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A Qualitative Study Analysis on How Utilizing a Token Economy Impacts
Behavior and Academic Success

A Dissertation by
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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Education in Organizational Leadership

July, 2016

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In loving memory of my father, David Fred DeFrancis. Although it is difficult to imagine that you passed just two weeks prior to me starting my doctoral program journey, I want to acknowledge you. Even though you won't be present the first time that I am called Dr. Solomon David DeFrancis, I always wanted you to know that this was for you. I love you, dad. I will never forget what you have taught me: "You're either getting better or you're getting worse, son, but you're never the same" (DeFrancis, 2012).

ABSTRACT

A Qualitative Study Analysis on How Utilizing a Token Economy Impacts Behavior and Academic Success

by Solomon D. DeFrancis

Utilizing a qualitative study analysis, this study examines how behavior impacts academic success utilizing a token economy with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. Through focus groups of para educators, therapists and teachers on special education settings, there will be a comparative analysis of behavior and academic success. The study will consist of six education sites throughout the Antelope Valley: A kindergarten through eighth grade (Yellen Learning Center), a kindergarten through sixth grade elementary (Valley View Elementary), a seventh through eighth grade intermediate school (Joe Walker) and three high schools that are ninth through twelfth grade (Desert Pathways, Palmdale High, and Pete Knight). These sites are all designed with programs to serve the needs of students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder. Continued research could be beneficial in understanding how behavior modification utilizing token economies impact academic success not only in specialized settings but in other settings as well.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder demonstrate “An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors” according to Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (1997). The education system has been riddled with different ideologies and behavior systems to produce academic growth. When looking at special education and students who suffer from (ED), academic achievement and behavior management go hand in hand. “Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances” according to Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (1997) is another classification for (ED). It is through the different philosophies of educators, administrators, therapist, and society that these children can or will achieve.

When exploring behavior management, token economies are often utilized for behavior improvement. For example, in special education the term Antecedent Behavior Consequence (ABC) for behavior assists in distinguishing the reasons behind a specific behavior. The antecedents, behavior/s, consequence/s are examined in order to come up with intervention strategies for the observed behaviors. Through utilizing both behavioral intervention strategies and academic interventions, the goal is to increase academic achievement. An examination of a specialized campus with interventions for students who suffer from (ED), displays a link between behavior improvement and academic achievement. In addition, such settings that focus on smaller classrooms and individualized attention from educators and mental health providers support student achievement, both behaviorally and academically.

Utilizing techniques in the classroom such as behavior management strategies as well as creating a structured, consistent environment where students feel safe; behavior can and will improve. Intervention programs for academic growth interwoven within a structured classroom will be used with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder to ascertain whether or not this type of intervention method works. According to Skinner (1954), classroom management is often the saving grace, if not the biggest factor, when dealing with students; especially those who display severe behavioral issues. Positive behaviors, in any classroom, are often dictated by the individual running the classroom. In addition, Kohn (1993) believed that it was not merely the interventions, but also what was portrayed through the educator or educators in the classroom that led to student growth. Though the expectations set in the classroom and the demeanor of the support staff, students will live up to expectations. Student achievement and behavior management go hand in hand when dealing with any setting or any specific population of students (Skinner, 1950). Often, the biggest factor in a classroom being successful is that structures are in place to guarantee education is being administered. It is the duty of educators to either change or modify instruction in order to make all students understand the concepts, with the hope that they can achieve academic success and demonstrate the ability to reproduce what they were taught (Kohn, 1993).

Positive performance on state mandated testing is the aim for any successful school. The growth shown through state or standardized testing is what society deems the most important. When dealing with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder, standardized testing scores are often low. The fallacy is that students who suffer from emotional disturbances cannot learn or lack the capacity to learn (Henley, 2010).

Through the right teaching practices, such as a structured and consistent classroom environment, high levels of engagement, holding students to high expectations, classroom teacher personality, and intervention programs, all students can learn regardless of the disorder. Growth measured by standardized tests is a neat verifiable way to grade multiple students, but overlooks the individualism of students. There is a certain conformity that comes along with the current public education system. It does not promote the individual mindset or students who do not fit the public education mold.

Behavior management is imperative in every classroom to ensure all students are learning. One common way to control behaviors is token economies. According to Skinner (1954), a token economy is an incentive system that produces a desired behavior from the student. For students who suffer from an emotional disturbance, often these token economies teach coping skills and social skill awareness. If a student is never explicitly taught how to behave within a classroom setting, how can educators expect them to live up to their expectations. Behavior-based token economies assist in reinforcing these specific, individual goals and often prove successful in producing positive behavior outcomes. Token economies can also be used as an incentive program to keep students on task, to encourage them to stay focused, and even to help them to bring homework back the following day.

Although state testing is an efficient way to grade multiple students and get a snapshot of academic proficiency, it has also been shown to be a big money maker in America (Miner, 2005). It allows people that are administering the test to dictate the standards and educational influences by which they want all students to abide. The production and profit that come from these tests are often controlled by big businesses,

which unfortunately, do not have the best interest of students; rather they are more interested in making a profit (Miner, 2005). Students who suffer from an emotional disturbance often display disabilities in their learning, which affect standardized tests. For example, having to include modifications and accommodations or even creating alternate testing to show growth is yet another way to produce more profit for the state testing corporations.

Intervention programs have been conceived over the years for students in special education, but one of the more unexplored areas of special education is students who suffer from a serious emotional disturbance disorder. Often these students are misunderstood and have multiple diagnoses. In turn students who suffer from emotional disturbances disorder require additional supports and accommodations to assist them in their success. With the implementation of Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004), society is now becoming more aware of special education, hence gaining a better understanding of why accommodations are required and how to provide these students with the least constrictive environment where they can still achieve.

Students who suffer from a serious emotional disturbance disorder in the past were generally sent to a residential facility. Residential facilities are campuses where students live and attend school. These facilities were created for the students whose behaviors were so severe that they could not function on a comprehensive school site, with no other practical means of providing schooling in their home district. Yellen Learning Center is a school that in the last 10 years has created interventions on campus to teach social skills, while providing individual accommodations for students with a goal to get them back to a comprehensive school site. With specialized Individual Education

Plans (IEP's) students are provided with accommodations and take part in interventions on the campus and are allowed to go home in the evening; a choice they do not have in a residential facility. In residential facilities, students are housed on campus and are monitored 24 hours a day for months at a time, only allowing family visitation for short periods of time once treatment is administered. Residential facilities are extremely costly, and home districts must pay large sums of money for students to attend. However, due to the severity of behavior, the districts had no choice but to provide residential treatment care, because none of the comprehensive campuses had the support to accommodate students which such demanding needs. The greatest hindrance is that residential facilities are not cost effective or family orientated. The question is: How does behavior; that is, staying in seat, raising hand, staying focused, and completing tasks impact academic success?

Background

Behavior management strategies

Inside the classroom setting there are two main components that every educator must attend to on a yearly basis. The first major issue is behavior management within the classroom. "One of our primary responsibilities as teachers is to help our students learn. It is difficult for learning to take place in chaotic environments" (Leong, 2005, p.11). Certain students generate additionally challenging behaviors than others. Utilizing diverse behavior management strategies and techniques will allocate educators to be prosperous and successful throughout the academic school year. Certain students present different challenges displaying disruptive behaviors from various stimuli for numerous reasons.

State testing is the other major component along with behavior management that each educator is required to face at the end of the year. “The idea that test scores should be considered when evaluating a teacher’s effectiveness grew out of a desire to reform education systems across the country” (Kastenbaum, 2012, p.1). Whether it is high stakes testing or common testing concerns, accountability places additional stress on students and educators. The educational world conducts assessments yearly to provide data for the progression of student learning and the efficiency of educators.

Student’s behavior in the classroom has a vital impact on learning and academic achievement. Token economies are one behavior management strategy educators can utilize in the classroom with students that present challenging behaviors. “A token economy is a form of behavior modification designed to increase desirable behavior and decrease undesirable behavior with the use of tokens” (Moore, James W., 2001, p.53). Utilizing a token economy system can enable educator’s ways to teach social skills and replace inappropriate behaviors with tangible rewards. This behavior intervention strategy utilizes monetary values for appropriate interactions with peers and adults which ultimately is the goal for appropriate behavior.

One challenging subgroup of students is those who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder. These students can represent behavioral challenges unlike any other student in the classroom. Although typically they are within the confines of special education classrooms, all educators can benefit from understanding of this population to further recognize students that have extra challenging behavioral requirements.

“Behaviour problems in a classroom increase the stress levels for both the teacher and pupils, disrupt the flow of lessons and conflict with both learning objectives and the

processes of learning” (Parsonson, 2012, p. 427). Without the understanding of behavior and without techniques to combat disruptive behavior and encourage positive behavior, academic achievement will be accomplished. “Also it changes the classroom dynamic as the focus of attention shifts from the academic tasks at hand to the distractions provided by disruptive behaviours” (Parsonson, 2012,p. 427). Different behavior strategies can be utilized to achieve the required climate in the classroom for all students to be successful. Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) is one strategy that has been relevant throughout behavior management research. According to Parsonson (2012), applied behavior analysis techniques implemented with classroom behavior intervention has been an application utilized for educational benefits for the better half of four decades.

Intertwining these educational practices of behavior classroom management has proven to be not only indispensable but proficient when utilizing diverse interventions that look at the antecedent and contingency. Addressing the problem behavior strategies with applied behavior analysis techniques produce stronger results. These classroom management behavior strategies allocate teachers to foster positive and functional learning environments. Utilizing these practices with disruptive behavior will begin to minimize distractions. This will improve engagement and academic achievement which can be rewarded.

If “teacher awareness that poor classroom management is an important factor associated with disruptive behaviour, then it would follow that intervention which target teaching skills and classroom behaviour management have the potential to produce significant impacts on disruptive behaviour” (Johansen, Little, & Akin-Little, 2011,

p. 17). Disruptive behavior leads to lower academic achievement and on-task behavior leading to poor state test scores. “Everyone needs to succeed and to be recognized for success” (Harlan & Rowland, 2002, p. 5). The success in the classroom is imperative to the ultimate goal of academic growth, also “results indicated that the self-management intervention led to decreases in disruptive behavior, which is maintained in the absence of the teacher” (Hoff & DuPaul, 1998, p. 290.). Abiding by certain techniques in the classroom can improve discipline. With the discipline under control, academic achievement can be the focus. Behavior management strategies are simple implementations embedded in every teacher’s lessons and classroom curriculum. Simple things such as ensuring that students are focused while they are in the classroom can have a great impact. Focusing has to do with students understanding they need to be paying attention before any of the academics is going to be presented to them. Direct instruction is another technique that is efficient in getting everyone in the classroom on task and in a uniform manner. Weingarten (2010) states that, the unpredictability of certain student’s lives can present behavior problems. Home life without an established routine cultivates feelings of insecurity and distrust that can lead to classroom disruption. When teachers employ conventional routines and institute schedules and rules the stability allows children with disorganization in their life outside of the classroom to become stable. Also teaching techniques such as direction instruction can be beneficial to create comfort in the students’ lives. This consistency allows the children expected routines acting as a safe haven for emotional struggles that could be created from insecurity outside of the classroom.

Direct instruction acts as an influence so students start to understand that they have to conform to the way that the teacher is presenting the information. Constant movement by the instructor in the classroom also is a structural technique that can be utilized. This technique is normally known as monitoring. Monitoring is just the simple circulation of the teacher throughout the classroom interweaving through the chairs making sure that all students are on task and finishing the work (Tauber, 2007). Furthermore, according to Weingarten (2012), one simple behavior management technique such as, checking in on students individually over the course of the instructional period can demonstrate to be effective. Another technique to combat behavior is developing individualized plans for students that display disruptive behaviors in the classroom. These individualized plans for students that represent serious disruption problems will further improve effectiveness when recognizing disruptions. Lastly keeping a log with records of events the tracking of disruptive behavior will be beneficial. Tracking this behavior will be beneficial when teachers develop individualized behavior interventions strategies to concentrate on student's needs.

Assertive discipline is another traditional behavior management strategy. This is normally understood as an authoritarianism technique. Made famous by Canter and Canter (2006), this form of discipline is widely understood. It includes a mix of praise and a clear set of rules constantly being reinforced. One of the most overlooked behavior management strategies is simple positive discipline. Harlan and Rowland (2002) postulate that, disruptive and misbehaving students present themselves in public and private schools. Students that demonstrate unsuitable conduct in the classroom is not exclusive to public or private schools. These inattentive students require to be addressed

by school personnel and parents forming an alliance to assist students in having proper behavior in the classroom. When the students display correct manners it should be recognized by both school personnel and parents with positive reinforcement and attention. This will permit the students to gain the attention that they desire when they demonstrate the appropriate behavior in the classroom setting.

