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The Effectiveness of Disciplinary Interventions in School-Based Counseling

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THE EFFECTIVENESS OF DISCIPLINARY INTERVENTIONS IN SCHOOL-

BASED COUNSELING

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A Project

Presented to the

Faculty of

California State University,

San Bernardino

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In Partial Fulfillment

of the Requirements for the Degree

Master of Social Work

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by

Dakota Blue Bates

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ABSTRACT

This project discusses the effectiveness of disciplinary interventions in school-based counseling. Participants were selected from elementary and middle school sites in a school district in Southern California. Qualitative interviews were conducted to give this researcher additional knowledge in the field of school-based counseling. The audio of the interviews that were conducted were recorded, transcribed, and then analyzed by this researcher. The knowledge of the participants and their unique experiences operating with a wide range of students in many years of experience allowed for a more comprehensive understanding of what intervention strategies are most beneficial to students and where schools and counselors can improve in providing counseling services to students. The results consisted of the following eight themes: Defining Discipline, Measuring Success in Interventions, Strategies in Interventions, Theoretical Orientations, Commonalities between Frequently Counseled Students, Communication within the School, Communication between Counselors, and Areas Where Schools are Lacking. Contributions to social work practice in a micro and macro sense are discussed. Findings were given to California State University, San Bernardino and were provided to the school sites and counselors utilized for this study.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

This is dedicated to every child that passed through the schools that I worked at and to the support systems around them that allowed them to grow.

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CHAPTER ONE

ASSESSMENT

Introduction

The topic of the research and the anticipated accomplishments of this research are addressed in this chapter. Following that is the chosen paradigm of research and the reasoning behind the selection of that paradigm. Next, a literature review is discussed focused on the issues presented in the course of research such as: populations most at risk of disciplinary interventions, how discipline is handled at schools, the communication gap regarding resource's availability and their use, and the negative impact of discipline interventions with students. This review aims to expand upon how these topics will relate to the research directly and indirectly. This chapter also features the theoretical orientation of the study and the contribution that this study will make to the field of social work will be discussed to close out this chapter.

Research Focus and/or Question

This research project focused on the interventions and disciplinary methods which are being used on elementary and middle school students that are referred to a school-based counselor, assistant principal, or other administrator. Disciplinary interventions in schools can fall under a few categories. These were defined with each school within the research as to the exact steps of discipline. In general, there are in-class redirections, which

eventually lead to being referred to the front office, parent contact, detention, or suspension (both in-school and at-home) depending on the severity and frequency of the perceived misbehavior. There are also meetings with a school-based counselor, or whoever at the school site is serving in this role as an intermediary between the student and those within the greater school system to rectify whatever behavior or situation has been caused by the behavior.

The research attempted to discover what interventions were being used and the success or failures of those interventions for the students, both in terms of presenting behavioral concerns, academic performance, peer interaction, and relations with authority figures. In addition, this research looked at what further aid or changes are necessary to result in more positive outcomes for students within this school district.

Paradigm and Rationale for Chosen Paradigm

The paradigm used in this research was the post positivist paradigm. Morris (2016) states that, in a post positivist paradigm, there is an assumption that valid data can only be accumulated by a researcher entering the natural settings of people and interviewing and observing real human subject in their environment and that data is words rather than in numbers (p. 249). In the case of discipline interventions in a school setting, this rationale aligns well as the research looked at what interventions are being implemented and the positive or negative outcomes of those intervention strategies. The complex and unique nature of how discipline impacts a given student in a school lent itself to the

viewpoint that reality is found in natural settings in order to give each experience equal weight in the research. There may be one student whose behavior can be curtailed by a simple redirect, but another may have a negative reaction to an in-class redirect and move towards proceeding up to the higher levels of discipline. People react differently to different interventions on different days and from different people. Qualitative data collected in a naturalistic setting, as this research did, falls under the same branch.

Literature Review

This literature review outlines key takeaways from several different areas of discipline in modern schools. This covers populations that are most at risk for forms of discipline in schools and how the faculty view their role once discipline occurs, a general history of discipline practices in relation to where the status is presently, the negative impacts that over-discipline and disciplinary interventions have on students, and the perceptions that administrations and counselors have with regards to resource's availability and use with regards to discipline.

Populations at Risk of Discipline

There is an exceedingly large population of children that are being woefully mishandled during their development by being over-disciplined in an attempt at masking issues instead of resolving them. Students that are disciplined in schools tend to be from the backgrounds that are most in need of being empowered. Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin and Moore-Thomas (2011) found that "students from nonintact families, males, and African American students

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were more likely to be referred to the school counselor for behavioral concerns." (p. 180).

When children are perceived as disruptive, there is a much higher chance that they will be shuttled through the school instead of being empowered to improve. Instead of sacrificing individual time to work through behavioral issues and build a relationship to improve the situation long term, there tends to be this short-term focus on curbing the behavior for the good of the rest of the group in the short term. Bryan, Day-Vines, Griffin and Moore-Thomas (2011) found that teachers doing this referring to counselors are reliant on the counselors alone to fix these problems (p. 180).

This focus rarely solves anything and the behavior often continues recurring until the year is over, and then that difficult child is sent to the next year with the same problems and a file in the administrative offices that is a little bit thicker every semester. The primary way for schools to deal with this behavior is through discipline.

<u>Disciplinary Methods History</u>

When going through primary or secondary education alongside the natural human development of children, there are going to be inevitable speed bumps in behavior for each individual. Over the course of the last century, the scope of the world has changed. Technology, medicine, widespread social movements leading to gains in equality for ethnic minorities and women, global trade and communication, vast immigration changes and dramatic changes in the

demographic makeup of the United States. The children entering America's

education system have changed, the people teaching and administrating these

systems have changed, the parents have changed. However, and somewhat

shockingly, disciplinary practices and policies on the whole have not changed in

a notable way since the 18th century (Cameron, 2006, p. 15).

Negative Impacts of Discipline

These children being left to fend for themselves can be empowered to

become better human beings and succeed in the classroom if given the

necessary resources. This becomes much more difficult, as the result of

discipline often impacts the individual being disciplined negatively instead of

leading to any positive change. This was shown in an article by Cobb-Clark,

Kassenboehmer, Le, McVicar and Zhang (2015) stating that, "Most descriptive

analyses show that suspended students tend to have poorer outcomes than

students who have not been suspended" (p. 377).

Cameron (2006) delivers research on the stigmatization and negative self-

image that results from students being referred to disciplinary measures and it

shows that once a student is given a label of displaying negative behavior, even

if just for a single incident, the student begins associating that with concepts of

"failing the teacher", "internalizing negative messaging", and "developing a

negative self-identity" (p. 16).

<u>Lack of Resources and Cohesive Planning</u>

One aspect of leading to this leaning on discipline is the fact that a great number of schools do not have a developed plan for therapeutic interventions in cases where students are referred to counseling for disciplinary reasons. As Bye, Shepard, Partridge, and Alvarez (2009) showed, there is a lack of evidence on administrators and school based social workers agreeing upon what services should be provided in their schools and how they should be provided, stating that "principals were not satisfied with the quantity of available school social work time" and "student groups and parent counseling were wanted more frequently (98)". There is a need for better communication between counselors or those acting in those roles and the administrators.

Theoretical Orientation

The theoretical orientation of this research is role theory. Role theory revolves around the idea that a human being's behavior is highly influenced by their perceived social identity for the situation they are in. This theory aligns with the research being done in this study because the students being referred to these school based counselors and disciplinarians are acting in roles that are related to the environment they are in. The negative perception the students are obtaining by being disciplined create these roles within a school setting, which then can lead to them acting out in continued behavior due to being subconsciously assigned these roles in their classroom settings in response to discipline. The interventions of the counselors and disciplinarians in the school

setting can influence these roles and lead to changed perceptions within those school settings in a negative or positive manner. Basically, a student will behave negatively if their expected role is to behave negatively and vice versa for positive behavior.

