency improves (Huling & Resta, 2001). Boreen et al. (2010) reported the findings of a 1992 Odell study when they stated, “The attrition rate for teachers receiving one year of mentoring was only 16% after four years of teaching, about half the national attrition rate at that time” (p. 7). Also, Boreen et al. (2010) found teachers indicated a higher level of job satisfaction, higher retention, more effectiveness with diverse students, and better problem-solving skills in the area of instruction as a direct result of mentoring.

Additionally, the number of alternatively certified teachers is growing faster than those seeking the traditional route to teaching (Blazer, 2012). These individuals who are entering the field of education are doing so later in life and bring experiences with them that help with classroom management (Muy-Hung & Wing-Ming, 2004). These experiences might include, but are not limited to, military experience, private sector jobs, and raising their own children (Berry, 2010; Blazer, 2012).

Teacher training program staff are looking for ways to improve (Goldhaber & Liddle, 2012). Goldhaber and Liddle (2012) found policymakers ultimately have the most leverage over teacher preparation programs. While individuals are entering the teaching profession through alternative certification programs, most still use the traditional route (Goldhaber & Liddle, 2012). Policymakers select the criteria for licensure and the standards pre-service teachers must meet, so there is little control over who enters a traditional teacher certification program (Goldhaber & Liddle, 2012). Goldhaber and Liddle (2012) supported, "Changing the way teachers in traditional training programs are selected or prepared could significantly influence the teacher workforce" (p. 78).

Woodcock (2011) found teachers had a higher level of efficacy in their training and student teaching experiences than they did after their first years of teaching; however, Woodcock (2011) also stated efficacy levels rose with every year of experience and training after the first year of teaching. This demonstrates a gap between teacher training programs and what goes on in a teacher's first year of teaching. It places a value on the training received while on-the-job (Woodcock, 2011).

Research question two. The second question focused on what teachers perceived to be their level of effectiveness in handling classroom discipline. To answer this overriding question, two questions were asked on the survey and in the interview. One question was whether classroom management would be a reason for teachers to leave the profession. The other was whether classroom management was the hardest part of the teaching job. The results of the survey indicated the most frequent answer of disagree with a 37.70% frequency. To further support the assumption of classroom management being the hardest part of the teaching job, 48.36% of teachers answered they agreed

classroom management would be a reason to leave the teaching profession, with more respondents answering agree and strongly agree than disagree and strongly disagree.

During the interview, two of the interviewees answered they would leave the profession because of classroom management alone. Interviewee I6 stated, "There are days. It depends on the year. Some years there are more bad days than others and in those years, yea, I would and have come close to quitting my job." The data from the interview indicate classroom management would be a reason to leave the classroom along with other issues, but not classroom management alone with a matrix code of 2.3.

The literature supports this finding. According to Thompson (2011), “The failure to manage a classroom successfully is often the reason that even the most dedicated teachers leave education for a less stressful career” (p. v). Multiple surveys have found the same to be true (Thompson, 2011). Early exiting from the education career field is reported to have reached epidemic proportions and has the appearance of being unfixable, according to Gallant and Riley (2014). Pirkle (2011) reported the high rate of teacher attrition is a chronic issue that needs desperate attention. Teachers are leaving education in large numbers, and they are citing the inability to handle classroom management as one of the most common concerns.

Early exiting from the education career field is reported to have reached epidemic proportions and has the appearance of being unfixable, according to Gallant and Riley (2014). However, in a study comprised of teacher interviews, Hamburg (2012) asked teachers what changes could be made to make their jobs easier. Hamburg (2012) cited better mentoring programs, better feedback, and more administrative support. Teachers wanted small groups to visit collegially about issues faced on a daily basis (Hamburg,

2012). Many of these issues were directly related to classroom management (Hamburg, 2012).