Positive discipline is the mixture of the way students are spoken to and the words that are used. An example of this would be saying “walking in the hallway” rather than “no running in the hallway.”

State testing. State testing is required of all students regardless of gender, disability, or current academic scores. According to Hodgson, Lazarus, Thurlow, and National Center on Education (2010), regardless of disabilities all students are accountable for state testing. Numerous students despite of disability participate in assessments on a regular basis with or without accommodations. Several students due to their disability participate in alternative assessments that are deemed appropriate to demonstrate their academic understanding of the curriculum. Students that suffer from much more strenuous cognitive shortcomings are typically deemed eligible for alternative test based on their academic levels. In the late 2000s federal guidelines permitted certain students to partake in alternative assessments based on a modified curriculum that demonstrated academic achievement with standards (AA-MAS). The students deemed eligible for this category must present an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) with goals that are based at grade level standards. With these federal regulations alternative testing was allotted to students with an IEP to participate in an alternative testing to demonstrate academic achievement that would be beneficial due to their cognitive disabilities.

State testing is what moves the education machine. “Federal legislation requires that all students participate in state accountability systems” (Hodgson, Lazarus, Thurlow, & National Center on Education, 2010, p .1). Throughout different readings, the debate of state testing being efficient or effective is controversial. In addition, Blazer and Miami-Dade County Public Schools (2011) reported that, certain testing has been labeled “High Stakes Testing” and has been controversial over many years within education in America. Individuals that advocate for this type of testing claim that it encourages students to work more diligently and forces teachers to display a better understanding of where students have strengths and weaknesses. Furthermore, it allows educators extra assistance when targeting failing schools. On the other hand critics of high stakes testing consider that it distorts curriculum. In addition it forces educators to narrow the scope of what is being taught while holding teachers and students to standards without equitable resources. Critics believe this mindset solidifies the gap between class and race disparities.

Public education is subject to mandatory state testing. Curriculum is measured and checked for understanding, at the end of the year, by exams administered on every campus; exams provided by the state. This type of high stakes state testing implementation can also lead to merit pay. High-stakes tests are used to make decisions about students, teachers, schools, and/or districts. These types of tests try to imply predictions to associate student’s decisions about high school graduation and/or grade promotion. This high-stakes testing model implies educator supervisor’s decisions regarding teachers’ jobs and pay. High-stakes tests for schools and districts often determine school funding levels and guide school restructuring efforts (Blazer, C., & Miami-Dade County Public Schools, R., 2011).

Negative effects of state testing can be measured in many ways, but one important way to highlight is the narrowing of the curriculum. Studies have consistently confirmed that increasing the stakes attached to tests can change what is taught and how it is taught and adversely affect the quality of classroom practice. Studies have also found that the greater the stakes, the more likely curriculum narrowing will occur (Blazer, C., & Miami-Dade County Public Schools, R., 2011).

Positive effects of state testing can be measured in many ways. One important way is increased teacher professional development. “There is some evidence that high-stakes testing has led to more focused teacher professional development” (Blazer & Miami-Dade County Public Schools, 2011, p. 7). The different state standards that are presented on the exams are measured by the organizations that created the test. With the implementations of common core in the classrooms, there have been new concerns for educators. According to Mcneil and Gewertz (2013), growing concerns of common testing presented in the near future have various school districts stressed regarding the accountability that the test will present. The drive of policy groups is to be presented with further flexibility on how individual teachers, schools, and states will evaluate and enforce consequences to testing districts. Throughout this progression which is steadily approaching the education world will be detained to elevated levels of accountability which could be a complicated and unattractive evolution.

Token economies. What is a token economy? “A token economy is a contingency management system that allows participants to earn tokens for presenting specific, positive behaviors that are later exchanged for predetermined backup reinforcement” (Kazdin, 1977, p. 342). Token economies are one behavior strategy that can be utilized in

a classroom or on a school campus. Maggin, Chafouleas, Goddard, and Johnson (2011) state that, token economies are utilized as a behavior intervention strategy which produces unique features by representing tokens as a monetary value for acceptable behavior. When utilizing a token economy the exchange of tokens can be reinforced by monetary values which are commonly portrayed as tangible items. Allowing the student to associate tokens with benefits of various items so there is a clear distinction of perceived value when exchanging tokens in the behavior intervention system. It is the exchange of the individuals' tokens that reinforces the benefits of suitable behavior. This facilitates a tangible reward for an intangible behavior. These behavior management systems can integrate various variables ranging from social skills and academic standards. Weingarten (2012) opines that, token economies can be utilized to reinforce appropriate social skills when addressing inappropriate behavior. Certain students do not understand suitable behaviors or interactions with peers. If the student is not trained on how to interact appropriately with peers, then developing friendships and displaying acceptable adult to student interactions will become complicated. Expectations of student behaviors necessitate being educated with approved social interactive modeling. The development of the social skills will permit students that exhibit improper behaviors to produce proper relationships with peers and adults. Token economies can be utilized for social skills, bringing a tangible reward for expectations met with correct social interactions.

Along with positive praise and classroom structure, token economies present other behavior strategies which. “reinforce acceptable performance by letting students know how well they are performing the skills” (Weingarten/AFT, R. 2012, pp. 5-6).

Understanding how these behavior strategies and knowing how to implement them, will control behavior and increase academic achievement.

Students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. Students who suffer from an emotional disturbance require more time and behavior strategies to allow them to be successful in the classroom. Working with a group such as this, requires addressing different environmental cues and structures to allow the most efficient academic achievement. Children and youth receiving special education services for emotional disturbance (ED) experience bleak short and long-term outcomes, including increased rates of arrest, and present many challenges to schools, families, and communities (Gage, Josephs, & Lunde, 2012).

The common misconceptions regarding students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder are they cannot learn and are academically delayed. What is commonly over looked and not factored into the research is the background of the students. These students typically come from a low socio-economic household along with parents that are not high academic achievers themselves. Also on average, by the age of 12, these students have had multiple special services (Gage, Josephs, & Lunde, 2012). According to Gage et al. (2012), between the ages of 10 to 13 years old is classically when students are identified for special education services. Just before 13 years old is normally when contact with a child welfare agency has been established for these students. Additionally, before the age of 13, the same participants have had their initial contact with the juvenile justice system. "Welfare records further indicated that youth with ED were prone to suffer from high rates of abuse and neglect, with 49% having experienced physical abuse, 29% sexual abuse, and 75% neglect" (Gage, Josephs, &

Lunde, 2012). When examining the academic achievement of this population it demonstrates an increasing apprehension. 35% of the time students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder are held back a grade level at least once and 27% of them have been suspended before entering a special education class setting according to Gage, Josephs, & Lunde, 2012. Although this population is represented generally by males it is not uncommon that females are identified later for special education services.

Many of these students come from poverty, have suffered abuse, and have failed significantly within their academic careers, however, with consistency in a classroom, the teaching of social and behavior skills, as well as being held to high academic expectations, some of these students have proven themselves to be academically and behaviorally successful not only within the Yellen campus, but also upon returning to a comprehensive school campus (Dietzen, 2011).

Research Gap. After examining the research, token economies can be advantageous when creating behavior intervention strategies for students that require additional behavior services. Token economies can be utilized for social skills development with students that struggle with peer and adult interactions. Furthermore, token economies can be beneficial behavior management strategies for teachers that have challenging students in the classroom setting. Finally, token economies create tangible rewards for appropriate behavior in the classroom. Research tells us that students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder typically do not obtain special education services till the age of 10 years old. Moreover research states that by the age of 13 these individuals have made initial contact with child welfare services and the juvenile justice system. The research

gap between token economies and students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder is what this research intends to expose.

Statement of the Research Problem

There are clear significant academic achievement gaps between students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder and general education students. “Current federal education policy that specifically addresses students with disabilities requires that these students be fully included in the provisions of Title I of NCLB and thus endorses the notion of “closing the achievement gap” between students with disabilities and other student groups” (McLaughlin, 2011, p.11). The majority of students in special education “are diagnosed with disabilities that do not necessarily mean reduced mental ability, which has led many to argue that, with special accommodations and support services, the majority of students with disabilities should be able to perform at grade level and graduate from high school with a regular diploma” (Cortiella & Dillion 2009, p.1). Educators utilize diverse strategies in the classroom to combat undesired behaviors, one of which is token economies. There is a lack of researched knowledge of the effectiveness of token economies with regard to effecting positive behavior change. Due to the limited knowledge and research in the field of academics regarding students with emotional disturbance disorder, the study will provide current data. This information will provide insight on what is effective regarding token economies with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder academically and behaviorally. Results of this information will provide valuable insight on inventions when combating challenging behaviors in the classroom. “The Token Economy system is a powerful tool used to

shape and strengthen desired behaviors and responses in the classroom and at home”
(Hernandez, D., & Reitman, D., 2015, p.6).

Purpose

The purpose of this qualitative study analysis will be to identify how utilizing token economy impacts behavior and academic success for students with emotional disturbance disorder as perceived by teachers, para educators, and therapists.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceived positive impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?
2. What are the perceived negative impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?
3. What are the perceived positive impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?
4. What are the perceived negative impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

Significance of the Problem

California schools are falling behind with the academic goals. According to the Department of Education website almost 4000 California schools are now in program improvement. The 2011/2012 academic school year demonstrated significant academic decline. With 63% of schools in California being labeled Title 1 and 47% of districts receiving Title1 funds for academic improvement needs, program improvement status is a

direct result of failed adequate yearly progress according to legislation in correlation with the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act of 2002 (Schultz, 2014). Included in the legislation of the No Child Left Behind Act is the provision that school districts are to ensure that all students are up to grade level in math and reading by 2014. "As the Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) standards increase to 77 percent proficiency in the current school year and a hundred percent in the following year, educators feel that more schools will fail to make that AYP, even when the students demonstrate growth" (Schultz, 2014, pp. 2-3). It is apparent the test scores are not up to par for the state of California and this demonstrates an immediate need for attention. Furthermore, students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder represent a portion of this population failing to meet adequate yearly progress.

According to IDEA, students ranging from ages 6-21 represent 8% of the population that suffers from an emotional disturbance disorder. Looking over the numbers "0.72 percent of the school population is represented with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder" (IDEA, 2004, p. 39). With the ever growing spectrum of special education students, the study is relevant as the problem needs to be addressed. With this disorder students lack the ability to exhibit appropriate behavior and/or maintain relationships; this ultimately affects them emotionally resulting in depression with manifestations of physical symptoms (IDEA, 2004). As research develops in the field of token economies when dealing with students with emotional disturbance disorder this study will demonstrate the effects.

The timeline starts with the 2015-2016 school years; observing implemented structures, inventive curriculum, and a behavior based token economy to show progress

and change. The qualitative data analysis through a qualitative study design will examine how behavior impacts academic success through a survey of the teachers, para-educators and therapists of Yellen Learning Center, Desert Pathways, Palmdale High School, Pete Knight High School, Joe Walker Middle School and Valley View Elementary.

Research results within the qualitative study accomplished will provide supplementary information on how behavior impacts academic success through a survey of the teachers, para-educators and therapists.

Definitions

Assaultive behavior - "Defined as patient attacks involving either another patient or staff and resulting in an injury" (Bellus, Vergo, Kost, Stewart, & Barkstrom, 1999, p. 3).

Back-up reinforcers - Prearranged to students in substitute for a definite quantity of tokens. Administration is simply restricted by a teacher's thoughts (Kerr & Nelson, 1998).

Behavior - "The portion of the organism's interaction with its environment that is characterized by detectable displacement in space through time of some part of the organism and that results in a measurable change in at least one aspect of its environment" (Johnston & Pennypacker, 1993, p. 23).

Behavior management - The customs individuals encourage and educate students to follow classroom regulations and expectations as well as the achievement of their academic responsibilities (Witzel & Mercer, 2003).

Emotional and behavioral disorders - Individuals with disabilities. Educational Improvement Act 2004 defines emotional and behavioral disorders as a condition

exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:

- a. An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors (United States Office of Special Education, 2004).
- b. An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers (United States Office of Special Education, 2004).
- c. Inappropriate types of behaviors or feelings under normal circumstances (United States Office of Special Education, 2004).
- d. A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression (United States Office of Special Education, 2004).
- e. A tendency to develop physical symptoms of fears associated with personal or school problems (United States Office of Special Education, 2004).