Potential Contribution of Study to Micro and/or Macro Social Work Practice

This research has the opportunity to contribute to social work practice by revealing more about how students frequently being referred to administrators for behavioral issues are responding to the interventions being used by those in position to dole out discipline or service the students in counseling. There is also the opportunity to look at what counselors and administrators need in order to provide more positive outcomes. This will have potential ramifications on both macro and micro practice. On a micro level, it could give those individuals in counseling or disciplinary roles in school settings insight into intervention methods that are effective and ineffective in their practice. On a macro level, it could potentially lead to a more unified approach to way that this level of practice is done in school systems, reduce over-disciplining of students and show evidence that a more collaborative effort, both between students and counselors and between counselors and other counselors, can result in more effective selection of interventions.

Summary

In the assessment stage of this project, the focus of research was introduced which is the effectiveness of disciplinary interventions in school based counseling and administration by counselors or whomever is operating in that role in the administration of schools in a Southern California school system. Next, the post positivist paradigm and the rationale for using it was illustrated. Then, a literature review laid out the guiding points for the direction of the research, where a need for a revamping of disciplinary procedures was presented, a look at the conditions in the school systems related to discipline and the inequality that there is to underprivileged communities and populations in schools, some of the most common interventions and methods used by those in disciplinary roles were outlined. Next, a theoretical orientation heading into the study was discussed, which was role theory. Finally, ways in which this research could potentially contribute to social work practice at a micro and macro level were presented.

CHAPTER TWO

ENGAGEMENT

Introduction

In this second chapter, the engagement stage of the project is explained. This explanation addresses the locations at which the research is taking place and the engagement strategies for developing relationships with those in positions of power at those sites to carry out the process of the research. Personal preparation is addressed after the engagement strategies, which will then leads into diversity, ethical or political issues that may arise while the study is being conducted. Finally, the role of technology is explained.

Study Site

The study sites for this research were schools in the Inland Empire in Southern California. There were schools from elementary and middle school levels chosen through purposive sampling to get the most diverse range of students possible. This school district serves a total of 45 elementary, middle, high schools, and adult education facilities in the district. Of these 45 schools, four were selected to be included in the study. The clients of these sites were the students and parents or guardians of the students enrolled in the schools, totaling over 40,000 students at all levels. The gatekeepers to this site were the administrative officials at the individual schools, as well as the school-based

counselors, front office staff and other decision makers in the schools and school district.

<p style="text-align: center;">Engagement Strategies for Gatekeepers at Research Sites</p>

In order to gain access to these study sites and the participants in the study, there was work done with the gatekeepers at the sites selected. For the school system, this included the principals at each of the schools, or any other high-ranking administrators. Each principal or leading administrator at a selected school was approached about the concept of the research and the intention behind it in either a face-to-face meeting or through e-mail or phone correspondence. This meeting or correspondence was set up in a formal manner through either a personal visit to the school to set up the meeting or through e-mail or phone contact. During this meeting, the researcher sought to gain an introductory understanding of how discipline and counseling is handled at the school by asking for resources or data that the school has available on discipline able for me to view, collaborating with the principal or counselor and asking follow-up questions to clarify the process the school has with discipline. The researcher also gave due diligence to convince the principal or counselor that this study was worth carrying out and show why they felt that the three selected schools were good choices to carry out the study. This was due to their diverse populations of students, varying age range, and the researcher's belief in their missions as schools of wanting to better students and communities. Once the necessary steps are taken to gain approval of the research, a similar pattern of

engagement with each counselor or whomever is in an administrative role with the disciplinary or counseling work in the school was pursued, with a face-to-face meeting being ideal.

The participants in the study were given necessary information to follow up on any questions they may have had about the process and all formalities regarding informed consent, distribution of information and contact information were handled.

Self-Preparation

While in the beginning stages of this research work, an understanding of the level of behavior that the school-based counselors, school social workers or those acting in a similar role were dealing with in their work from the students was gained. For example, what was leading the children that are misbehaving to arrive in the office of the disciplinarian during school and how often that it was happening?

Next, information will be gathered about what the intervention process is in these situations and if there are any prevention techniques being utilized to try and address whatever concerns are displaying themselves beforehand.

The extent to which these three specific schools possess resources like counseling offices, therapists, disciplinary plans, specialized programs for those more "difficult" children and other resources and tools available as preventative measures instead of reactionary measures will be identified.

Another means of self-preparation was being aware that in the post positivist paradigm, the problem focus and research question, theoretical orientation and other aspects of the study are fluid as more information is gathered. Being aware of this helped the researcher remain open to letting the research live its own life and not try to force what the researcher feels should happen onto what is actually happening. This was accomplished by taking a period of time and decompressing before and after interviews or collaboration to assess if the focus was still in the right direction and collaborating with the researcher's advisor if questions arose.

<div align="center">Diversity Issues</div>

The role as a researcher and the participant's roles in their professional work, as well as their roles in the interview process inherently created some diversity issues that were partially addressed prior to ever starting the engagement process, and were continually taken into consideration over the course of the research. The researcher was educated on the populations of students in the Fontana Unified School District as a starting point prior to initial and formal engagement with the schools themselves.

In the interview process, being aware of personal biases and personal appearance helped mitigate issues of appearance, assumptions and norms and appropriate behavior. By maintaining a professional relationship and appearance at all times in contacting anyone involved with the study (gatekeepers,

administrators, front office staff, students, teachers, social workers), these issues were reduced.

Ethical Issues

According to Morris (2016), all research sponsored by California State University, San Bernardino must undergo a Human Subjects Review process that is overseen by the Institutional Review Board, where the potential for harm is reviewed using federal guidelines (1515-1516).

Issues of moral, competency, personal, and societal values may arise in the course of a study. This was evident by the fact that the counselors being interviewed were professionals and sharing about their performance and strategies in their field of work. That reality covered most of the issues above because the professionals acting in these roles had personal feelings about how that work was being done and how effective they are in doing the work. The issue of privacy and confidentiality arose, and had to be clearly communicated up front in any interview and through continuous reminders during the research process. By informing each and every participant of the nature of the research, the reasoning behind it, the goals of it, the methods by which those goals are being accomplished, and the procedures in place, the ethical issues above were addressed. The data collected was kept confidential by remaining in the possession of only those whom the participants are aware of and the participants will be reminded of this. The recorded interviews were kept on the researcher's personal electronic files and securely stored in the researcher's cabinet when not

in use. The files were recorded and deleted once the study's use for them was at its end.

Due to the level of involvement that a researcher and the study participants have with one another, there needed to be clearly established boundaries and procedures in place for when the actual subject interview was taking place, both in beginning and end. To address this potential issue, there was a formal beginning and ending to every interview that was noted and understood by both the interview and interviewee, as well as a set time period for the interview to take place. If an interview should go longer or shorter than that time, there was a clearly communicated note with the interviewee to obtain consent to continue or end the interview. This also extended to general consultation, if there was information that became a part of the survey, it was only done with the clear consent of the interviewee, gate keeper, or administrative party.

<center>Political Issues</center>

Keeping an awareness that there was not a team effort taking place in the data collection stage between the researcher's role as the researcher and the interview participants in their professional role was a political issue that arose in post-positivist research (Morris, 2016, p. 1708). While working in these interviews, the counselors could have tried to guide the research to say that certain interventions were either ineffective or effective based on their experience. To combat this changing the research, the researcher was reminded

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that the participants were being paid to do this work by a system that they did not have personal control over, and the work being done by the researcher was not related to that system or done to benefit that system. Also, the professionals in those positions may have seen the research as a way of risking making them look incompetent or ineffective at their jobs, so there needed to be measures taken to reassure them of the confidentiality and safety within the research. These measures included a reminder before and after each interview, clear communication throughout the data collection process and reminders and updates on the status of the recorded data.