Research question three. The third research question asked to what teachers attributed their preparedness to handle classroom management. Within the first three years of teaching, what do teachers perceive as their reasons for being prepared to handle classroom management? The survey had the largest mode of 4, or strongly agree for on-the-job training and for positive student and teacher relationships. On-the-job training had a frequency of 58.20%, and positive student and teacher relationships was at 56.56%. This showed more respondents agreed and strongly agreed than disagreed and strongly disagreed. Engaging lessons were next with 52.07% of respondents agreeing the engaging lessons helped most with classroom management.

In the literature, Malgren et al. (2005) wrote about keeping students feeling good about themselves and feeling worthwhile to maximize learning. If students are receiving attention and are engaged, they are less likely to act out in class or to cause disruptions (Dreikurs & Soltz, 1964). Pawlychka (2012) supported Dreikurs by stating social connection, human interest, and cooperation are fundamental in the behavior of a child and the character development of the child. According to Pawlychka (2012), “The primary principle is fundamental belief that all individuals, including children, must be treated as equals and all relationships must be based on mutual respect” (p. 28). Furthermore, “Effective classroom management increases student engagement, decreases disruptive behaviors, and makes good use of instructional time” (Wang et al., 1994, p. 76).

The results of the interviews that answered the last research question cited experiences outside of the classroom and prior to teaching as reasons for successful preparedness in handling classroom management. A matrix code of 3.3 supported that previous experiences before teaching helped the most with classroom management. Of the six individuals interviewed, five were traditionally certified and one took an alternative route. Two of the interviewees reported being not ready at all, with a matrix code of 4.2.

The literature does not address the issue of experiences prior to teaching making a teacher better or not. It does address the similarities and differences in alternative and traditional certification routes. Typically those teachers who have alternative certification bring with them different experiences than those teachers who have traditional certification. The alternate certification route opens the profession up to those who may have retired from the military, received a degree in a specific content field, or people making a mid-career change who have strong skill sets (Blazer, 2012). According to Blazer (2012), fewer than 3,000 teachers received their certification through alternative means in 1985; however, in 2008, almost 59,000 teachers received alternative route certification.

Implications for Practice

Classroom management has many facets leading to multiple issues for teachers in education. Some of the issues are the same ones that have been dealt with since classroom management research became a phenomenon in the mid-1950s. However, many of these issues are just now beginning to be revealed through research. As

requirements of teacher certification change, new issues in classroom management are being discovered.

One of the issues faced is how to increase a teacher's ability to handle classroom management through mentoring opportunities as early in the career as possible. Increasing feedback from both other teachers and administrators will help teachers to seek help when dealing with issues that are unfamiliar. Supporting teachers in their creation of engaging lessons will aide them in increasing engagement in the classroom and decreasing the number of instances of disruptive classroom behavior. Lastly, providing strategies to teachers to help build and maintain positive relationships with students will help reduce the number of classroom disruptions, increasing efficacy of classroom management.

Recommendations for further research. Valuable knowledge can be gained by doing further research in multiple areas of this study. One area would be the attributes and success rates of traditional and non-traditional certification routes of teachers in the classroom. The ability to handle classroom management is one difference that these two subgroups of teachers share. There are more differences; however, the purpose of this research was to identify those related to classroom management.

As classrooms change and become more technologically enhanced, issues in classroom management that have not yet existed will begin to emerge. Those issues will need to be studied and best practices put into place to acknowledge and handle them. Classroom management cannot ever stop being investigated. Classrooms have changed since the 1950s and will continue to change as long as society changes. From the open concept classroom to the rise and fall of corporeal punishment in schools, further research

is needed to address the changes in classrooms and the new issues that arise in classroom management. Continual monitoring and seeking feedback from teachers in the field of education will allow researchers to gather data so issues can be found. Once new issues in classroom management are found, then changes can be made in policies, procedures, and practices to address them.