Emotional disturbance disorder - An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers, and an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors (United States Office of Special Education, 2004).

Mental disorder (Mental illness or psychiatric disorder) -

"Conceptualized as a clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or pattern" (Frances, First, & Pincus, 1995, p. 15).

Off-task behavior - Once a learner does not emerge as if he or she is not vigorously engaging in a particular education action (Levin & Nolan, 2006).

On-task behavior - Once a learner appears as if they are vigorously appealing in a specific education action (Levin & Nolan, 2006).

Reinforcement - An enhancement in the power of a reaction following the alteration in situation directly is following that alteration (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007).

Reward or reinforcer – Something that might be communal, motion-orientated, restricted-oriented, or worldly in nature that students can receive as an enticement for not signifying a target behavior (Zeigler-Dendy, Durheim, & Ellison, 2006).

Self-injurious behavior - "Deliberate self-inflicted injuries that are not considered a suicide attempt, regardless of the degree of injury" (Bellus, Vergo, Kost, Stewart, & Barkstrom, 1999, p. 28)

Target behavior - Observed detrimental or unsuitable manners targeted for development (i.e., decrease of period the conduct occurs) (Bicard, Bicard, & the IRIS Center, 2012)

Token economy - "A structured treatment in which desirable behaviors are rewarded with tokens that are exchangeable for valuable goods or activities" (Lecomte, Liberman, & Wallace, 2000, p. 1312).

Token or reinforcer - "Is defined as any material item, consumable, activity, person, or social event that increases the strength of frequency of the individual's behavior" (Lecomte, Liberman, & Wallace, 2000, p. 1312).

Delimitations

This study was delimited to teachers, para-professionals, and counselors in the Antelope Valley Region of Los Angeles County, California. Specifically, the study was delimited to teachers, para-professionals, and counselors from Yellen Learning Center, Desert Pathways, Palmdale High School, Pete Knight High School, Joe Walker Middle School and Valley View Elementary School.

Organization of the Study

Chapter 1 provides a thorough analysis of the qualitative study analysis being presented. The focus of the research is a qualitative study analysis on how utilizing a token economy for behavior impacts academic success with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder. Chapter 2 will provide literature as the foundation of understanding behavior and the spectrum of understanding between control-based behavior techniques to encouraging-based behavior techniques. Chapter 3 will provide more in-depth look at the research questions; define the population, sample size of the study. This chapter will also include methodology, data collection, and summary procedures.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

“Emotional disturbance means a condition exhibiting inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances” (IDEA, 2004, p.39). The review of literature analyzes behavior from the foundation of Skinner (1950) and behaviorism to Kohn (1993) and punishment by rewards. The review will examine how behavior has diverse levels of control and a gradual release formula; it will discuss encouragement, and the foundations of a token economy. Analyzing student environment and social acceptance are all dynamics of behavior. The summary at the end of the chapter will highlight important theories and explanations that can be utilized in the classroom.

Emotional disturbance disorder is represented by students exhibiting inappropriate types of behavior under a normal setting. An example is students that are typically overly depressed and have tendencies in the inability of having an appropriate interpersonal relationship with staff and students. Academic learning struggles without any explanation of intellectual sensory or health factors. Also, it is not uncommon for students that have emotional disturbance disorder to develop fears associated with school.

teachers, para educators, and therapists that work with students with emotional disturbance disorder have specific roles in the education setting. Teachers enter a strenuous credentialing program learning how to scaffold curriculum along with developing behavior modifications for this population. Para educators are educated in behavior intervention techniques to combat severe behaviors displayed from students with emotional disturbance disorder. The therapist role in the school setting is to intervene with students that have mental breakdowns with either curriculum or peer and

staff relationships. Therapists intervene with the students for the mental health aspect in these programs. It is critical at times that the therapist intervenes along with behavior interventions due to the nature of emotional instability with these students. When teachers, para educators, and therapists collaborate they create a learning environment that is not only curriculum based, but foster an environment of emotional intelligence enabling students that are socially maladjusted.

The settings for students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder on an elementary, middle, and high school are identical. Elementary settings have self-contained classrooms with no more than 12 students to a classroom. These classrooms are equipped with one teacher and two para educators, and therapists on site to intervene for additional intense support when required. The middle school settings mirror the elementary campus with a self-contained classroom equipped with a teacher, para educators, and therapists on site to intervene with behaviors. As students shift into the high school setting they transition classrooms after educational periods, but still on a self-contained campus with no more than 100 students.

Programs strictly created for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder are self-contained campuses with low population numbers. These campuses are equipped with supplementary mental health and staff highly trained in behavior intervention techniques to combat the severe nature of the students. To qualify under the diagnosis of emotional disturbance disorder a psychologist is required to test, observe, and interview then call an Individual Education Plan (IEP) meeting presenting their findings. The IEP must be signed by the parent or guardian to solidify the diagnosis. Different tests such as the Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC), Scale for

Assessing Emotional Disturbance (SAED) and Children's Depression Inventory (CDI) are administered on the student by the psychologist. Through student interviews, rating scales and observations the psychologist utilizes this data to solidify the emotional disturbance diagnosis. Once a student is labeled emotional disturbance disorder they can be placed in a severe setting or program to create the Least Restrictive Environment (LRE) to allow them to assess the curriculum. Programs for emotional disturbance classrooms and campuses are federally funded under Title one. California's legislation Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) is the criteria for emotional disturbance disorder and the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) supports supplementary funding for student that fall in this category.

Review of the Literature

Behaviorism and Classical Conditioning

Skinner's (1974) book *About Behaviorism* is the foundation for so many theories and understanding of the human behavior condition. Understanding behavior requires a change in the "independent variable" and effect in the "dependent variable" which creates a "cause-and-effect connection" which becomes a "functional relation" (Skinner, 1977, p. 1). Accepting the causes of these effects becomes a foundation to behaviorism. The first section is *inner causes*. Inner causes are when scientists look for causes inside of the study rather than any external explanation. Neurological causes pertaining to the nervous system contain bodily language and expressions that cannot always be observed but are observed through the interactions of a causal relationship. Psychic inner causes are the purest form of animal instinct, physical organism's behavior. A physical organism is merely responding to the inner personality of the mind. The inner psychic of the physical

organism is driving the wills and actions of the outer man's reactions. Conceptual inner causes is neither psychic nor neurological disposition, if a man is hungry, he eats and if plays the piano, well he has a musical ability. These are not causes but preconceived dispositions.

When looking at the variables of which behavior is a function there are three key points to be made. First, an operation performed upon the organism with or without incentive; second, an inner condition, and third, a kind of behavior. After utilizing direct information, a link between the probability of a behavior must determine if there is an antecedent creating a rise or not in the behavior. Observing behavior must have a controlled behavior established and able to be manipulated. A functional analysis is utilized to produce a controlled behavior in an individual organism. Using a dependent variable finds a cause in an independent variable to create behavior. Reverting back to cause and effect relationships, any behaviors established are thus creating the laws for the science of behavior analysis.

Reflex action is the understanding of a stimulus from an external agent and the response which is the control behavior of an individual organism. Behaviors can be measured in magnitude depending upon the response to the intensity of the stimulus, providing conditions of the individual organism having a complete account for the reflex due to the external agent providing that stimulus. Conditioned reflexes contribute to a child crying before it feels pain or a dog salivating when seeing food. Pavlov's (1927) conditioned response theory is the implementation of conditioned reflex. Pavlov used conditioned reflexes under the same process through stimulus substitution when replacing certain stimuli for the response desired.

Operant conditioning is often referred to tendencies or dispositions with the human behavior. Determining a tendency can also be the probability of a response from the condition behavior. Variable of frequency can stimulate frequency but observing the probability does not express the likelihood of behavior occurrence. Observing a man's behavior with the probability of frequency, scientists create standard conditions so the subject is able to repeat a given act and the behavior cannot be interfered with. In a permanent conditioning, the stimulus has reinforcement creating the condition or the response. When the behavior is strengthening the reinforcement expected continues the response conditioning. If there is another stimulus being reinforced the organism should change its probability of response. Therefore the reinforcement is creating the operant conditioning behavior response (Skinner, 1953).

Dobson's (1970) *Dare to Discipline* follows behaviorism ideology taking some direct quotes from a biblical standpoint. Dobson believes that certain students are demanding to be chastised. By spanking students the authority figure will grant their wishes for certain disciplinary requirements. Dobson is a Holy Bible literalist and an evangelical Christian. He believes discipline is an expression of love and it is God's idea to chastise children. This disciplinary mindset is additionally common with Skinner's (1974) behaviorism and the control aspect of discipline. Throughout the book, Dobson (1970) refers to a disciplinary approach with biblical orientation, inferring that parent's disciplinary interactions in the home ultimately shape their children's mindset and behavior. Discipline within the household is to act as a precursor for the consideration to other forms of authority. Dobson illustrates those poorly behaved children that are

disciplined in the home will then submit to structures at school leading to less disciplinary problems later on in life.

Through observations, Dobson (1970) interpreted students preferring authoritative natured teachers over teachers with a less discipline heavy approach to classroom management. Dobson gives examples of classrooms without strict educators producing out-of-control chaotic setting environments, where the students become afraid of one another and without norms and guidelines bullies run ramped. Students feel unsafe in their environment when they do not know who is in charge and they feel there is not an equitable system in place. The undisciplined environment produces uncertainty, and irritation for both the student and educator. The idea of democracy within the classroom plays a little to no role in this model of discipline. Dobson stresses that democracy would only breed rebellion against the educator and produce selfishness. If a power struggle is to ensue between a student and an adult, by all means the adult needs to win decisively in order to establish assertive dominance in the classroom. Dobson believes that the teacher must be the dominant authoritative figure in the room and by no means release any power.

Bandura's (1977) social learning theory introduces the idea that conditioned responses are from social observations and modeling. There are four models. The first is attention: do the subjects pay more attention because it adds a level of functional value to the characteristics that they feel aroused by? The second is retention: did the subjects display retention, did the subjects remember what they were so attentive over; were there mental images; did it reproduce symbolic meanings for their behavior? The third is reproductions: when self-observing behavior did the subject reproduce the same

behavior? The fourth is motivations: does the subject have intrinsic motivation for the behaviors being expressed and are there incentives for the subject to model this behavior? Social learning theory argues that "most human behavior is learned of observation only through modeling from observing others, one form of an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this code information service as a guide for action" (Bandura, 1977, p. 22).

Kozol (1992) in his book, *Savage Inequalities*, provides examples of social learning by looking at different school systems and the profound effect of socioeconomic demographics. From affluent areas to impoverished areas the same ideologies are expressed. Throughout the book the main focus is that students who come from a low socioeconomic background cannot learn and do not deserve funding that those from a higher socioeconomic background enjoy. From Washington, DC and throughout the East Coast to the state of Texas, Kozol finds the underlying theme that students coming from a low socioeconomic background are not getting the same opportunities as students from higher socioeconomic backgrounds.. The working conditions of teachers in underfunded schools and school districts not only destroy morale of teachers, administrators, and staff, but have a direct impact on the ability of students to learn. The Academic Performance Index (API) price per student is higher in the higher socioeconomic areas and in the low socioeconomic areas API per student is not even enough to pay for it the toilet paper bill. Throughout Kozol's book, he presses home the fact that schools in low socioeconomic areas create students with low intelligence and lacking the competency to achieve. Kozol goes as far as to present a case that when documented evidence is brought to the attention of the state of Texas; it takes the ruling of the courts 23 years to even begin the rebuilding

process of equal funding for all students. When students are not valued and proper funding is not administered to schools, the system is creating an environment to fail. Not only are certain students coming from a struggling background but the schools are reaffirming low expectations by not being able to afford proper facilities. Without the proper funding the system is continuing to provide a facility that is not conducive to learning. Teachers lose morale therefore creating a school, full of long term unqualified substitute teachers or even worse classrooms going without teachers. This in turn creates larger class sizes, less textbooks and supplies required for learning. When education or the educators are not valued, students will reflect that same ideology and not value education.