The Role of Technology in Engagement

The most notable use of technology in the engagement process was using it as a recording instrument in the interviewing process, which enabled the research to be kept in its true form and not be paraphrased by the memory of what happened or in notes. During the engagement process, phone calls and e-mail and coordinating calendar scheduling were utilized as well. These served as tools to give the researcher and those involved in the research the ability to communicate quickly and efficiently, as well as help navigate any scheduling conflicts or time-management issues that arose in the engagement phase. Using e-mail and phone calls also allowed the research to try and reach as many schools as possible in a narrower time frame then there would have been using face-to-face discussion to set these interviews and consultations up

Summary

In this chapter, the engagement stage in the project was explained. This stage included an overview of the study sites that were chosen and the methods of engagement with the gate keepers of the study site. Following that, there was a guide through the self-preparation process that occurred before the engagement phase, during the engagement phase and throughout the research process. Then, issues relating to diversity, ethical and political factors in the research were pointed out and remedies for those issues were discussed. Finally, the role of technology in the research, both pre-engagement and during engagement was explained.

CHAPTER THREE

IMPLEMENTATION

Introduction

In this chapter, the implementation stage of the research is addressed. First, the participants of the study are outlined, as well as how these participants were selected to participate in the research. Next, the data gathering, phases of data collection, and the recording and analysis of the data are explained.

Study Participants

The participants of this study were school counselors or assistant principals in four elementary and middle schools in a town in Southern California. These were the people most likely to be equipped with the information needing to be collected. The individuals who are seeing which intervention techniques best serve children with disciplinary issues, in addition to how the children served are generally handled in these schools and how interventions that have been used in the past have impacted their academic, behavioral, and classroom performance. The participants were individuals with, at minimum, bachelor degrees in human service related fields. They were school district employees who lived in the surrounding area of the schools selected. These individuals have worked in school settings for a considerable number of years with extensive experience with disciplinary interventions and managing relationships and conflicts with children, parents, and administrators.

Selection of Participants

In this qualitative research, purposive sampling, specifically typical case sampling, was used to select the participants in the study. Morris (2016) states that typical case sampling describes an issue to people unfamiliar with it and gives a profile of the experiences of people involved (p. 2556). To try and discover these experiences, school based counselors and/or school administrators acting in similar roles related to disciplinary procedures and interventions were interviewed.

This fit with the research focus in this project, as the interventions in discipline and the effectiveness of those being taken by school counselors or administrators acting in that role are generally unknown and the sample of participants that were chosen was done with a purpose.

In the school system, this selection included those individuals acting in those roles for elementary and middle schools in the Fontana School District, so that there was a diverse and large sample of data to gather from people acting in roles in many different settings and communities within the school district. To select these individuals, this researcher used prior access and contacts that were made working with the Fontana School District to make initial contact with these individuals and used those relationships as a method of establishing trust going into the process of gathering and collecting data. The goal of selecting individuals in these roles at elementary, middle and high schools in the school district was geared towards getting a complete picture of disciplinary interventions at multiple

age levels of students and to see if there are similarities or differences between the interventions used at different levels of ages and the level of communication between those acting in those roles at different sites.

Data Gathering

The qualitative data gathered in this project was done through interviews with the selected school counselors or school administrators acting in roles of doling out discipline and guidance. While trying to discover what intervention techniques work with school-based counselors or administrators on children who are sent to the office by teachers or other administrators in the school, this researcher conducted a series of interviews designed to gather and analyze this information.

These interviews included a variety of categories of questions relating to the effectiveness of certain interventions in school based counseling and disciplinary work. They included descriptive questions, where a general overview of the disciplinary and intervention methods was sought after, as well as background information pertaining to student populations, patterns in discipline and raw data relating to these topics. There was also both structured and contrast questions asked in the interviews, where the participants expanded upon the questions with their personal experiences, opinions and strategies in their work as counselors and disciplinary agents.

The setting of these interviews was in the schools where these participants work and was arranged in the engagement process. The interviews

lasted roughly 45 minutes and were recorded by the researcher. This was agreed upon prior to the interview and the subjects were reminded about this on the day of the interview, along with issues pertaining to confidentiality and informed consent.

In addition to those interviews, the literature review and associated research on the subject of discipline in schools and the impact it has on the development of students served as another form of data collection in the post positivist paradigm. Including work and research that has been previously done gave a comparison, as well as a bit of a guide in how to structure interviews in the capacity of this sort of research

Phases of Data Collection

There are two primary stages of data collection in the post positivist paradigm with qualitative data. The first being the interviews of the participants, which included the recording of those interviews along with the process of the interview itself. Once the interviews were completed, the transcription process was the next phase. During this, there was a transcript made from the recording of the interview and that was where the recording process takes place.

These interviews included descriptive questions geared towards collecting broad data about topics like the number of students being seen on a daily, monthly, yearly basis, data collection for disciplinary statistics like suspension, detention, work study. The interview question also looked to gain a better understanding of the day-to-day strategies of the individuals operating in these

roles and the interworking they deal with in the school district, amongst peers and with teachers and students. Structured questions were used in the interviews to clarify on the finer details of the topics discussed prior. This, along with the contrast questions, were used to hone in on the specifics of how these individuals develop and apply their styles of disciplinary interventions and how they perceive the effectiveness of these interventions. This researcher also inquired about what metrics the individuals use to measure effectiveness. Other follow-up questions were included, and this researcher made it a point to remain aware of the personal biases of both parties in the course of these interviews and the importance of informed consent.

Data Recording

The data in this research was recorded after each interview with a participating party was finished. This researcher recorded this data via an audio recorder on a computer. This process was made clear to each participant with the terms of informed consent and necessary signatures were obtained prior to this agreed upon recording session. Once the interviews concluded, the data was put into a narrative journal. Morris (2016) informs that these journals have a purpose in the research and how the research will move forward (775). One purpose was committed to the detailing the themes in research and its development over the course of each interview and the other was a reflective exercise to keep each interview in perspective for the researcher.

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Data Analysis

The qualitative data from the interviews was taken and analyzed from a bottom up approach. This approach allowed for the information collected to be made into communicable data related to the research instead of solely clumps of quotes and ideas. To complete this approach, it was necessary to follow the steps of open coding, axial coding and selective coding. First, open coding was done by breaking up the content of the interviews into sections relating to the themes of the answers that are given to the questions that are asked. During this process, smaller and more specific sections of the interviews were noted to closely detail and attempt to add context to these answers that were given. Some examples of open coding were the themes of communication with students, parent or home life, stressors at school and home, struggles within the roles of counselors, and levels of discipline.

Next, the axial coding allowed for the organization of common themes that were developed during the open coding process. This was further present in the selective coding, which was carried out by creating tables to demonstrate themes that were drawn from the answers given in the course of the interviews.

The last stage in a bottom-up approach to analyzing this qualitative data was a conditional matrix. This is a way to link to human experiences, which is closely tied to this work because school-based counseling is all about the human experience for the students and the counselors. The levels of individual, family,

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group, organization (school in this case), and community would all be addressed in the interviews and different levels of coding.

Summary

In this chapter of this project, the implementation stage of the research was explained. This began with the layout of the participants in the study and the selection method of those participants in the post positivist paradigm. After that, the process of data gathering, phases of data collection, data recording strategies and data analysis were all covered with regards to the research proposal.

CHAPTER FOUR

EVALUATION

Introduction

This chapter addresses the findings of this study done through a qualitative lens. The first step of this process is presenting the findings of the interviews that were conducted. This is done through the data being transcribed by the researcher, and analyzed through the development of themes and categories within those findings. The second step is interpreting the data. The final step is a discussion related to the implications that these findings will have on macro and micro social work practice. The chapter's final section is a summary.

Data Analysis

Defining Discipline

One important element found in having the counselors from the four different school sites was their differing definitions of discipline within their work and how they apply discipline in their work. Three of the four school sites are overseen by counselors that view discipline as a training and education opportunity. Below is a table of direct quotes about those definitions.