Mentoring programs are beneficial to teachers. More research in the area of mentoring programs that support teachers in the area of classroom management needs to be completed and shared with other schools. Creating a bank of best practices in mentoring might help the teacher retention rate. Likewise, feedback was listed as a measure to help teachers feel more effective in their abilities to handle classroom management. Research on effective feedback strategies will help with future training programs of mentors and administrators. Student relationships and engaging lessons should be researched for strategies in creating both. Finding strategies that yield high levels of trust or high levels of engagement in students for teachers would be beneficial in helping with classroom management issues.

To add to this research, a study should be completed on classroom management that follows individual responses to two specific questions. The questions would be, "What teacher training program did you complete?" and, "How well do you feel prepared to handle classroom management?" Following individual responses to both of these questions will help to further the data in this research by pinpointing which certification routes produce teachers who feel as though they are the most confident in handling classroom management issues. Then, practices can be implemented in other preparation

routes that mimic those found in the research. This would allow a best practice or procedure to formulate.

Summary

Teachers have always had to maintain class control while attempting to teach a specific lesson on a topic (Kratochwill, 2011). Weimer (2008) described classroom management as "the provisions and procedures necessary to establish and maintain an environment in which instruction and learning can occur" (p. 1). Classroom management is cited as one of the top reasons teachers leave the profession (Berry, 2010). While there are many ways to address the improvement of classroom management among teachers, a good mentoring program that provides feedback to teachers is perceived by teachers to be one of the best ways to increase efficiency in handling classroom management issues. Engaging lessons and good student and teacher relationships are also perceived to be ways to help with classroom management issues. Data support the prior experiences of teachers help them to feel prepared or unprepared to handle classroom management.

Through the continued study of classroom management and teacher efficacy, new research findings might conclude evidence to help teachers become better managers in the classroom. This evidence can be used to make changes in teacher training programs. These changes, when monitored, might have the chance to impact teacher retention. Data show teachers who leave the profession cite classroom management as a reason. If classroom management is no longer a reason to leave the field of education, then retention rates might change in a positive direction. Keeping high-quality teachers in classrooms benefits the teaching profession and ultimately the students it serves.

Appendix A

Email to Principals

Greetings,

My name is Sean Woods. I am a doctoral student in the Educational Administration program through Lindenwood University. I would like to request permission to conduct research as partial fulfillment to meet requirements set forth by Lindenwood University for my degree. Your participation is very important to my study as it includes teachers from Southwest Missouri school districts.

Please read through the following informed consent. There is a link to the survey at the bottom. By clicking the link, you agree to the informed consent. Thank you so much for your time. I know it is extremely valuable.

Purpose of the Study:
The purpose of this study is to understand the perspectives of teachers who are in their first three years of teaching as it pertains to classroom management.

What will be done:
You will complete a survey, which will take approximately 20 minutes to complete. The survey includes questions about your perceptions of classroom management and preparedness. Survey questions will address your perceptions of your preparedness and effectiveness of classroom management.

Benefits of this Study:
You will be contributing to knowledge of classroom management preparedness.

Risks or discomforts:
No risks or discomforts are anticipated from taking part in this study. If you feel uncomfortable with a question, you can skip that question or withdraw from the study altogether. You are free to quit at any time before you have finished the survey.

Confidentiality:
Your responses will be kept completely confidential. I will NOT know your name from the survey. Only the researcher will see your individual survey responses. If I use quotations from your responses, I will NOT include any names or nicknames you use, nor will I include identifying names along with the quotations.

Decision to quit at any time:
Your participation is voluntary; you are free to withdraw your participation from this study at any time. If you do not want to continue, you can simply not respond to the survey. You also may choose to skip any questions you do not wish to answer.

How the findings will be used:
The results of the study will be used for scholarly purposes only. The results from the study will be presented as a dissertation paper and will benefit the study teacher preparation.

Contact information:
If you have any questions about the study, you may contact my advisor Dr. Patricia Conner, Lindenwood University, by email at pconner@lindenwood.edu.

By beginning the survey, you acknowledge you have read this information and agree to participate in this survey, with the knowledge you are free to withdraw your participation at any time without penalty.