Positive Discipline. Jones' (2000) *Positive Classroom Discipline* is a systematic approach that has steps to align discipline management. “There is no ‘best method’ of dealing with discipline in the classroom; rather there are many different methods for different children in different circumstances” (Jones, 2000, p. 51). The first step is structure within the classroom, this is to prevent problems from occurring and produce an environment conducive to learning. Structure within the classroom is a systematic approach from the arrangement to procedures the first day of class to the last. The second step understands that following through with the norms set requires relaxed body language through cues from the instructor. High standards are set and resolutions to conflicts are to be followed through with near to no emotional attachment. The third step is the responsibility aspect. Students require a firm understanding to take ownership of their actions and for instituting a system that promotes autonomy and cooperation for the whole group. The fourth step is plan B, systems in place for when the common approach

tends to falter. These are disciplinary actions that are additionally severe. Misbehaviors within the classroom which do not include utilizing disciplinary approaches from current administrative school practice. This disciplinary model promotes the natural teacher model.

A natural teacher model is one that active and circulates the students constantly while students are working. The ideology behind students constantly working is that teachers accept as true that students are not learning unless they are doing something. Structures within the classroom range with preference allowing the instructor to walk seamlessly throughout the room; being able to easily access students. Furniture is arranged for minimal effort when working in the classroom. In addition, these settings support this disciplinary approach. Body language, non-verbal cues are major elements in this ideology. Simply looking at students can get them back on task.

Jones (2000) stressed that all human beings comprehend the same body language and students study body language. Therefore it is a teacher's priority to give an emotional and physical response. Jones' ideology stresses that the number one priority is to plan before instruction is administrated. For Jones, discipline comes before all or classroom norms become null and void. He believes children will dictate the boundaries by testing and pushing the barriers sensing how stable they are. Educators' emotional response works two ways, calm shows they are empowered and a lack of calm displays weakness. Physical aspects of the disciplinary model require the educator to stay calm and move slowly while dealing with a disruption in the classroom. If the educator does not display a willingness to stop and deal with the disruption, students will learn that the educator does not follow through with his or her norms. Incentives are an additional part of this model

for discipline enforcement. Incentives are labeled *hurry up* and automatic bonuses. When students transition, such as getting in their seats, sharpen pencils, being ready to learn take valuable time away from instruction. If the teacher implements bonuses for on-task behavior, it will develop into common practice to be ready to begin. The positive instruction aspect of the model is critical during a lesson presentation, feedback, addressing behaviors appropriately and motivating students for success.

Dreikurs' (1974) approach to discipline has fundamental promises that allow social learning theory to exist when dealing with behaviors. The social discipline model has four basic intentions; first, that all human beings have a desire to belong; second, that every behavior has a purpose and there is a fundamental reason as to why the behavior is occurring; third, human beings are living organisms and they make decisions; and four, human beings have perception and their perception is their reality therefore making it biased or misunderstood at times. Dreikurs alleged that every behavior that was observed in a negative connotation from a student was for one of four reasons; gaining attention, grappling for power, revenge, or expressing some shortcomings. The logic behind his social discipline model promoted encouragement rather than punishment or reward. Being appreciative to the fact that every student is seeking his or her place within the classroom, all students are trying to find their place within the group and student conform to their role which in turn makes valuable contributions to the classroom as a whole. On the other hand, the student that is a disruption is trying to maintain social status or a powerful position. Throughout the dynamics of the classroom one needs to understand that misbehaviors are not the focus but the reason as to why the student is acting out.

Throughout his study the underlying theme is that all students want some sort of acceptance whether they are getting it negatively or positively.

Albert's (1996) *Cooperative Discipline Model* utilizes similar logic as Dreikurs' (1974) *Social Discipline Model*. Students behave in the manner in which they do, not for an act of defiance, but rather for the reason that they sense that is the appropriate conduct for the occasion. Another of Albert's philosophy is that all students want to experience a sense of belonging in the classroom. All the lessons administered from educators require being valuable for students to recognize that education is essential. When analyzing a student's misbehavior the same premise in the *Cooperative Discipline Model* is displayed in the *Social Discipline Model* that a student is merely trying to gain attention, power, some sort of retaliation, or avoid shortcomings. Albert's ideology has to do with a democracy within the classroom. The democracy within the classroom stresses working collaboratively with students in developing procedures, norms, and consequences. With this ideology, in the classroom, students have a sense of belonging and can contribute to their learning experience. An additional strategy when dealing with misbehavior or a power struggle pertaining to a student is that educators should maintain a business professional demeanor. Not allowing students to provoke or get off track which is ultimately the goal in education and not winning arguments. Maintaining a positive and encouraging demeanor will produce the best results with the students. Furthermore, creating a communication system between student, teacher, and parent will allow fewer misunderstandings and make for improved behaviors. Creating this alliance between home and school will provide clarity and input with all parties involved in the education of the student.

Glasser's (1998) *Choice Theory* idolizes the idea of managing and influencing students for its disciplinary approach. The core understanding of Glasser's book is that people are courteous especially when it comes to adults. Within the classroom setting, educators are required to breed the environment of laughter and happiness about their work. Communication within the classroom is promoted amongst all the individuals and not just dictated to the crowd. Students have conversations and discussions with each other, not just waiting for another to speak. Norms and structures are reasonable and not overly dictated. Structure and conditions of the classroom are to enable interaction and the educator is to stimulate conversation rather than control the lecture. Glasser illustrates that "reasonable rules, firmly enforced through separation from the program (not punishment).... are an essential part of helping students become responsible enough to take advantage of what is made available to them" (Glasser, 1998, p. 194). He expresses that educators cannot expect the existence of a rule without the understanding of their relationship to the rule. It is the logic that if one does not understand the relationship of cause and effect, then one will view cause and effect relationship to be authoritative and unreasonable. If rules are not within reason, then the classroom is not a *good place* and students will not feel safe therefore academic achievement will not thrive.

Through a systematic approach, students can gain personal and mutual trust with the educator in turn helping to diffuse a lot of misbehavior within the classroom. Being personal is the initiative that a teacher displays empathy and kindness towards all students within the classroom. Educators necessitate only identifying misbehaviors in the present and not living in the past. Teachers are required to display explicit instruction on why the misbehavior is counter-intuitive for the student; explaining why it is wrong for

him or her and how it will be counterproductive in his or her educational journey. Next having a systematic approach of how to replace misbehavior with the desired behavior and working with a student in developing this plan are very important. Gaining student involvement by having the individual write down or verbally agree that the behavior will change is key. Conversations with students that excuses are not reasons as to why they cannot be successful are imperative. Illustrating that excuses are not productive and encouraging ownership of their actions lead to positive growth. Punishment is counterproductive for students to take responsibility for their actions. When punishment is administered students stop taking ownership of their actions; the ownership has shifted to an authoritative punishment rather than a reflective growth exercise.

The essence of *Choice Theory* is that students have control over their actions. Every behavior even a negative behavior is an individual trying to communicate with the world and assimilating its perception to it. Jones' (1987) hierarchy stresses that if student are to be successful, they require having enjoyment, control, and choices, being able to fit in and feel alive.

Gordon's (2003) *Teacher Effectiveness Training* utilizes the model of a rectangle. The rectangle is a window in which the educator sees acceptable behaviors at the top and unacceptable behavior at the bottom. Gordon display these behaviors as ones that educators would want to continue or ones that educators would just like to end. There are no emotional ties between the acceptable and unacceptable behavior just the sensation continuing or ending. The rectangle model has a systematic approach starting with; *Others own the Problem, Not Having a Problem Area, Owning the Problem, We are Owning the Problem and lastly Values Collision.*

Individuals that are in the stage of *Others own the Problem* put up roadblocks in their conversation, these can be messages like students do not feel they can do it because they say they are too stupid. These types of road blocks further judgmental and prejudicial ideologies within the group. Ways to address these types of road blocks, according to Gordon, are through silence, *non-committal responses*, *door openers*, and *active listening*. Being quiet often works or just showing an individual that he or she is in control and can respond when he or she feels ready. Non-committal responses are simply turning up the intensity of the problem by responding with "I understand" or "Oh my gosh." Door openers are leading questions like "would you like to talk about it?" Gordon believes that active listening is the most effective to all approaches. Being a good active listener takes time and shows empathy towards the individual to whom the educator is speaking. Gordon utilizes *I-Messages* in owning a problem. I-Messages teach individuals to take responsibility for their behavior; accepting and recognizing shortcomings or confrontations. I-Messages are not shameful or self-destructive although they are needed in understanding oneself. Effective I-Messages allow behavior to be owned by the individual rather than an attempt to provoke others for their behavior.

Another approach in Gordon's (2003) disciplinary model is conflict resolution. Gordon's conflict resolution uses steps. Step 1 is defining the problem and allowing individuals to have active listening through I-Messages to convey misunderstandings. Step 2 is hypothesizing solutions including, but not limited to, brainstorming in reviewing conflict solutions. Step 3 is the solution and understanding of both parties involved. Step 4 is reaching a mutual solution with the parties involved in figuring out the best solution and providing clarity on what is agreed upon. Step 5 is administering the solution to both

parties and following through with what they agreed upon including all the stipulations. Step 6 is evaluating the solution, reflecting on it and reviewing the approach to identifying if it is the correct resolution or if it needs to be reformed.

Curwin and Mendler's (2005) *Discipline and Dignity* utilizes strategies to maintain students' self-esteem and curb their behavior within the classroom. The model of discipline is broken into a three step approach, prevention, action, and resolution. During the prevention stage, the teacher needs to be understanding of the students regardless of the situation. Furthermore, a key to the prevention phase is that motivation needs to be key for all students to thrive. Teachers must express genuine gratitude towards students, establish rapport with their students, and become knowledgeable in disciplinary approaches. Throughout the action phase not every situation will have the same consequence. Educators must be open to different disciplinary approaches and consequences that best fit each individualized situation. In addition, educators must understand that they must document individual behavior situations in order to reflect on the data at a later date to better improve their teaching techniques. One underlying theme, above all, is to avoid getting pulled into a power struggle with students. The last phase of the 3-step approach is the resolution stage. After data have been collected from the previous stages, the student and the teacher need to come to a mutual agreement on how this behavior will not occur again. Working collaboratively with a student and implementing a plan for the reoccurrence of misbehavior will provide the most success in the future. Moreover revising the plan at a later date and constantly monitoring can only further the relationship between teacher and student; curbing negative interactions.

When viewing the consequences in *Discipline with Dignity*, there should be a clear distinction between punishment and consequences. Consequences are specific alternatives which are logical and never a punishment to misbehavior. The book presents principles of the educator's behavior which constantly stresses being a reflective practitioner and evolving never falling into a systematic approach for behavior management. The principles of an effective teacher entail long-term thinking when dealing with the behavior rather than quick fix, instant gratification techniques; creating a classroom that is just and where all students are treated fairly. Norms in the classroom are logical and on no account irrational. Teachers in the classroom are always modeling what they want expressed. Understanding that responsibility is shown through one's actions rather than obedience to an authoritarian demand and always the dignity of every student is being respected.

Dreikurs' (1974) *Discipline Without Tears* follow similar beliefs and ideologies of *Discipline with Dignity* carrying on the firm understanding that discipline is not a punishment and a teacher should respect the autonomy of all students; appreciating that the students should be treated with respect with the teacher representing a democratic leadership style in the classroom. There should be guidelines set by the teacher but with the involvement of the students in establishing the rules and regulations. Students want to be socially accepted, they require a sense of belonging in the classroom. Recognition is critical for student success. When students display behaviors that are counter intuitive to the teacher's rhetoric there are always four reasons for this. Subconsciously students are acting out four subliminal messages; goals. Attention, power, revenge, and inadequacy. These are the fundamental reasons as to why a student would act out in a classroom.

Dreikurs (1974) systematically approaches behavior with the theory that an *inner goal* results in an *outward behavior* but, even with the algorithm that is created, it is the educator who must solve the problem. Teachers need to comprehend that the behavior is a result of this *inner goal* and that the teacher must create a solution for the student to have the appropriate *outward behavior*. Dreikurs was exceptionally clear, when discipline is implemented students needed to recognize to take ownership in their actions. Furthermore, students need to have a sense of autonomy and respect for one another. Therefore students could take ownership of their behavior to, in turn, appropriately influence one another; consequently students would have a firm understanding of the expectations and norms in the classroom.