Table 1. Direct Quotes about Defining Discipline

Participant #	Direct Quote About Defining Discipline
#1	Correction with love. Because a lot of our kids, come to us and simply there is no structure. There's no structure in the home. In my years of experience, I watched the home disintegrate. And whatever home is. What is the norm for that child? Because what is normal for me, are not maybe for you or is not anything I even thought of 30 years ago. As to what I'm seeing now, it is scary as heck to see it. I mean to say, structure. Kids needing structure. Kids needing love. Kids needing attention. (May, 2018)
#2	So, discipline is when a student is not following school expectations and we need to provide them with a consequence. So, a consequence could be sitting in for recess and doing things like chores around the campus. Discipline is pretty much a consequence of letting the kid know, "You messed up". This is what your consequence is. There is positive discipline and negative discipline. So, over at Cypress, we believe in more of a positive discipline, such as: making an apology letter, a re-think letter, sitting in at recess. That's the positive behavioral instructional support school. So, you can go about it in a positive way or a negative way just depending on how you want to handle it. They're finding out that the positive way is having more changing and better effects on the kiddos with their behavior. (May, 2018)
#3	Discipline, to me, is a training tool for a student. So, it's a teaching tool for them to understand what they did was wrong as well as understand that they need to make better choices for themselves. So that's where the discipline comes from. It's being

	able to teach them the wrong, the right, and educate them on choices. (May, 2018)

Measuring Success in Interventions

An additional theme that arose from the conducted interviews were the ways in which success is measured in their interventions. Interviewees discussed rates of suspension, the reactions of parents and teachers, seeing positive change, developing new skills, and ensuring the students feel empowered. Below is a table of direct quotes about those measurements of successful interventions.

Table 2. Direct Quotes about Measuring Success of Interventions

Participant #	Direct Quote about Measuring Success of Interventions
#2	I just looked up our numbers yesterday. (The students) that have four or more (disciplinary referrals), we only have 8 kiddos. We have had zero suspensions this year. And just four years ago, there were 36. So, you want to look at suspension rates, attendance rates, and referral rates, grades, things like that. That's how you would measure if your discipline plan is working or not. (May, 2018)
#2	Parents, the teachers. Today, for example, because we only have two weeks off to school, I'm calling the parents. I asked them "Have you seen an improvement?" and, with my kindergartner, the mom just said a half an hour ago, she goes "He's talking with me more at home and I've been hearing from the teacher less. So, it's working. Thank you so much. Will you be starting off with you next year?"

	I said "Clean slate next year. Let's give them a clean slate" So, that's what I say is a successful intervention and when the kids run up to me screaming "Miss Marcy, Miss Marcy. I love you. Thank you." Those are your rewards. How to account for a job well done. That's what keeps me going. (May, 2018)
#3	The effectiveness comes, I think, from the result of the non-recurring activities. So, whatever's going on with the students, whatever disciplinary action was given. Checking back in with them afterwards and having the conversations again regarding their choices and then I keep checking in with them. The other thing here, we do at this site, is for whatever disciplinary action is given, if it's like suspension stuff or if there's other concerns we have, we ask our counselors to follow up with it. With our counselors, that becomes a student who is on more of a Tier 3 type of thing with the interventions with those counselors to kind of check-in more often to see what is going on. To the effectiveness would be if that student's grades are coming up. If we don't see that behavior problem with the kids not getting sent out of class or getting phone calls from teachers. (May, 2018)
#3	A successful intervention is one when we see a positive change in the student. And usually it is a student being able to accept and be willing to work with you. So, I think the successful intervention is just, I think, is successful because that student is willing to break down some of their walls and make some changes to help them with their lives that could really help them to not...throw them under a bus and get them in trouble. Whatever the case may be. (May, 2018)

#1	I think that it's important that any intervention that kids are not made to feel unimportant or you know just thrown away. And that sometimes happens. I've seen that happen with some teachers. Or with way they do things in class. "Okay, you acted this way, so, "Boom. you're out of my classroom". And had the environment been different with the teacher and a little bit more love with the teacher. The kid may have been okay. You know, they settle down, going to go do what they need to do. So, I think so much that is a relationship thing. (May, 2018)
#3	I think we need for them to be apply the strategies you give them. So, you know, teaching them a life skill of being able to, with a couple...One of the groups I did a couple years ago, it was a life-skills group because we had these students and they just kind of barge through everything. Like, they're just like, no respect for any kind of anything. But, we were able to work that semester and just saw a difference with the students using manners and being to adjust themselves. Realize that the world doesn't revolve around them and they have to stop. They have to use acceptable manners, use social cues and stuff like that. So, seeing those things, those tools you are teaching them be in place to help them

<u>Strategies in Interventions</u>

Another theme that arose in the process of analyzing the data from the interviews was the wide range of strategies taken in interventions by administrators, teachers, counselors and the school district. The tiered system of counseling that exists in the district was a commonality. Tier 1 being the multi-

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tiered level of support, which includes all students. Tier 2 are students that are focused upon inside of groups and Tier 3 are 1-5% of students who need additional support in the forms of individual counseling or regularly scheduled sessions with school-based counselors or other administrators. Direct quotes on engagement, rapport building, assessment and in-session intervention strategies can be found below.

Table 3. Direct Quotes about Intervention Strategies

Participant #	Direct Quotes about Intervention Strategies
#3	We're not required as counselors to be outside for lunch duty. We would like to be out there as counselors; but it's not required. We try to go out there at least one of the lunches. So, the students see us and we encourage the students to come up and talk to us and ask questions then. We wander around ourselves, trying to get students engaged, having different conversations with them and a lot of the kids will just come in and say hello and they know that's like their check-in.
#1	Building that relationship immediately if it's somebody new that I've not spoken with before. Taking it that I am concerned for where you're at, what you've done, what's happened or is this true? This doesn't sound like you, but is this true? And if it is, hey, you know what. Lay it here on the imaginary table in my office and let's talk about it". Relation, just building whatever I can spin off as a positive first with the person. Or even if it is something they are wearing or their hair, blue or pink. Whatever it is. That little bit of compliment connection in their first couple moments.

Participant #	Direct Quotes about Intervention Strategies
#3	Middle school is more...you can have more conversations with them. So, there's that teaching piece, but that teaching piece is through the conversations. Versus the elementary is a lot more of teaching and simple communication to kind of get them to understand what's going on and how things are supposed to operate. So, I think just kind of breaking down to the basics for the elementary. And middle school kids, although you have to break down the basics, you're able to have a conversation with them and they kind of have an idea of their feelings a little bit more than some of the elementary students do.
#2	I want to build that trust and that rapport with them. What's been great about doing these guidance lessons. First thing is that these kids already feel very comfortable with me. Because they're like: "Ms.Marcy, she's been in my classroom six times during the school year." So, obviously within counseling, you have to build the trust and rapport first and that differs between students. Some kiddos trust me from day one and we're able to start right then and there. Other kiddos, it's going to take me a few sessions especially kiddos that have been traumatized. Such as going through a parent up and leaving. It's going to take the kiddo much longer to trust me and get to know me.
#3	So, we have the kids we see on a regular basis, those are easy to track. We have the kids that we see in small groups, those are easy to track. We go into the classrooms, those are easy to track. It's the little conversation you have with the kids, you know, you're walking out the door and in the meantime three students

Participant #	Direct Quotes about Intervention Strategies
	have stopped you outside of your door to ask you about something. It could be a college, it could be something with their own classes. It could be something, "I need to talk to you about something at home." And those are the ones that we always lose in the transition of everything.
#3	The situation will be a little bit different depending on what it is. So, if a student is just coming in for like academic concerns. I would start with a genuine conversation. What are their concerns, what are they feeling, how are they feeling, going over their stuff, trying to help them given tips, study skills. Maybe some paper work guides to help them. If it was a social-emotional issue, something going on at home or with some friends, it would kind of go along those same lines. Offering some community outreach.
#2	Of course, explaining to them why they're with me. Things around confidentiality and then trying to teach them the tools and making it applicable for them so that they see "I really need to learn from Mrs. Marcy". Because once they're able to see and apply it, their confidence starts to go up. And that's what I really want. Because once their confidence goes up in themselves, that's when our work really starts to go through the roof. And then once parents and the teachers, see that kid that's when I can kind of lasso the teachers and the parents and you go, "OK I can't do this by myself. I need you guys.". That's kind of like my philosophy is: Build the trust. Get to know each other. Establish the logistics part of it. Then give them the skills and the confidence to go out there.