Thank you again for completing this survey.

[redacted]

Sincerely,
Sean Woods

Appendix B

Lindenwood University

School of Education

209 S. Kingshighway
St. Charles, Missouri 63301

Informed Consent for Participation in Research Activities

"Classroom Management: Beginning Teachers Perceptions of Preparedness"

Principal Investigator ____Sean Woods_____

Telephone: [redacted] E-mail: saw185@lindenwood.edu

Participant _____ Contact Info_____

1. You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Sean Woods under the guidance of Dr. Patricia Conner. The purpose of this research is to obtain information about teachers' perceptions of classroom management preparedness after completing one to three years of teaching.

2. Your participation will involve:

A) Answering questions to an online survey pertaining to preparedness in classroom management. This is a onetime survey for all teachers who have completed their first through third years of teaching.

OR

Answering questions in the form of an interview pertaining to preparedness in classroom management. This is for teachers in their first through third years of teaching.

B) The amount of time involved in your participation will be approximately 20 minutes. Approximately 37-111 participants will be involved in this research.

3. There are no anticipated risks associated with this research.

4. There are no direct benefits for you participating in this study. However, your participation will contribute to the knowledge about the perceptions of teachers in their preparedness to handle classroom management.

5. Your participation is voluntary and you may choose not to participate in this research study or to withdraw your consent at any time. You may choose not to answer any questions that you do not want to answer. You will NOT be penalized in any way should you choose not to participate or to withdraw.

6. We will do everything we can to protect your privacy. As part of this effort, your identity will not be revealed in any publication or presentation that may result from this study and the information collected will remain in the possession of the investigator in a safe location.

7. If you have any questions or concerns regarding this study, or if any problems arise, you may call the Investigator, Sean Woods at [redacted] or the Supervising Faculty, Dr. Patricia Conner [redacted]. You may also ask questions of or state concerns regarding your participation to the Lindenwood Institutional Review Board (IRB) through contacting Dr. Jann Weitzel, Vice President for Academic Affairs at 636-949-4846.

I have read this consent form and have been given the opportunity to ask questions. I will also be given a copy of this consent form for my records. I consent to my participation in the research described above.

_____	_____
Participant's Signature Date	Participant's Printed Name
SEAN WOODS 4-2-14	SEAN WOODS
Signature of Principal Investigator Date	Investigator Printed Name

Appendix C

Survey Instrument

1. What is your age?

- 21 to 24
- 25 to 34
- 35 to 44
- 45 to 54
- 55 to 64
- 65 or Older
- 75 or older

2. What is your gender?

- Female
- Male

3. How many years have you been teaching?

- 1
- 2
- 3
- 4-6
- 7 or more

4. Which program best describes your certification route?

- Online Program
- Traditional (four year university program)
- ABCTE
- MAT
- Temporary Certification
- Hardship
- Doctoral

5. I was prepared for classroom management prior to teaching.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

6. After one year of teaching, I was adequately prepared for classroom management.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

7. I am prepared to handle classroom management issues for next school year.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

8. I am prepared to handle student discipline issues as they arise.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

9. My school district has prepared me the most to handle classroom management issues.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

10. My school district continues to help with strategies to handle classroom management issues.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

11. My undergraduate or degree program has helped me handle classroom management the best.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

12. On the job training has helped me the most with classroom management.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

13. A mentoring program helped me the most with classroom management issues.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

14. Parental communication helps with classroom management issues.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

15. Administrative communication helps most with classroom management issues.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

16. Engaging lessons help the most with classroom management issues.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

17. Teacher/Student relationships help the most with classroom management issues.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree

- Strongly Agree

18. Classroom assessments help most with classroom management issues.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

19. Classroom management would be a reason for leaving the teaching profession.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