Canter and Canter's (2001) *Assertive Discipline* has to do with the proactive systematic approach to dealing with behaviors. The central focus of Canter and Canter's ideologies is the classroom requires a climate that is not only conducive to learning, but also is humane and the focus is on positive classroom behaviors with a proactive approach. The foundation of Canter and Canter's *Assertive Discipline* has to do with many facets; the main one being a proactive rather than reactive approach. Proactive is establishing norms and having a systematic approach for the classroom when behaviors arise rather than waiting for the behavior to occur. It creates an effective working environment for teachers to be proactive rather than reactive when dealing with discipline. Another focus of Canter and Canter's *Assertive Discipline* is establishing relationships with students; the necessity to continually have positive interactions with students and treat them humanely. When giving positive praise to students, insuring to praise is specifically to the student and not just displaying a general praise remark. If

teachers want students to emulate them, they need to model their behaviors and express them through their actions. Most students may become confused if the teacher is setting limitations and guidelines for one thing and doing another. Having a systematic discipline plan is one of the foundations of trust and respect for all students; this ensures that students can feel comfortable and safe in the classroom. Educators must always express this behavior when dealing with students and not allow sarcastic or rude remarks to be vocalized when dealing with discipline. "Whenever possible, simply ignore the covert hostility of a student. By ignoring the behavior, you will diffuse [sic] the situation. Remember, what you really want is for the student to comply with your request. Whether or not the student does it in an angry manner is not the issue." (Canter & Canter, 2001, p. 57). The destruction of the proactive approach towards discipline in the classroom can occur if educators are not following up and modeling the desired behavior. . Instruction must always have positive support when dealing with behaviors via facial expressions or kind words of encouragement that acknowledge a positive learning experience.

Negative Effects of Token Economies. Punishment by Rewards is drawing from numerous research of the effectiveness of positive reinforcement behavior shaping systems. This is the antithesis of behaviorism and operant conditioning. Kohn (1993) demonstrates that treating students or people as animals only creates temporary obedience and is the wrong way to motivate individuals. Training people to utilize autonomy through realistic positive approaches in the workforce or in the classroom is far more valuable for productivity. According to Kohn (1993),

Some who support [more] coercive strategies assume that children will run wild if they are not controlled. However, the children for whom this is true typically turn

out to be those accustomed to being controlled— those who are not trusted, given explanations, encouraged to think for themselves, helped to develop and internalize good values, and so on. Control breeds the need for more control, which is used to justify the use of control. (p. 33)

Manipulating incentives is only a short term fix and it creates long term failure.

Punishment by Rewards utilizes the idea that rewards and punishments are the same thing but on opposite ends of the spectrum. Rewarding and punishing individuals are simply two ways of trying to control people. Students are innately excited to learn; respecting that thought process will get teachers farther than trying to create individual compliance. “Many of the discipline models that are employed rob students of their potential to become more responsible self-governing” (Edward, 2011, p. 77). Having a classroom that is open to ideas, harmonious, and caring will foster learning and positive social interaction. By creating gold stars or over-the-top positive praise only allows students to work for the next incentive. Taking away incentive systems allows students to enjoy the learning process and continue to thrive in becoming educated.

If the example is moved from the classroom to the workplace, it can be seen that rewards and punishments are counter-intuitive in the workforce, merit pay system and competitive ideologies only create a hostile work environment. Creating competition amongst employees, not only undervalues individuals’ autonomy but breeds hostility between persons. Respecting everyone for the work they do, understanding that human beings want to work and want to be challenged will push organizations to the next level rather than creating a monetary value on productivity. It is the firm belief of Kohn (1993) that having genuine feedback and creating a true positive environment, fosters creative

and innovative ideas which will breed success. The ideology of rewards or punishment only attempt to try and control individuals for a short period of time rather than foster intellectual capacity, innovation, the hunger to learn, and risk-taking. Punishment by rewards gets away from carrots or sticks and replaces them with autonomy and respect.

Kohn (1993) promotes autonomy within a classroom. It is the logical conclusion that teachers need to respect their students. Through a constructivist mindset educators need to involve their students in the diplomacy of the classroom. Working collaboratively with all students in problem solving and disciplinary approaches, the shift in this ideology has to do with removing independent dictatorship type of control and actually inviting a democracy into the classroom. Students gain a sense of purpose and community within the classroom with this ideology being administrated. Kohn (1993) contributes the belief that students should have intellectual discussion regarding the curriculum, procedures, and environmental problems that arise. Whenever there is a question that needs to be solved, the teacher should be asking students for their feedback and stimulating critical thinking within a classroom.

Traditional approaches to education encourage students to forget and not retain any of the lessons learned. Students disregard instruction for the reason that they are being preached at and not involved in the process. In the same way, when discipline techniques need to be implemented, a group discussion or classroom meeting should be available to permit everyone to experience a sense of ownership. The ideology of punishing a student for compliance degrades the opportunities of community within a classroom. When norms and rules are created in a classroom students should have levels of involvement, Kohl (1993) believes that teacher-made rules serve no purpose. The

belief system in *Beyond Discipline* is that students retain a sense of fulfillment, utopia, and compassion when they work together with their others classmates. *Beyond Discipline* promotes this type of ideology within a classroom and consequently motivating student achievement in the fulfillment of their educational experience.

Educational Evolution. Edward's book *Educational Change: From Traditional Education to Learning Communities* (2011) is moving education into the 21st century. With foundations of discipline, classroom management, instruction, and academics there is movement in education and all parties involved need to be equipped for change. Through various disciplinary ideologies from the 1950s till the present, we have seen change in educational discipline techniques. From strategies such as Skinner's (1938) Behaviorism to Kohl's (1993) *Beyond Discipline* approaches, the dynamics of discipline techniques in education are changing. Through the decades, there has been an assortment of ideologies on assertive discipline, respecting student's autonomy, and administrating appropriate disciplinary techniques. Whether it is a community democracy or an independent dictatorship, teachers need to understand respect towards students and provide them with a safe, inviting classroom to breed success. From traditional classroom instruction to applied learning, a teacher's obligation is to be up to date on the curriculum.

With the implementation of the *No Child Left Behind Act* standardized testing has changed education and ways of measuring academic achievement have been condensed. The implementation of professional learning communities requires modifications by the educator and those being educated need to be aware of the changes. Relationships between the community and the school have improved over the years. "In learning

communities, instruction would be consistent with the way humans naturally learn” (Edward, 2011, p. ix). As education moves into the new century all parties involved must be well-versed in the dynamics of the education movement.

Conclusions

In conclusion, there is a balance between discipline and the way it is administered within a classroom. As the educational climate changes in the 21st century, teachers are constantly becoming additionally accountable for their test scores and student achievement. *Classroom Management* systematically goes through effective practices of discipline and ideologies from highly effective teachers. The book presents six different discipline ideologies and explores the implementation of administering the discipline models. Examining Dobson’s (1998) *A Place for Punishment*, Canter and Canter (2001) *Assertive Discipline*, Jones (2007) *Tools for Teaching*, Dreikurs (1968) *Social Discipline*, Glassers (1980) *Reality Therapy, Choice Therapy, and Quality Schools*, and Gordon (2003) *Teacher Effectiveness Training* gives the behavior evolution in the classroom over time, allowing individuals to utilize what is best for them. Analyzing the discipline models allows understanding of the disciplinary spectrum from Skinner's (1938) beliefs that a child needs change and the system that is already in place is fine to Kohn's (1993) *Punishment by Rewards* and the negative effects of discipline. *Classroom Management* truly illustrates that an effective teacher asserts discipline proactively rather than reactively. An effective educator understands that multiple uses of discipline techniques and norms will allow discipline to seem easy and seamless. The reality is that, if educators are not proactive and structured with their disciplinary model, they will find it difficult to administer guidelines and produce effective teaching in the classroom.

Research Gap

After examining the research, token economies can be advantageous when creating behavior intervention strategies for students that require additional behavior services. Token economies can be utilized for social skills development with students that struggle with peer and adult interactions. Furthermore, token economies can be beneficial behavior management strategies for teachers that have challenging students in the classroom setting. Finally, token economies create tangible rewards for appropriate behavior in the classroom. Research tells us that students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder typically do not obtain special education services till the age of 10 years old. Moreover research states that by the age of 13 these individuals have made initial contact with child welfare services and the juvenile justice system. The research gap between token economies and students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder is what this research intends to expose. What the research does not state and what the dissertation is going to disclose is how token economies impact behavior and academic success with students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Participants that will be involved in the qualitative study to provide information to the investigation and will be explored throughout an assortment of perceptions regarding teacher, para educator, and therapist input regarding behavior. Indulging these perceptions of behavior through qualitative data, i.e. focus groups, concerned participants will provide a superior perception of how behavior impacts academic success when utilizing a token economy with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder.

This qualitative study will explore how a token economy impacts behavior and academic success in elementary, intermediate and high school. It is the desire of the researcher and those participating to discover the fundamentals that will guide student behavior success and academic achievement. Utilizing focus groups, the researcher will compile a unique account on how implementing a token economy will impact behavior and academic success of students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder.

Overview

Chapter 3 is a thorough explanation of research design, population, sample, sample selection processes, instrumentation, reliability, validity, data analysis, data collection and limitations of my study of teachers, para educators and therapist that utilize token economies for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study analysis is to identify how utilizing token economy impacts behavior and academic success for students with emotional disturbance disorder as perceived by teachers, para educators, and therapists.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceived positive impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?
2. What are the perceived negative impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?
3. What are the perceived positive impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?
4. What are the perceived negative impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

Research Design

This research involves utilizing a qualitative approach during a descriptive qualitative study design. “Qualitative research methods focus on discovering and understanding the experiences, perspectives, and thoughts of participants that is; qualitative research explores meaning, purpose, or reality” (Hiatt, 1986, p. 148). Utilizing a qualitative study teachers, para educators, and therapists will form a focus group to discuss the impact token economies have on behavior and academic achievement. The rationale of the descriptive qualitative study design is to comprehend the impact behavior has on academic success utilizing a token economy with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder. Exploiting teachers, para educators, and therapists from an elementary, intermediate and high school setting will provide various perspectives on

students with emotional disturbance disorder. A focus group of the diverse groups of participants will be used to conduct an exploratory qualitative study to recognize the causation and underlying principles of a token economy with its impact of behavior which results in the student's academic progression.

Population

A population is a group of elements or cases, whether individuals, objects or events, that conform to specific criteria and to which one intends to generalize results of the research (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010). According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2014), "approximately 8.3 million children (14.5%) aged 4–17 years have parents who have talked with a health care provider or school staff about the child's emotional or behavioral difficulties" (p. 2). The population is students with emotional disturbance disorder. Due to the severe nature of students' behavior and academic difficulties, these individuals demonstrate social maladjustments with teachers and peers. According to Ehlers from the Legislative Analysis Office (LAO) of California (2013) approximately 686,000 students with disabilities ages 3 to 22 obtain special education services in California, approximately 618,000 are in grades K through 12, comprising regarding 10 percent of the state's overall K through 12 public school enrollment.

Target Population

The target population or sampling frame is the actual list of sampling units from which the sample is selected (Creswell, 2005). The target population in this case is a "group of participants in a study selected from the target population from which the researcher generalizes to the target population" (Creswell, 2002, p. 401). The population

for this study includes teachers, para-educators, and therapists who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in Los Angeles County, California. All students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in the state of California must meet the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) criteria to be diagnosed with emotional disturbance.

The target population is teachers, para-educators, and therapists who work exclusively with students with emotional disturbance disorder in the following schools in Los Angeles County, California: Yellen Learning Center, Desert Pathways, Palmdale High School, Pete Knight High School, Joe Walker Middle School and Valley View Elementary School. Students in the selected three school districts are located in the Antelope Valley. There are 15 teachers, 25 para educators, and 7 therapists working with these students on the sites referenced.

When targeting this population it will provide an insight to Palmdale, Lancaster, and Quartz Hill with an array of diverse socio-economics within these various cities. Although the cities are within 10 to 15 miles of each other they have different community cultures. This will allow the researcher to gain an extensive spectrum of insight when working with this population.

There are 104 students who currently attend Yellen Learning Center, 42 students at Desert Pathways, 45 students at Palmdale High School, 30 students at Pete Knight High School, 15 students at Joe Walker Middle School, and 15 students at Valley View Elementary School. Through consulting with the Palmdale School District, Westside Union School District, and Antelope Valley High School District the researcher will analyze data of the focus sites regarding the qualitative study. The research provided

from the focus sites will be used in a qualitative study design analyzing how behavior impacts academic success through a survey of the teachers, para-educators and therapists.