Participant #	Direct Quotes about Intervention Strategies
#2	This year I have over at Cypress, I have had over close to 200 individual sessions so far this year and at Juniper my caseloads are smaller because it's a smaller school. I'm in the mid-100s range. It would probably break down to about 25 to 30 kiddos a month for Tier 3 supports. Groups are about every other week. Since this is my first year here, I've decided to focus primarily on Tier 1 and Tier 3. Next year, I'm going to be focusing more in on Tier 2, Tier 3 and stepping back on Tier 1 now that I've taught the teachers how to teach the social skills.
#1	We do things on college and career. We do sexual harassment. We do cyber bullying. We do many different kinds of presentations. So, we're constantly reaching out to kids, too.

Theoretical Orientation

The theoretical orientation of each counselors was another interesting theme that emerged. Two of the four school sites are counseled by individuals whom do not subscribe to the application of theoretical orientations in their interventions. The counselor that oversees two elementary schools, and who is much closer to the years in which she was learning about these theories in college, has a more pointed approach to the purposeful use of theories. Below are quotes in reference to the application of theories of social work used in the disciplinary or counseling interventions.

Table 4: Direct Quotes about Theoretical Orientations

Participant #	Direct Quote About Defining Discipline
#2	Theories play a huge factor into how I'm going to approach a kid. Do I use more reality based with this kid? Do I use more of a solution-focused because I don't have much time with this kid? Do I use more like a CBT type of approach, social-emotional approach, social-emotional learning? I have to remember my theories because I can't use just one theory for everybody it's not going to work. You're working out your Carl Young and all of your theories because not every kid is going to be the same. Some need the reality based and then they need the more nurturing from me. I just present to them based on what their needs are that are presented to me. (May, 2018)
#2	If I notice they are not responding well to discipline, I am not going to use the reality-based theory. Than I'm going to use a more social emotional type learning. For the older kids, I use more of the cognitive behavioral stuff because they're able to understand that better. For my kiddos that are just very defiant and just feel that they are on top of the world, that's where I will use more of the reality based. Like, "This is how the world works and acting like that, what's going to be like for you in ten years?" And I'll sit there in silence until they answer it. Very, very concrete. Some kids you need to be concrete with and then some kiddos, you will scare them off if your concrete with them. So, that's why I like to use more of the social emotional stuff. (May, 2018)

#3	In practice, you know, sometimes one thing works and sometimes it doesn't. I can say that as the two counselors here, the other counselor is a little more nurturing and softer and sweeter. And then I'm kind of more of the straight and narrow, "This is how it is" and so there are some times where I feel like, "You'd probably be better with this student", so we kind of flop. But as for a theoretical approach, not necessarily. (May, 2018)
#1	I pull from everywhere. You know. I'm very eclectic in everything I do. I couldn't...it's been so long since I've thought about that. Truthfully, I could even tell you right off the top. It's been so long. I mean I'm not a not a big, big person theories-wise. I come from a standpoint of just love, love, love the kids. And that's it. And you start there and you build relationships.

Commonalities between Counseled Students

The traits and circumstances that are held in common by students that consistently require interventions was another theme that emerged. The concepts and impact of trauma were noted by all of the interviewees. Home life and a lack structure was a focus in both the elementary and middle schools. Below are quotes from the participants.

Table 5. Direct Quotes about Commonalities between Counseled Students

Participant #	Direct Quote About Defining Discipline
#2	Here our kids are traumatized. There's a lot traumatizing going on in their families. So, we're seeing more of the anxiety, the depression, on top of the behavioral. Or should I say the behavioral and then, on

	top of that, the anxiety and the depression that comes from being traumatized. (May, 2018)
#3	I would say that our common theme for our frequent flyers, our Tier 3 kids, is probably social-emotional stuff. Where it's...there is self-injury. That's probably...or they're keeping from doing it. They're not doing it anymore; but if we stop those conversations with them, they probably go back to it. So, it's just that outreach constantly (May, 2018)
#1	It is the lack of structure. I mean, I'm like Mama Weber. I'm Mama Weber to some of these kids. Some of them will come in for sort of the daily hug. I mean, I don't necessarily hug them every day, but they just need to know that you're here. (May, 2018)
#2	Home life. The repeat offender kiddo's, I can't get a hold the parents. They won't call me back. The teachers start to become frustrated because their hands are completely tied and it creates a bad storm when family is not on board. And with our repeat offenders a lot of it stems from family, unfortunately. With kids coming to school feeling empowered because here is the only place where they can feel empowered because their lives are so out of control at home. It's sad to see because you're just like "Get it together, Mom. Get it together, Dad. Get it together, Parents." Because this is affecting your child. Some parents get it and some parents don't want to get it or don't care to get it. (May, 2018)
#3	Tier 3 students. Those students are that 1 to 5 percent of our population that need extra support. Mentoring more than anything. They need to build that relationship with someone. We've had to reach out to those kids. It could also be the social-emotional needs. Those are our cutters and somebody like that we've got to

	make sure we check in on a regular basis. (May, 2018)
#3	Hearing a name, like it's, like if it's an ongoing thing. It's kind of. It's a red flag, instantly. Really just the need of the student. So, if there's a student based off of the information that students are giving us or maybe they've given a teacher. And, we feel that a student needs it. A lot of those kids are really, the Tier 3's, are more of are more undisciplined. You know, the action kids. Kids who have high turnover rates of discipline stuff. (May, 2018)

Communication within the School

A theme of communication playing a role was a constant point of interest in the interviews that were conducted. One level of communication that arose as a factor in the success of interventions is between the school. This communication between counselors and parents, counselors and administrators within the school, and how a lack of communication can impact students are all mentioned by the counselors. Below are direct quotes relating to this sort of communication.

Table 6. Direct Quotes about Communication within the School

Participant #	Direct Quote about Communication within the School
#3	I was fortunate that I came the same time as (the principal). So. I wasn't under a different administrator here. And so, I think she came in and laid the foundation down and I was here for part of that, I was here

	for the foundation to be laid and been able to kind of work with that. (May, 2018)
#2	I know the schools are competitive and they do talk. It seems like one school has one way of doing their curriculum and another school has a different way of doing their curriculum. So, I don't know if schools are all on the same page in their delivery of how they're teaching. Like I could tell you Cypress and Juniper are night and day. Totally different schools separated by one street. (May, 2018)
#3	Parents can be difficult. As a parent myself, we tend to believe our own children and don't think they can do anything wrong. So when they make a poor choice, the parents will usually defend their child and (it is hard) getting them to understand that this is what happened. It's difficult at times to communicate with them. I've had a parent, you know, there's parents that yell at you. But, you just listen to it and you take it and then you are able to communicate back what you need to. And then keeping a calm voice yourself helps in ending a conversation if you need to end it. (May, 2018)
#1	There are now four or five MFTs that are working in the district. But, we have not had a lot of communication there. We're waiting and going, "OK. When are you guys going to come talk to us?" We've put it out there that we, "Hey. Come tell us how we're working with you guys?" In fact, I had one of them, who came and saw one of my students actually, the other day had signed in and saw the student. I happened to see the student here in the hallway, and she is one of my regulars, and I see her and she's all teary eyed and I say, "You okay?" And, she says, "Oh, I just saw my therapist". I said, "Oh, what therapist did you see?" And, it was somebody from the district. I saw it in the log-in. And I'm

	like, "What? Okay." I did not know that this child, who I see here fairly regularly, is seeing one of our district people. So, there's a lack of connection there at this moment. And it bothers me because it's like, wait a minute, you know, if we're all in the same district, we should all be really cohesive (May, 2018)

Communication between Counselors

The second sort of communication that was a key theme was between counselors at different school sites and different levels within the school. The communication quality, frequency and strategies are discussed by all three counselors. Both middle school counselors felt more confident with their communication introducing incoming elementary students that with the high schools. Below are direct quotes related to this sort of communication between counselors.