20. Classroom management is the hardest part of your job.

- Strongly Disagree
- Disagree
- Agree
- Strongly Agree

Done

Appendix D

Interview Instrument

1. How long have you been teaching?
2. What certification program did you use for your teacher certification?
3. How well do you feel you were prepared to handle classroom management issues prior to teaching?
4. How well do you feel you were prepared to handle classroom management issues after accepting your first teaching job?
5. How well do you feel prepared to handle classroom management next year?
6. How well has your current school district prepared you to handle classroom management issues?
7. Are you offered strategies to handle classroom management issues in your current school district?
8. How well did your undergraduate program help you with classroom management issues?
9. How well did on the job training help you with classroom management issues?
10. How well did a mentoring program help you with classroom management issues?
11. How does parental communication affect classroom management?
12. How does administrative communication affect classroom management?
13. How do the student/teacher relationships affect classroom management?
14. Do assessments affect classroom management?
15. Would you ever leave the teaching profession because of classroom management issue?

Appendix E

IRB Permission Certificate

LINDENWOOD

LINDENWOOD UNIVERSITY ST. CHARLES, MISSOURI

DATE:	February 5, 2015
TO:	Sean Woods
FROM:	Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board
STUDY TITLE:	[703638-1] Classroom Management: Beginning Teachers Perceptions of Preparedness
IRB REFERENCE #:	
SUBMISSION TYPE:	New Project
ACTION:	APPROVED
APPROVAL DATE:	February 5, 2015
EXPIRATION DATE:	
REVIEW TYPE:	Expedited Review

Thank you for your submission of New Project materials for this research project. Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board has APPROVED your submission. This approval is based on an appropriate risk/benefit ratio and a study design wherein the risks have been minimized. All research must be conducted in accordance with this approved submission.

This submission has received Expedited Review based on the applicable federal regulation.

Please remember that informed consent is a process beginning with a description of the study and insurance of participant understanding followed by a signed consent form. Informed consent must continue throughout the study via a dialogue between the researcher and research participant. Federal regulations require each participant receive a copy of the signed consent document.

Please note that any revision to previously approved materials must be approved by this office prior to initiation. Please use the appropriate revision forms for this procedure.

All SERIOUS and UNEXPECTED adverse events must be reported to this office. Please use the appropriate adverse event forms for this procedure. All FDA and sponsor reporting requirements should also be followed.

All NON-COMPLIANCE issues or COMPLAINTS regarding this project must be reported promptly to the IRB.

This project has been determined to be a project. Based on the risks, this project requires continuing review by this committee on an annual basis. Please use the completion/amendment form for this procedure. Your documentation for continuing review must be received with sufficient time for review and continued approval before the expiration date of .

Please note that all research records must be retained for a minimum of three years.

If you have any questions, please contact Robyne Elder at (314) 566-4884 or relder@lindenwood.edu. Please include your study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

If you have any questions, please send them to IRB@lindenwood.edu. Please include your project title and reference number in all correspondence with this committee.

This letter has been electronically signed in accordance with all applicable regulations, and a copy is retained within Lindenwood University Institutional Review Board's records.

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Vita

Sean Woods started his career at Hollister School District in Hollister, Missouri. After teaching social studies and sponsoring several activities, while helping to coach when needed, he began a career in education administration as an assistant principal. After five years as a building administrator, Sean moved to the central office where he currently serves as the Assistant Superintendent of District Operations for the Hollister R-V School District in Hollister, Missouri.

Sean graduated from Drury University in 2005 with a Bachelor's of Science in Education in Springfield, Missouri. In 2009, Sean graduated with a Master's Degree in Educational Administration from Missouri State University in Springfield, Missouri. He finished his Specialist's Degree in Educational Administration at the same institution by working on it simultaneously with his Master's Degree in 2010. Sean started on his Doctorate in Educational Administration in 2011 at Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri.

Sean has not completed any work or educational endeavor alone. He has had a wife of 13 years to help, guide, and support him. While attending school and working through a career, Sean has achieved his most proud goal—to be blessed by becoming a father to good-natured, kind-hearted, and beautiful children: Aden, Easton, and Aubrey.