The following table presents a target population breakdown of each of the school sites in the study:

Population	Yellen Learning Center	Valley View Elementary School	Joe Walker Middle School	Desert Pathway High School	Palmdale High School	Pete Knight High School
Total Population	104 students	769 students	887 students	42 students	3,072 students	3,413 students
Blacks or African Americans	60%	10.4%	11.6%	40%	15.1%	16.6%
Hispanics or Latinos	20%	38.6%	34.4%	24%	69.2%	71.3%
American Indians or Native Americans	1%	N/A	N/A	2%	N/A	N/A
Asians	2%	1.5%	2.9%	2%	0.6%	0.7%
Filipino	N/A	0.6%	1.9%	N/A	0.9%	1.3%
Caucasians	17%	44.0%	44.1%	31%	9.2%	8.4%
Two or More Races	N/A	2.4%	1.6%	N/A	0.4%	1.1%
Students with Disabilities	100%	9.8%	9.8%	100%	16.3%	14.5%
English Language learners	4%	7.8%	6.8%	N/A	45.6%	37.7%
Socio-economically Disadvantaged	73%	50.1%	34.7%	52%	71.2%	67.9%

Target population of this qualitative study is teachers, para educators and therapist that utilize a token economy with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder.

Sample

A sample is defined as the “group of individuals from whom data are collected from within the target population” (McMillan & Schumacher, 2010, p. 129)

“Samples for qualitative studies are generally much smaller than those used in quantitative studies” (Mason, 2010, p.1). A sample consisting of between 8 to 15 teachers, 15 to 25 para educators, and 4 to 7 therapist will be drawn from the target populations elected. “There are no rules for sample size in qualitative inquiry. Sample size depends on what you want to know, the purpose of the inquiry, what’s at stake, what will be useful, what will have credibility, and what can be done with available time and resources” (Patton, 2002, pp. 242-243). Justification of unequal numbers of each group is due to the number of professionals working in the setting. Due to the specific nature of this population the sample size is contingent on these numbers.

The population is limited to a purposive sample of teachers, para educators, and therapists who work with students who attend the identified schools, K-6 school (Valley View Elementary), K-8 school (Yellen Learning Center), 7th-8th intermediate school (Joe Walker), and 9-12th high school’s (Desert Pathways, Palmdale High, and Pete Knight). A list will be provided to the administrators with the eligible candidates that meet the 2 year minimum requirements when working with students with emotional disturbance disorder. Furthermore the list will be compiled of teachers, para educators, and therapists, all of these candidates have the minimum requirements of experience, and

certifications for being a teacher, para educator, and therapist. Teachers were selected for this process due to their strict certifications in educating students with emotional disturbance disorder. Para educators also known as behaviorist are certified in administering token economies and behavior interventions for students with emotional disturbance disorder. Outside contracted therapists having credentials in therapeutic interventions to intervene with student behavior in the classroom if they are struggling academically or behaviorally.

The element of analysis is teachers, para educators, and therapists with a minimum of 2 years' experience of working with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. Due to the high turnover rate with employees in this field 2 years was the required minimum amount of experience. "High teacher turnover rates, specifically in programs serving students with E/BD, have been attributed to environmental/workplace variables" (Adera, 2007, p.3). The sample includes a focus group of teachers, para educators, and therapists who are properly certified and have been working with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder for at least 2 years. These individuals have been identified by the participating school administrator as reliable and meet all criteria.

Sample Selection Process

Once permission is obtained from the districts, administrators at the chosen sites will select from a list a teacher, para educator and therapist that is properly certified in their field and has worked in the population for at least 2 years to participate in the survey. The teacher selected for the focus group to present perspectives regarding student academic achievement to the relationship with token economies. A para educator selected for the

focus group to present perspectives of working with students one on one with behavior intervention utilizing token economies. Finally, a therapist selected for the focus group to present perspectives of token economies and how they affect crisis intervention.

Guest, Bunce, and Johnson (2006) advised that saturation frequently transpires near 12 participants in homogeneous groups. A sample consisting of between 8 to 15 teachers, 15 to 25 para educators, and 4 to 7 therapist will be drawn from the populations elected. The population is limited to teachers, para educators, and therapists who work with students who attend the identified schools from kindergarten through sixth grade, kindergarten through eighth grade, a seventh-eighth grade intermediate and those who attend the matching ninth through twelfth grade high schools. The ending selections are based upon the teachers, para educators, and therapists of each site identified by the administrator and meet all the criteria.

Instrumentation

This study will involve a qualitative approach utilizing a descriptive qualitative study design. The rationale of using the descriptive qualitative study is to investigate the environment of how utilizing a token economy impacts behavior and academic success with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder over diverse school settings. The investigator will employ focus groups with different groups of participants as resources to obtain valuable data (see Appendix D).

Furthermore the study's intention is to assemble focus groups for teachers, educators, and therapists that interact with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder utilizing a token economy for behavior intervention on a daily basis. The role of these focus groups is to present a methodical assessment and evaluate the

temperament of behavior and its impact on academic success for the students in the school configurations. Therefore, the focus groups can serve to extract significant information to be used in the foundation of the outline. The agenda incorporated explicit information associated to the research question, including data on the environment of behavior, academics, and token economies associated with the school models.

The researcher will be the mode of instrumentation, utilizing the research questions developed in the qualitative study; the researcher will conduct focus groups (see Appendix D). Focus groups will consist of one para educator, teacher and therapist. Each school configuration described will have their representatives of one para educator, teacher and therapist to contribute information. The focus groups will be recorded with the consent of the participants. Consent forms will be signed prior to configuring and administering the focus groups. Focus groups will be configured on each campus by the selection process utilizing the administrator as the mode of random selection.

The focus groups will serve as the main data collection instrument and will exclusively be conducted with: 1) teachers, 2) para educators, and 3) therapists. One focus group will be used for each school site. The focus group will follow the established inquiry from the research questions.

Reliability - Field Test

The validity of the instrument (see Appendix D) utilized for the focus group will be administered on a separate group of teachers, para educators, and therapists to ensure feedback and data legitimacy. The 4 research questions will be administrated to a focus group consisting of a teacher, para educator and therapist to ensure that the function and data collection will be adequate for the researcher's requirements. To ensure that the field

test is as identical as possible to the study the focus group will be administered on an intermediate school site to a teacher, para educator and therapist. After obtaining permission to conduct a focus group on the school site, the researcher will collect data from the focus group to ensure functionality and reliability. For the reason that the researcher is the instrument utilized in the study. After administering the focus group, the researcher will ask for feedback. Feedback will consist of suggestions or feelings regarding the questions and if the researcher remained neutral during the interview. The interviews will consist of the research questions regarding student's behavior while in a classroom setting. The researcher will be looking for depth of information and focus group feedback on the instrument (see Appendix D).

Validity. The variables were produced in direct reflection of the literature review to identify themes from the different participants. *About Behaviorism* is the foundation for so many theories and understanding of the human behavior condition. Understanding behavior requires a change in the "student behavior and academic achievement variable" and effect in the "token economy variable" which creates a "cause-and-effect connection" which becomes a "functional relation" (Skinner, 1977, p. 1). The literature review covered the spectrum of student behavior and interactions with teachers and staff. Throughout the literature review there is a spectrum of behavior and exploration of students' intrinsic reward system in relation to an extrinsic reward systems such as a token economy. The focus groups explores in-depth, open-ended questions to produce results of understanding how behavior impacting academic success utilizing a token economy system.

Inter-rater validity will be the teachers, para educators, and therapists' perspective when dealing with students with emotional disturbance disorder with different qualifications of behavior and academics. The validity comes from the input of all the participants in the focus group at Yellen Learning Center for the rationale that they specialize in serving students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. This population of students is often overlooked on general education campuses due to behavior issues. Often misunderstood these students pose problems on comprehensive sites. The main focus of Yellen Learning Center's token economy behavior system is to increase positive social behaviors and decrease the duration of negative behaviors.

Data Collection

No data will be collected for the study until it is approved by Brandman University Institutional Review Board. All participants involved with the study will fill out and sign a consent form (see Appendix C). Data collection will be accomplished over the 2015-16 school-year. The first phase of data collection will be to gain permission from the school districts involved to obtain access to the settings of inquiry. Once access is obtained, the researcher will form a rapport with the administration to obtain a selection of one teacher, para educator and therapist meeting all the criteria to be able to be involved with the study on each site. The second phase of data collection will be scheduling and administering a focus group to a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a K-6 school (Valley View Elementary). The third phase of data collection will be scheduling and administering a focus group to a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a K-8 school

(Yellen Learning Center). The fourth phase of data collection will be scheduling and administering a focus group to a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a 7-8 school (Joe Walker). The fifth phase of data collection will be scheduling and administering a focus group to a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a 9-12th high schools (Desert Pathways). The sixth phase of data collection will be scheduling and administering a focus group to a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a 9-12th high school (Palmdale High). The seventh phase of data collection will be scheduling and administering a focus group to a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a 9-12th high school (Pete Knight). The eighth phase of data collection will be ending the focus groups. The focus groups of all the participants and observations will be accomplished by March 2016. Analysis of data will be accomplished during June and July of 2016. All data will be locked in a safe to protect the identity of individuals involved.

- The first sample will be data from a focus group of a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a K-6 school and who employ token economy strategy.
- The second sample will be data from a focus group of a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a K-8 school and who employ token economy strategy.

- The third sample will be data from a focus group of a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a 7-8 school and who employ token economy strategy.
- The fourth sample will be data from a focus group of a teacher, para educator, and therapist who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a 9-12th high school and who employ token economy strategy.

Data Analysis

The examiner will categorize themes and patterns associated with three major concepts: academic achievement, behavior, and token economy dynamics; explicitly in creating a perception of how behavior impacts academic success with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder. Furthermore, the investigation will need to discover any other concepts and patterns concerning behavior with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder interrelated to academic achievement that were not expected in the formal research questions.

The data gathered from focus groups of teachers, para educators, and therapists who work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in a K-6 school (Valley View Elementary), K-8 school (Yellen Learning Center), 7th-8th intermediate school (Joe Walker), and 9-12th high school's (Desert Pathways, Palmdale High, and Pete Knight), will be coded and organized by school, and individual's career title i.e. (teacher, para educator or therapist). Utilizing this method of coding will guarantee individuals perspective to be accounted for.

The investigator will use traditional qualitative data analysis techniques such as a matrix to scrutinize the data resulting from the focus groups. The only individuals selected for the sample will be teachers, para educators, and therapists identified by the school site administrator that meet all criteria and work exclusively with students who suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. Once all of the data sources are compiled the researcher will look for plausibility of token economies. Initially creating codes or segments to organize the data, which will create categories and discovering patterns. Inter-rater reliability will be the contrasting perspectives of the teacher, para educator and therapists views regarding token economies. Opposing and correlating focus group data, formulated from the teachers, para educators, and therapists occupied in the elementary school locations as compared to those in the intermediate school location as compared to those in the high school locations will be documented. An examination of the focus groups data will be shared with the participants to ensure that it permitted consideration of what was taking place with students.

Limitations

1. The individuals at each school site selected could pose bias due to favoritism.
2. Due to the nature of the participants and their respective experience and expertise the research may have restrictions in becoming generalizable.
3. The principal researcher engages in additional teaching and supervisory duties on a separate school site. These obligations could present issues in the data collection process.
4. The small sample size and limited geographic area of study may affect the ability to generalize results.

Summary

Chapter 3 provides a thorough analysis of the methodology utilized in the qualitative study being presented. A qualitative study design was selected to provide data collection for the purposes of determining how behavior impacts academic achievement utilizing a token economy with students who suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder. Data will be composed by means of focus groups. The study will examine the levels of behavior impacting academic achievement utilizing a token economy.

The qualitative data compilation will include focus groups of data from the teachers, para educators, and therapists in the elementary, intermediate and high schools selected. The societal validity of this investigation is required in order to achieve the following behavior expectations. Expectations within the classroom utilized through the study will be reliable, with the potential of the general education population to gain benefits from the study in perceptive student behavior.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH, DATA COLLECTION, AND FINDINGS

Utilizing a qualitative study design, the researcher conducted focus groups throughout campuses from kindergarten to twelfth grade. Focus groups were accomplished with a teacher, a para educator, and a therapist from Valley View Elementary, Yellen Learning Center, Joe Walker, Desert Pathways, Palmdale High, and Pete Knight. School sites selected for focus groups were amongst three school districts, in order to provide a broader understanding of utilizing token economies for behavior and academic achievement with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder.