Table 7. Direct Quotes about Communication between Counselors

Participant #	Direct Quote about Communication between Counselors
#1	Our feeder elementary school, we visit quite often. We started in the fall, at least once just do like a little walk through. We have three feeders for 6th grade. My principal is very good about that too. He likes to go out. My assistant principal at least three times during the year, we have the students come and visit us. They did a school visit, morning visit back in April.

	Where they're coming to visit us. We run here a little bridge program. It's only a four-day program for incoming 6th graders and I actually create like a four period schedule for them. (May, 2018)
#2	We're just so busy. So busy. They're doing their thing. We're doing our thing. We run into each other at like a training or something like that. There is talk at the district about having us do a huge PLC (meeting). Soon, hopefully. So that we can all be together and talk about things. Because I would love to know what the middle school would need from us. I'm sure the high school would love to let the middle school know what they need for their incoming ninth graders. So, hopefully, that happens next year. Which they said they're going to try. So we'll see. Fingers crossed. Being positive. Communication is necessary. (May, 2018)
#3	All of our elementary schools, our teachers, as well as the principals, at our elementary schools, they all provide us with the target list. So, whether it's behaviors, attendance, that red flag list. Like "these are some concerns you need to be aware of. This is what's going on with this one." The counselor will email us a list of their students that we need to keep track of. So, the teachers will give us a list, the principals give us a list also. (May, 2018)
#2	We need more and I think every counselor would say that. We would like more communication. Especially from the district. We would just like, we would like to know that we're supported and that what exactly they want from us. So that we can present it to them. So, when you have a huge district, like we're on right now, you kind of feel just, "Put it and Do it, Succeed". But we would like to have more of a direction. I guess you could say. If I need something, I have my go-to counselors who I can reach

	out to. And so as far as feeling like a team, our elementary school counselors, we're a really good team. (May, 2018)
#3	We just go back to what our best practice was and that's where that consultation comes in. We don't do anything without the other one knowing. So, if she has something going on, she's told me and we say, "OK this is what we're going to do and we stand and we protect each other with it". So, then our administrator is on board with that too. Then we're a unified team to do it. (May, 2018)
#1	We as a middle school group are really tight. As far as counselors go. There's seven middle schools. There's two of us at each site and we do a monthly Professional Learning Community meeting at one of the schools, usually. Sometimes we rotate schools. But, we do about a three-hour meeting to be able to touch bases with each other. Share, you know, if we're using a curriculum thing or sharing things that we've ID'd or we may have somebody coming from the outside that we want to, you know, have present to us. (May, 2018)
#2	Once a month the 30 elementary schools come together and the 16 counselors, we all meet. Our goals are set via an agenda that we set and the District sets for us. So, every month we need to talk about attendance, we need to talk about what we're doing to get these kids college and career ready. We need to talk about what behavioral interventions we're using and then there is a section for share outs and then just concerns. And we need to collaborate about certain kiddos that are severe cases. (May, 2018)
#3	From middle school to the high school, we again at our site, our administrator sends off to Summit and AB Miller, which are our two main sites. She sends names up to those two sites. As counselors, we send to

	the high schools, those two high schools, our kind of Tier 1 students especially for those social-emotional areas. (May, 2018)

Areas Where Schools are Lacking

A final theme that stood out in the analysis process was pointing out areas for improvement and where schools are lacking in the services provided to students. Below are direct quotes relating to the areas where the schools are lacking and what could be improved upon in interventions with students on a micro and macro level.

Table 8. Direct Quotes about where Schools are Lacking

Participant #	Direct Quote About Where School Are Lacking
#1	The biggest problem as a counselor is the time factor. In that, there are many lessons that I could go into the classrooms and do. But, if I do all of those lessons, I'm pulling from the student's instructional time. I don't know that I would change too much, I just wish there were more of us. Because the load would be less and I think a person could do even more with the students. You have to sort of triage everything on a daily basis. (May, 2018)
#2	We need more counselors. We need more counselors. Me being split between two schools is unacceptable in my eyes. But that's just where California is and where a lot of districts are. These kids are suffering younger and younger and younger and, if you want kids to succeed academically, you need to invest in counselors because

	these kiddos are not in class to learn. They are in class to be loved. They're in school to be fed. They're in school to feel safe, warm. So, if your kids aren't academically succeeding you need to look at the emotional-social component. (May, 2018)
#3	More time in the day to just be with students and observing like kind of classrooms and stuff like that would be amazing. But, I think the biggest piece would be other strategies to help the students. To get some feedback from there, to see if there's something that I'm missing. That, maybe, I can put into play to help. You know, maybe it's decrease our suspension numbers because maybe we didn't need to suspend all those kids. (May, 2018)
#3	There's both. I mean, what is a disadvantage is that we have, close to 1300 students and there's two of us. So, we're working with 650 students each. So we split the alphabet, and there's not enough time. You know, there's kids who when they're walking across campus I'll say, "wish I knew that kid's name". You know, but there's just not enough of us. (May, 2018)
#2	That's what No Child Left Behind has done for us. It is ruined so much. You can't go into a kindergarten class and just see them playing for any longer than 10 minutes. You know. They're learning how to multiply almost in kindergarten. It's just like, "What?" Yeah. No, no. No Child Left Behind really hurt the school systems. It really did. (May, 2018)
#1	How can I best fill those hours? Sometimes it's really, really difficult because, you have one big thing that happens. Like if it is a suicidal kid or an abuse situation going down. That can take out two to three hours of your day. Just because you're there with the student, you're waiting for police to

	come, you're waiting for this, waiting for that, waiting for parents. Whatever. It can take a lot of your time and that's why I wish there was more if there were even three of us one for each grade level. That would be awesome. (May, 2018)
#3	There's a big push to not suspend kids. But, what are the alternative means? So, if a student is cussing out a teacher and we're not going to suspend, what's the alternative mean? I don't have an in-class suspension room. They won't pay, the district won't pay for in-class suspension rooms. So, you're paying for...you have a student who you don't want to suspend, but yet this happened. And I know at some school sites administrators are highly against suspension. I don't know what they do with them. (May, 2018)

Data Interpretation

The purpose that this study served was to peer into the environment around discipline and interventions done in school-based counseling. The interviews revealed a wide range of themes that relate to these factors.

All the participants identified that the primary function of discipline within their work is not as a punitive measure, but rather as an opportunity for development and accountability. There is a link here to restorative discipline, which was directly mentioned by Counselor #2 in speaking about positive and negative discipline. All the counselors aligned with Mullet (2014) that "wrongdoers do not "get away" with anything. They recognize their obligations and commit to restore, reconcile, and make restitution, which are real

consequences of their actions" (p. 161). This perspective on discipline emphasizes building up in a way that is complex and challenging for the child in a style that is appropriate to them developmentally. Mullet (2014) also discusses the critique of positive discipline being too lax, "As to the criticism of being pain-free or too easy, restorative justice practitioners note that no reconciliation process is simple; restorative justice is hard work and thrives on the principles of obligation, empathy, dignity, and making things right." (p. 161). Discipline, in these schools, is defined as a training tool, an instructional support measure, and as an opportunity to place structure as a means of correction with love.