The purpose of the qualitative study design was to identify common themes throughout a token economy and how it impacts behavior and academics for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. Research questions were specifically adapted to comprehend perceived positive and negative impacts regarding behavior utilizing a token economy. Also, the research questions were designed to provide data regarding positive and negative impacts in relation to academic achievement with the population of severely emotionally disturbed students. In order to achieve complete understanding of behavior and academic success utilizing a token economy, the methodology employed a teacher, a para educator, and a therapist from diverse school sites and grade levels in order to uncover common themes. Data collection procedures consisted of contacting administrators on diverse sites to develop relationships in order to have administrators select a teacher, a para educator, and a therapist that would be qualified for the focus group. The population consists of teachers, para educators, and therapists who work with students with emotional disturbance disorder within Los Angeles County, California. The researcher located schools that serve the needs of emotionally disturbed students from

across the Antelope Valley in order to provide a broad spectrum of understanding. Samples included teachers, para educators, and therapists with proper certification and a minimum of two years of experience working with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder.

Overview

Chapter 4 is a systematic clarification of the purpose statement, research questions, research methods and data collection procedures, presentation and analysis of data population, and sample of my study of teachers, para educators, and therapists that utilize token economies for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this qualitative study analysis will be to identify how utilizing token economy impacts behavior and academic success for students with emotional disturbance disorder as perceived by teachers, para educators, and therapists.

Research Questions

1. What are the perceived positive impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?
2. What are the perceived negative impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?
3. What are the perceived positive impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

4. What are the perceived negative impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

Research Methods and Data Collection Procedures

Utilizing a qualitative study approach, the researcher conducted focus groups to gain a perception of the impact token economies have on behavior and academics with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. Data collection was conducted through phases in order to keep organization. The researcher contacted school districts to be allowed access to individual school sites. Once access was granted to the school sites, the researcher developed relationships with the administrators on the diverse sites. Through these interactions, the researcher had the administrators select a teacher, a para educator, and a therapist that work exclusively with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder for the focus group. After the groups were formed and waivers were signed, the researcher conducted the focus groups.

Population

The population consists of teachers, para-educators, and therapists who work exclusively with students with emotional disturbance disorder in the following schools in Los Angeles County, California: Yellen Learning Center, Desert Pathways, Palmdale High School, Pete Knight High School, Joe Walker Middle School and Valley View Elementary School. Students in the selected three school districts are located in the Antelope Valley. There are 15 teachers, 25 para educators, and 7 therapists working with these students on the sites referenced.

Sample

The sample includes a focus group of teachers, para educators, and therapists who are properly certified and have been working with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder for at least two years. These individuals have been identified by the participating school administrator as reliable and meet all criteria.

Presentation and Analysis of Data

Research Question: 1. What are the perceived positive impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?

Teachers reported students on their task behavior improving. The teacher from Desert Pathways stated “I think you see more on-task behavior [and] completion of assignments.” The desired behaviors would increase frequently upon utilizing a token economy. Physical gestures from students such as smiling and having a sense of pride were displayed when teachers implemented token economy consistently. The teacher from Joe Walker mentioned “I see would-be smiling. It would be a more pleasant child.” Level parties at the end of the week provided adequate rewards to incentivize desired behaviors from students. The Pete Knight teacher affirmed that “Every other Friday, we may have some type of a level system party where the kids try to earn level three and four’s because they know at the end of the week they’re going to receive some type of reward.” As token economies are implemented, teachers noted that problem behaviors would convert, being less consistent, and recovery time from off-task behaviors would begin to diminish. The Valley View teacher acknowledged that “It decreases the behavior relatively quickly when implemented consistently.” The token economy became a sense of pride, making students feel good about themselves with the additional tokens or points

they earned. Consistency, structure, and being clear when utilizing a token economy were highlighted as points in creating a successful token economy system in the classroom.

Para educators reported the token economy being utilized as leverage for on-task behavior. The Pete Knight para educator stated “I’ve noticed that you can use the rewards or the token economy system as a type of leverage for the students.” The token economy can be utilized as a reminder to keep students on task or as an incentive to combat certain behaviors. The Palmdale High para educator mentioned “You can remind them of their points, their token rewards that they could obtain if they improve their behavior.”

Physical gestures were mentioned as smiling and becoming eager to finish their work, which would accelerate positive outcomes. The Joe Walker para educator confirmed “They’re more eager to finish their work when they have some kind of thing to look forward to.”

Therapists reported token economies as being a motivator; the better the behavior the further academics will be produced. In addition, concerning the therapeutic setting, points promoted students to participate. The Desert Pathways therapist stated “It also works in therapy as well because sometimes we’ll allow them to get bonus points, or they get their points that they’re supposed to get in classroom; we’ll give it to them in therapy, if they do well in therapy as well.” Students enjoy the structure and can learn self-management through delayed gratification of level parties on Fridays. The Palmdale High therapist mentioned “With delayed gratification where kids realize that something fun is coming up Friday, so they better handle their business Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, and Thursday.” The token economy strengthens desired behaviors in the classroom and on the general school campus. The Joe Walker therapist affirmed “It generalizes into the

mainstreaming opportunities because the majority of the kids in this class are mainstreamed, and the token economy influences them to have appropriate behavior in the mainstream class that they have.” Token economies can moreover meet the requirements of individual students by having the system modified towards individual needs. The promotion of independence while monitoring their own behavior and individual goals is furthermore an incentive for utilizing token economies. The Pete Knight therapist acknowledged “They can kind of monitor their own behavior, which is really what we strive for kids to do, to be more independent so they're able to monitor their own behavior within the classroom.”

Research Question: 2. What are the perceived negative impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?

Teachers reported that the token economy promotes extrinsic motivation for students. When trying to take students off of the external rewards and craft an intrinsic motivator there becomes the concern. The Joe Walker teacher states “There's a point at which you do have to wean the token and get them to intrinsically accept the information, whatever the token represented before, they have to then become motivated intrinsically, and that's not an easy process.” How the token economy is administered can additionally present issues. If not worded properly, the token economy can be transformed into a punitive system. The Palmdale High teacher discussed that “If it's not handled properly, or worded properly to the students, it can be seen as punitive.” Students who do not obtain certain rewards can become upset and end up taking it personally. The Pete Knight teacher recalled an account “I had a kid who wasn't allowed [because] he didn't earn the necessary points to be on level three or four, and we had pizza that day, for two or three

days the kid came back and was upset. He took it personal, [but] every day is a new day, and every day we will be tracking points. But he took it personal and was acting out for two or three days.” Consistency when following up with rewards and communication amongst different classrooms or adults is vital. The Yellen teacher accredited “The biggest issue that we say is their inconsistency between classrooms. One classroom will reward for a certain behavior and other classrooms won't even acknowledge [a certain behavior].” Students that have inconsistencies with token economies may trigger negative behaviors. Tokens themselves become a distraction--students playing with the tokens or counting them when they should be on task. The Joe Walker teacher confirmed “I have seen kids smell the success cash. I have seen them count it, sort it, they get it together, [and] smell it. They bend it in half like it's a lot of money, like it's in a wallet.”

Transitioning from a least- restrictive environment to a general education classroom or campus may present problems for the reason that there are minimal rewards. The Yellen teacher declared that with the “Transitioning from Yellen to another school when they attend Yellen, they're used to getting these rewards. Then they go to another school and there are minimal rewards—if any rewards at all.”

Para educators reported students doing what is expected of them solely for the reward and not from learned behaviors. The Desert Pathways para educator stated “I think the biggest thing is that if you don't have a reward, they're not going to do anything. So they're not actually learning the behaviors and they're only doing it for the rewards.” Behaviors are not taught or reinforced, but achieved for the reason of the owed expectation. The Yellen para educator mentioned that “It's not taught. Even if it is taught, it's not enforced all the time and it can't be because you only have the student at certain

amount of times. Until it is universal 24 hours a day, the expectation is owed.” Para educators recognized the physical tokens being a distraction during class time was a negative. Students displayed frantic work habits in order to achieve levels before rewards were administered. The Joe Walker para educator confirmed that “They want to keep counting and it gets too important sometimes—past the point that we want it to be... And also, on Fridays is when we let them use the cash, the token, and sometimes they just go frantic trying to finish their work because their motivation is right at the step of what they want.” Additionally, students that did not make levels for rewards would persuade classmates to not make level or distract them from achieving acceptable behavior. The token economy would create a negative behavior if levels are not achieved. The Pete Knight para educator affirmed that “Some of the kids just don't care if they make it or they don't, and sometimes that can distract the other students as well. So I want to say, some of the kids are upset that they didn't make it, so then they try and bring the other students down, or they just don't care about the level system at all.”

Therapists reported students’ ages having diverse perceptions regarding the token economy system. The Pete Knight therapist discussed:

“Some students aren't as motivated with the positive reinforcement. With high school students, it might be hard to find things that are personally motivating or positively reinforcing for them because they're teenagers now, so they might not be excited about the little things, and, within a school setting, there's only certain things that we can provide. We can't be taking them on field trips every day, but some of them might not care about things like that, whereas younger kids might get really excited.”

High school students are often not as motivated with certain rewards. Younger students are motivated for small physical reinforcements. The Palmdale High therapist stated that “Sometimes the older kids, don’t want anything to do with the tangible token or physical rewards. Some of the younger kids want something all of the time. And that was a struggle for us.” Students are motivated by the reward and not doing it out of a learned behavior. The Desert Pathways therapist affirmed “They’re just doing it for the reward, not necessarily because they want to get better in terms of behaviors.” Competition regarding points received amongst students becomes a negative. The Valley View therapist confirmed that “The kids become a little competitive about how many points so and so has, and if they [believe] that the other person received a point or sticker [that] was unnecessarily given to them, then they may have a fit about that.” When shifting from external rewards of the token economy to intrinsic rewards in a general education setting, it becomes difficult to fade out the tangible reinforcements. The Joe Walker therapist acknowledged “When you're trying to generalize that into a GenEd classroom, the GenEd teacher is not going to be looking at you like ‘oh, you're level three or four, we're going to give you this reward.’ It has to be intrinsic now. You're not going to get some reward in every single class.” Expectations among staff members or settings for students develop into inconsistencies, with rewards for certain behavior responses. The Yellen therapist stated “The expectation depends on who the child is dealing with, because there's different staff who will reward different behaviors.”

Research Question: 3. What are the perceived positive impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

Teachers reported that students increase on-task behavior academically. Students start building self-confidence, which increases the effort exerted on academics. The Yellen teacher mentioned “Once they see that they're doing well and they're earning their points, they seem to want to push themselves harder to do better academically and we see that.” Earning points creates an intrinsic reward where students become more involved and engaged in the learning process. The Valley View teacher confirmed “The points there are internally motivating and so they are hard work; they get rewarded for their hard work and it pays off for them.” The token economy starts as an intrinsic reward for small gains on academics which turns into external rewards with improved test scores. Token economies provide support in producing work from students therefore data for the teacher to comprehend students’ levels academically. The Joe Walker teacher affirmed “It has improved their testing, because you want to make sure that this is their best work. If this is their best work, then you have to accept that and then you know where to go in terms of instruction.” Students on different levels can have token economies individualized to support their academic shortcomings. The Pete Knight teacher acknowledged “A lot of the assignments are individualized. So for academics, we have many different goals for each kid. [Each kid is] different, so we talk about the growth academically. Some kids may go from a first grade level to reading on a third grade level—that in itself is success for that kid.”

Para educators reported that token economies are a motivator to stay on task. Staying on task produces academic skills and focus to accomplish assignments. The Desert Pathways para educator confirmed that “It is a motivator for them to stay on task. So when they are on task, they are practicing the skills and getting better at them.” A

token economy produces less prompts for students to complete an assignment. The Palmdale High para educator affirmed “They're more willing to take help, whether we ask if they need help or they ask us.” The token economy creates positive reinforcements, which keep students organized. The Pete Knight para educator stated that it “Helps the students watch what they're doing. I let them know as long as you are doing your work, each and every period is a new period.” As academics are produced, fewer tokens are required to reinforce on-task behavior. The Joe Walker para educator acknowledged “You give them more tokens, and as they progress you can give them a little bit less for the same amount of work as you go. Ideally, we just wean them off as they go. But it just motivates them sometimes for getting their work done.” Individuals have selected realistic expectations for their academic levels when utilizing a token economy system. The Pete Knight para educator declared “Each of my students are different that I work with every day, so they need to have a few things tailored so that they can be successful, see progress, see achievement, and they can obtain whatever it is that they want.”