In relation to determining how effective these measures of discipline and interventions are, the counselors discussed the ways that it is possible to identify the impact of those interventions. The raw data is one measure that came out in the elementary schools and one of the middle school counselors. That data being days served of suspension, how many individual students they are counseling, attendance rates, referral rates, changes in grades. The counselors spent considerably more energy in detailing the interpersonal measures of effectiveness. For example, following up with parents and getting their insight. Home life is a means to bridge the gap between what is happening at school and what is happening at home. It is noted that "school social workers' ability to enhance family engagement in educational programming will increase the likelihood that families will use applicable interventions…in the home environment" (Hunter, Elswick, Perkins, Heroux & Harte, 2017, p. 174). The

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counselors noted this importance in seeing a positive change in the student, or developing life skills. These are concepts that cannot be solely measured in a school; but require the inclusion of the support system of the child as well.

A recurring theme that arose from the counselors was the strategies that they approach their interventions with. A constant was in the engagement phase, specifically in building and maintaining rapport and establishing trust. The relationships that the counselors can create and nurture with the students they see also depend on the preparedness of the students. Elementary students, for example, were seen by the participants as needing more simplistic and less nuanced strategic interventions than what can be done with middle school students. Ensuring that students fully understand the limits of confidentiality was another area of concern, as it was noted that students assume that they are "in trouble" the moment they enter an authority figure's office. Bridging that gap needs to be purposeful, and that is why the counselors noted the importance of reaching out to students outside of the office. Familiarity is a key element of building trust and rapport.

The theme of how a clinical theoretical orientation comes into play during disciplinary interventions also was discussed. Only one of the counselors distinctly mentioned how she interprets each case through a specific theoretical lens. The remaining participants theoretical approaches came out through discussion, but were not identified in a purposeful manner and both middle school counselors emphasized collaboration and relationship building as more

important to their strategies than working through a theoretical approach. The discussion of adapting theoretical approach based on the unique needs of the student was recurring as well through strategy approaches and the role of discipline as well.

One interesting note was that if a student was viewed to be responding poorly to discipline, that the approach should adapt to a reality-based one. Mullet (2014) notes that restorative discipline "is noncoercive; students who harmed are not required to make suggested amends, but are invited to see their role in the harm and to collaboratively create a plan of action to make things right" (p. 158). This approach aligns with the methodology applied by this counselor at the two elementary sites.

The common traits that are shared by the students that are seen most frequently by the counselors was also a major piece of note in this discussion. Trauma was one element that stood out. Anderson-Ketchmark and Alvarez (2009) note that "childhood trauma from exposure to family violence can diminish concentration, memory, and the organizational and language abilities that children need to function well in school." (p. 189). Within the role of a school counselor, recognizing that potential trauma exists and that a child can carry that into the classroom and into an intervention or meeting is important. A child's state of mind does not exist in a vacuum. Their home life, lack of structure, anxiety, depression, and other mental health needs are present in school and in the home. Being aware of this in interventions was an area of importance noted by

all the counselors and was linked to the importance of building a relationship with any given student.

The communication that counselors have was another key theme that arose in analyzing these interviews. The communication between parents and counselors, between counselors and the school district, communication between different schools within the district and even between outside therapeutic service providers came up during these interviews. This communication was generally seen as a negative by the participants. The gaps in communication were a source of frustration that held back the ability of the counselors to provide the most effective interventions possible.

One middle school counselor noted that the school district has Marriage and Family Therapists that can come out to work with students and there is no communication or notification from the MFT's to the school counselor. This was viewed as a missed opportunity, and Weist, Ambrose & Lewis (2006) discuss how important a "transdisciplinary," can be for students in that "professionals commit to teaching, learning, and working with other service providers across traditional disciplinary boundaries" (p.46). Working together across disciplines increases the knowledge base of all involved and allows for more specifically geared interventions to occur.

Another theme related to communication that arose in this analysis was related to the communication between counselors within the school district across all levels. These communications were roundly viewed as positive, and

the benefits of having a trusted individual to consult with and learn from was a feature. The elementary counselors were reported as being a tight-knit group, as were the middle school counselors. However, the communication between those parties on different level of schooling only occurred at the end of the year, usually in referring students to counselors. The monthly meetings amongst the counselors were seen as a resource and learning tool for the counselors to build their skill sets and establish protocol for best practices.

The areas where these schools are lacking was another theme that became clear in the process of reviewing the data. Time constraints were a recurring theme, as the counselors felt stretched too thin to provide the highest possible level of care. The counselors all felt that their caseloads were too high, with the elementary school counselors within the district being split between two separate schools. During a five-day week, that means that there are multiple days every week where students are without access to a trained counselor. Increasing mental health programs and the number of counselors in the school district was a suggestion that multiple participants made. There is evidence that aligns with this being beneficial as "these programs have demonstrated increased access, improved outreach to youths with less observable problems, and increased staff productivity" (Weist, Ambrose & Lewis, 2006, p. 45). As referenced in the literature review, administrators and school-based counselors have a gap in what services should be provided in schools. This gap is limiting

what school-based counselors can do because they are stretched to cover caseloads of over 600:1.

Macro and Micro Impact on Social Work Practice

This study's impact on social work practice on a macro level could be to be part of program development in school-based counseling. School-based counseling in this school district is immensely rewarding work, but the communication is lacking on an administrative level. The findings of this study could be part of implementing a program that includes input from the elementary, middle and high school levels and fosters collaborative relationships between counselors on different levels. Consultation and developing a support network is an important part of a child's development, and it is also important for those providing interventions in a counseling role to have a support network to determine best practices.

Additionally, the macro perspective of the school district at large can be informed by these findings. The needs and desires of the counselors on a micro-level are illustrated and the decision-makers that allocate resources and develop strategic plans for the schools are able to view these findings and use it to make more informed decisions about how to approach mental health within the schools. The overwhelming caseloads are a consideration that could be made more apparent as a result of these findings.

In treating and working with students, the importance of engagement and rapport building is noteworthy. The different strategies available in those

interventions are outlined in the findings of this project, which can serve as a resource for school-based counselors or anyone working in a micro-practice role with children. For those in a macro-practice setting, the findings of this project can help inform decision making when developing protocols or projects related to counseling. The importance of building a more trauma-informed approach to counseling in schools is noted in these findings as well, which is an additional factor to take into consideration in program development on a macro-level.

The researcher recommends that future research on disciplinary interventions in school-based counseling consist of interviews done on a larger scale across school districts, to include counselors and administrators in high schools and even secondary education. There is further insight to be gained by this occurring, as there is simply not enough communication occurring to alert counselors to the unique needs of incoming students that could be viewed as high-risk. The insights and strategies from additional qualified counselors could inform the decision-making and planning of current and future social work practitioners that are involved with students.

Additionally, gaining a more comprehensive understanding of the intervention strategies by school counselors would aid in micro-practice, as the counselors would be able to strategize their approach to working with students in a more purposeful fashion. Also, on a micro-practice level, there is added benefit to counselors having more access to interventions, adding tools to their toolbox to best serve their population of students.

The findings of this study stress the benefit of establishing rapport with students outside of the office, or outside of strictly a disciplinary role. It is recommended by this researcher that the input of students be included in future research alongside the qualitative interviews conducted with school-based counselors. The perspective of having the child's insights and how those correspond with the counselors would add another layer to the findings.

Summary

This chapter looked at the findings in the data of this project. The findings that were gathered in the interviews with school-based counselors were transcribed, which allowed the researcher to take that data and analyze it, developing categories and themes based on the transcribed interviews. Then, the data was interpreted. Finally, the impact that these findings could have on macro and micro-social work practice were discussed.

CHAPTER FIVE

TERMINATION AND FOLLOW UP

Introduction

This chapter addresses the findings of this study done through a qualitative lens. The first step of this process is presenting the findings of the interviews that were conducted. This is done through the data being transcribed by the researcher, and analyzed through the development of themes and categories within those findings. The second step is interpreting the data. The final step is a discussion related to the implications that these findings will have on macro and micro social work practice. The chapter's final section is a summary.

Termination of Study and Follow Up

In the termination and follow up to this research, this researcher strived to strengthen a network between counselors and administrators in the school district. A continuing and consistent and informed approach to discipline in the schools would serve the students and those working with the students in a positive way.

After each interview was completed, this researcher allowed for a period where questions or comments could be given by the interviewee to make the researcher available for any feedback or advice in moving forward with the research. Open communication was a key feature in the process.

A continuing relationship with those participants involved in the course of this study would be beneficial. The sharing of information, both between the counselors and from this study could help empower those children potentially being over-disciplined and that creates a better environment for both the students and between those counselors and administrators in the school system.

Communication of Findings and Dissemination Plan

Once completed, the findings of the study were provided to the library of California State University, San Bernardino and through a poster presentation at the School of Social Work's annual poster day. The findings of this study will be communicated by sending each participant a copy of the final research by either mail or in person. If there is interest, a presentation of a copy of the final project was arranged to be provided to the administrators of the respective schools. The materials that have been recorded were planned to be deleted and destroyed by the researcher once it is determined their use is at its end, this also was clearly and promptly communicated to the other parties of the interview once it is done.

Summary

This study explored the effectiveness of disciplinary interventions in school-based counseling and how the administrators, counselors, students, schools and school district work together to serve children. In this chapter, the termination and follow up for the research with the study sites were explained.

Finally, the methods of communicating the findings to those study sites and

dissemination plan for the research was stated.

APPENDIX A

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD APPROVAL

Researcher(s): Dakota Bates

Proposal Title: The effectiveness of behavioral interventions on students

_SW1778_____

Your proposal has been reviewed by the School of Social Work Sub-Committee of the

Institutional Review Board. The decisions and advice of those faculty are given below.

- -

Proposal is:

___X__ approved

_____ to be resubmitted with revisions listed below

_____ to be forwarded to the campus IRB for review

Revisions that must be made before proposal can be approved:

_____ faculty and Investigator signature missing
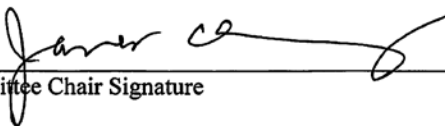
_____ missing informed consent _____ debriefing statement

_____ revisions needed in informed consent _____ debriefing

_____ data collection instruments revision

_____ agency approval letter missing

_____ CITI missing

_____ revisions in design needed (specified below)

_____ 2/20/2018
Committee Chair Signature   Date

Distribution: White-Coordinator; Yellow-Supervisor; Pink-Student

CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SAN BERNARDINO

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
School of Social Work

INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate disciplinary interventions and methods and their effectiveness in schools in Southern California. This study is being conducted by Dakota Blue Bates under the supervision of Dr. Gretchen Heidemann, California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board Social Work Sub-Committee, California State University, San Bernardino.

PURPOSE: This research project will discover what interventions are being used and the quality of those interventions and disciplinary methods being used on students being referred to school-based counselors.

DESCRIPTION: The data gathered in this project will be done through interviews with the selected school counselors or school administrators acting in roles of doling out discipline.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation is completely voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You may skip or not answer any questions and can freely withdraw from participation at any time.

CONFIDENTIAL: All recordings will be safely secured on the researcher's personal electronic device and will be kept in the researcher's locked desk when not in use. Any information given will be confidential.

DURATION: Each subject's interview will last between 30-45 minutes, if multiple sessions are deemed necessary, than a 2nd interview will be set up at the closing of the 1st session.

RISKS: There are not any foreseeable risks to participation, in the opinion of the researcher.

BENEFITS: This research may benefit the participant by revealing more about how students frequently being referred to administrators for behavioral issues are responding to the interventions being used.

VIDEO/AUDIO/PHOTOGRAPH: I understand this research will be Audio Recorded Initials_____ .

CONTACT: If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact **Dakota Bates (003442217@coyote.csusb.edu)** or Dr. **Gretchen Heidemann** (Gretchen.heidemann@csusb.edu) at **California State University, San Bernardino**. ·

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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
SAN BERNARDINO

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
School of Social Work

RESULTS: If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study, please contact the Pfau Library scholarWorks database (http://shcolarworks.lib.csusb.edu) at <u>**California State University, San Bernardino**</u> after July 2018.

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT: I have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

SIGNATURE: _____   DATE: _____

APPENDIX B

INFORMED CONSENT

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
School of Social Work
COUNSELOR INFORMED CONSENT

The study in which you are being asked to participate is designed to investigate disciplinary interventions and methods and their effectiveness in schools in Southern California. This study is being conducted by Dakota Blue Bates under the supervision of Dr. Gretchen Heidemann, California State University, San Bernardino. This study has been approved by the Institutional Review Board, California State University, San Bernardino.

PURPOSE: This research project will discover what interventions are being used and the quality of those interventions and disciplinary methods being used on students being referred to school-based counselors.

DESCRIPTION: The data gathered in this project will be done through interviews with the selected school counselors or school administrators acting in roles of doling out discipline.

PARTICIPATION: Your participation is completely voluntary and you do not have to answer any questions you do not wish to answer. You may skip or not answer any questions and can freely withdraw from participation at any time.

CONFIDENTIAL: All recordings will be safely secured on the researcher's personal electronic device and will be kept in the researcher's locked desk when not in use. Any information given will be confidential.

DURATION: Each subject's interview will last between 30-45 minutes, if multiple sessions are deemed necessary, than a 2nd interview will be set up at the closing of the 1st session.

RISKS: There are not any foreseeable risks to participation, in the opinion of the researcher.

BENEFITS: This research may benefit the participant by revealing more about how students frequently being referred to administrators for behavioral issues are responding to the interventions being used.

VIDEO/AUDIO/PHOTOGRAPH: I understand this research will be Audio Recorded Initials_____.

CONTACT: If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact Dakota Bates (003442217@coyote.csusb.edu) or Professor Gretchen Heidemann at California State University, San Bernardino. If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study, please contact Dr. Gretchen Heidemann at California State University, San Bernardino or through e-mail at: Gretchen.heidemann@csusb.edu at the end of (Spring) Quarter of 2018.

RESULTS: The results of the study will be available at the library of California State University, San Bernardino. The findings of this study will be communicated by delivering each participant a copy of the final research. A presentation of a copy of the final project to the administrators of the respective schools would be delivered regarding the research and possible paths to move forward with the findings.

College of Social and Behavioral Sciences
School of Social Work

CONFIRMATION STATEMENT: I have read and understand the consent document and agree to participate in your study.

SIGNATURE: _____   DATE: _____

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

Participant Demographics

Counselor Age & Years at agency:
Experience in field:
Gender:
Age/Grade range of students:
Demographic breakdown of students:

1. What is your definition of discipline?

2. How many students do you see per day? Per week? Per year?

3. What is your strategy from start to finish when presented with a student referred to your office?

4. How do you measure the effectiveness of a disciplinary intervention?

5. Is there a theoretical orientation to your work with students? Explain.

6. What would you consider a successful intervention?

7. What levels of discipline are there in your work?

8. How often is each level of discipline used?

9. Who is involved in the disciplinary process with your role with students?

10.   Where are students, teachers and schools lacking with regards to disciplinary interventions?

11.   If you could change anything about the way your role is conducted, what would it be?

12. How much communication is there between schools and others in the school district operating in a similar position to you?

APPENDIX D

DEBRIEFING STATEMENT

Study of Disciplinary Interventions in Schools and Their Effectiveness
Debriefing Statement

This interview you have just completed was designed to investigate disciplinary interventions and their effectiveness in school based counseling. In this interview, two decision biases were assessed: disciplinary actions at your site and on a broader level within the school district. Of particularly interest is the effectiveness of certain interventions and what is being done to provide those resources further.

Thank you for your participation and for not discussing the contents of the interview with other participants. If you have any questions about the study, please feel free to contact **Dakota Bates** or **Dr. Gretchen Heidemann** at **California State University, San Bernardino**. If you would like to obtain a copy of the group results of this study, please contact **Dr. Gretchen Heidemann** at **California State University, San Bernardino** at the end of **(Spring)** Quarter of 2018.

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