Therapists reported the token economy being a motivator to stay on task as well as academic achievement improvements. Desert Pathways therapist confirmed “So being on task and doing your work, you get the full amount of points, which is part of the token economy. And then with that, you're doing more work, then, obviously, hopefully you're learning more and your academics are improving.” When students receive better grades, they are receiving rewards. The Yellen therapist mentioned that “It's his parent providing token economy based off of his grades—so he does earn rewards for good grades.” It starts with behavior; understanding that once behavior is under control, the token economy can focus on the academics. The Joe Walker therapist acknowledged “Once you

have [good] behavior, the token economy helps them generalize it into academics.”

Token economies can be individualized to suit students at different academic grade levels. The token economies are flexible, meeting the needs of different students and improving the work. The Pete Knight therapist states that “There's flexibility with the academics, and we might have somebody who's reading at this level and there might be somebody who's at grade level, but they each could be working on similar assignments, the expectation just might not be the same for each.” This can motivate students to develop into being mainstreamed. The Palmdale High therapist affirmed “Mainstream may be a more powerful, motivator sometimes.”

Research Question: 4. What are the perceived negative impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

Teachers reported token economies creating a hyper focus on tasks rather than enrichment in academics. Students are focusing on rewards, not the quality of work. The Valley View teacher acknowledged that “They would become hyper focused on getting their task that they can get to the points. We have one particular student when it comes to reading and comprehension, he doesn't want to actually spend the time to actually re-read multiple times, so his comprehension isn't improving academically.” Students that do not earn the rewards dismiss academics and it affects their grades negatively. The Pete Knight teacher confirmed “I think it ties in to what we just said because if a kid feels he's never successful, I'm seeing them take their paper and throw it in the trash, and they know that that paper needs to be graded so they're missing out on their assignment.” Outside influences in media or friends can promote negative self-fulfilling prophecies

and academics end up suffering. The Desert Pathways teacher mentioned that “They try to become what they see and hear, rather than what we’re trying to tell them academically who they are and what they can be.” If rewards are food-based, obesity could be an issue. The Joe Walker teacher declared that “The food reinforcer is food. We don't want our kids to be obese. We want to be mindful of food.” Students that are off task behaviorally for large amounts of time create gaps in their academic instruction. The Yellen teacher avowed “Academically they’re very low because their behavior has gotten in the way of their learning, because they're either in the office, they're sent home, [or] they didn't come to school.”

Para educators reported token economies not being emphasized in regards to academics. The Pete Knight para educator mentioned “I feel like it's a small portion on the token economy system. It's maybe two of the rows that we even grade them on for each period.” Success in academics can promote students to less structured academic classrooms, which then creates an insecure environment for students that are accustomed to the structure of a token economy. The Palmdale High para educator stated that “Intellectually, they're ready for it. Mentally, they're not. So sometimes they get a taste of it; they want to pull back in, into our environment—into a safe, comfortable environment. Well, I don't want to say safe, I don't want to say comfortable, but a secure. Secure environment.” Students are conditioned for a certain amount of work to reward ratios. The Valley View para educator affirmed “They know about what time they do this much within this time span, so we try to make them work so much of that [so] they are not consistently being hammered with a lot of work, but they know what we expect from them, so that's the negative act ... sometimes they know they are doing too much work

within the short time compared to what everybody else is doing.” Quality of work can diminish because the focus is on rewards and not academics. The Joe Walker para educator confirmed that “You look back at the actual work and the quality might not be there because they're just in a rush to actually finish the assignment. So sometimes I think quality goes down, and we have to double check the quality part of the work because of that.” Double negatives can occur regarding not earning points then academics suffer and behavior issues arise. The Yellen para educator acknowledged “They don't realize that if they had a meltdown three hours ago, it's going to affect the store economy we have, then we have another meltdown because they can't go to store.”

Therapists reported that token economies can develop into negatives when competitive nature occurs. The Valley View therapist stated “When they're either competitive or frustrated, it takes away from the academics and so it's harder to come back on top if they are fresh with the token economy, or they could see somebody else got something that they didn't. That would be the only negative is that time away from academics.” Students develop dismissive attitudes towards academics if behavior is good, due to the lack of emphasis of academics in the token economy system. The Pete Knight therapist affirmed “The token economy is kind of geared a little bit more towards the behavior part. Of course they're rewarded for being on task and doing their work, but if they feel that they are behaving, they might think, ‘Oh, well, I don't have to do any work, I'm behaving so I'll still get by or have enough points to get by.’” Students coming from general education settings may reject the structure for the reason of never having participated in a token economy system previously. The Palmdale High therapist confirmed “Let's say the kid's been in general education their whole life, and then they hit

high school their freshman year and something happens, and then they are placed and they don't really want to be placed in the program. Maybe they see it as a restrictive placement, and it becomes negative inherently.” Self-doubt is a negative when students are not feeling confident enough for academic achievement. The Desert Pathways therapist acknowledged “That doubt, in terms of academics, that they’re not strong enough, or sometimes they say, ‘Oh, I’m not smart enough.’ And sometimes that might be a correlation almost to the token economy because they also don’t feel like they can ever make level, or it’s like, ‘why would I make level?’ and you see that with their academics as well.” Token economies promote only working for the reinforcement or to complete a task, not the academic lesson. The Joe Walker therapist declared “The main negative, that they won't work for anything other than the reinforcer, academically, and to do good work, like C or above work, not just rush like he said to get it done just to get, ‘Oh, I did all my work. I meet the criteria,’ when you're not actually... and learning. Learning, gain some kind of academic knowledge while, you're trying to get that doesn't always go in hand-in-hand.”

Summary

Token economies are a fundamental instrument in combating challenging behaviors from students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder. The token economy provides a systematic reward system that allows teachers to focus not only on shaping behavior but producing academic achievement. Reward systems for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder are required when students struggle with being competent to manage on-task behavior for extensive periods of time. Although there are negatives to a token economy, such as dependency for structure and working

towards only the reward, the positives overshadow the negatives. Students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder struggle in classroom environments with no structure. Token economies implement structure and teach students acceptable social skills while producing academics. Teachers, para educators, and therapists reported on-task behavior improving when implementing token economies.

CHAPTER V: FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Utilizing a qualitative study analysis design, the researcher identified how utilizing a token economy impacts behavior and academic success with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. Focus groups conducted utilized teachers, para educators, and therapists that work with this specific subgroup of students, to present insights on the administration and results from token economies. Research questions were designed to afford positive and negative impacts that the token economy displays on behavior and academic achievement for students that suffer from an emotional disturbance disorder. The research method approach of a qualitative study design achieved the perception organically of how students respond positively or negatively, behaviorally and academically, to token economies. The researcher contacted school districts throughout the Antelope Valley to increase a broad spectrum of knowledge from grade levels kindergarten to 12th. Once the researcher was capable of gaining admittance to school sites, relationships developed with administration achieved contact with a teacher, para educator, and therapist from each site for the focus group. Teachers, para educators, and therapists working with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder in Los Angeles County, California were the population selected for the focus groups. Yellen Learning Center, Desert Pathways, Palmdale High School, Pete Knight High School, Joe Walker Middle School and Valley View Elementary School are the sites that the population was selected from. Samples included teachers, para educators, and therapists that were certified with at least two years of experience working with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. These individuals were selected

by participating administrators once the researcher discussed guidelines and was notified that these individuals met all criteria.

Major Findings

Research Question: 1. What are the perceived positive impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?

Teachers, para educators, and therapists all approved of on-task behavior improving utilizing token economies. Furthermore, there was a concurrence that students take a sense of satisfaction in the accomplishments from the token economy when behavior was met. Para educators highlighted that token economies could be developed as influence for assignment completion or motivation to contest nonconstructive behaviors. Therapists mentioned token economies exploiting diverse settings whether mainstreamed into other classes or therapeutic-involving contribution.

How this responds to the literature is Bandura's *Social Learning Theory* only solidifying the conditioned responses through the social observations of a structure class modeling a token economy. Jones' *Positive Classroom Discipline* reinforces this point by understanding there is "no best method" when dealing with discipline in the classroom. Certain students require extrinsic rewards in order to respond appropriately in the classroom setting. Kozol's *Savage Inequalities* provides examples of how different school systems affect different socioeconomic demographics. Students are simply responding to the stimulus or the lack thereof. Often these students do not have intrinsic motivation so the extrinsic reward of a token economy is the best positive discipline approach.

Research Question: 2. What are the perceived negative impacts of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?

Teachers, para educators, and therapists all decided that token economies promote an extrinsic motivation for students. The negative impact on behavior is students are fueled for the reward but not learning appropriate behaviors. Token economy administrations vary from classroom to teacher. When token economies are administered inconsistently, it can be presented as a negative rather than a positive reinforcement system. A student not earning points takes it personally and it develops into a punitive system. In addition, tokens themselves grow to be a distraction for students whether counting success cash or concentrating solely on earning stickers or points. One of the largest concerns is that students do not learn to shift extrinsic motivation to intrinsic motivation for appropriate behavior responses.

Literature supports the negative impacts of token economies throughout Kohn's *Punishment by Rewards*. The research demonstrates the efficiency positive reinforcement shapes behaviors; however, it does condition students for temporary gratification. Kohn presents the ideology of token economies conditioning students to be controlled, rather than students employing self-governing behaviors. Students look for the next incentive, which is the negative consequence. Incentive systems reduce students drive to work or to be challenged. Human beings are intrinsically rewarded by their productivity, and creating the monetary value destroys it.

Research Question: 3. What are the perceived positive impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

Teachers, para educators, and therapists were all in agreement that token economies enhanced academic performance. Token economies built self-confidence in

students, which amplified efforts towards academic achievement. Students started with intrinsic rewards of earning points, which became extrinsic rewards by higher grades on tests. As work productivity increased, teachers were able to utilize that data to gear appropriate grade-level academics. Para educators confirmed less prompts for students to complete academic assignments. As work increased, fewer tokens would have to be utilized to generate academics. Individualized token economy goals could focus on academic shortcomings.

The literature Canter and Canter's *Assertive Discipline* focuses on this proactive approach to classroom management. Ideologies of conductive learning can only be accomplished through a proactive approach to discipline. The token economy system creates on-task behaviors, which creates academic achievement. One proactive measure taken is creating a token economy system in a classroom prior to negative behaviors arising. A systematic approach to establishing norms within the classroom will permit students to effectively comprehend what is expected. Dreikur's *Discipline Without Tears* follows similar viewpoints regarding teachers respecting the autonomy of a student, by establishing a democratic leadership style. Token economies allocate democracy within the classroom with guidelines. The token economy allows students to earn or fail to earn tokens by acceptable behavior and academic assignment completion.

Research Question: 4. What are the perceived negative impacts of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

Teachers, para educators, and therapists all confirmed that students have a hyper focus on tasks to achieve rewards. Academics suffer when the focal point is on rewards

through the quality of work produced. Token economies can create a double negative; not earning rewards therefore dismissing academics. Competitive natures from students arise creating negative behaviors. An institutionalized mentality occurs from the token economy. The system creates a secure environment making students fearful of mainstreaming into other classroom environments.

Literature supporting the negative impact of token economies is Kohn's *Punishment by Rewards*. Kohn solidifies the point that treating students as if they are animals only creates temporary obedience. He affirms that this is the wrong way of motivating individuals. Students should be trained through autonomy for workforce authenticity in the future. Creating a student that has intrinsic rewards for academic achievement is additionally important for society. Token economies construct traditions attempting to control individuals. Teachers are striving for compliance rather than competency.

Unexpected Findings

When conducting the focus group at Palmdale High School, the therapist mentioned students being diagnosed with emotional disturbance disorder at the high school age. These students have traditionally been in general education settings their entire academic career. Nevertheless, something traumatic happened to them resulting in the emotional disturbed diagnosis. As a result, the students are placed in the emotional disturbance classroom setting. An unexpected finding was at what point the emotional disturbance disorder discontinued being diagnosed, due to age level. Is there a line being blurred between emotional disturbances disorder and post-traumatic stress syndrome?

Conclusions

As the literature indicates comprehending behavior requires a “cause-and-effect connection” which later becomes a functional relationship, according to Skinner. There are “inner causes” which allow individuals to display external reactions. The findings of this study shows that students can be conditioned to respond by intrinsic rewards developing the cause-and-effect relationship. It is the inner psyche that drives the actions of the physical body. A human body is simply responding to stimulus i.e. “if an individual is hungry, they consume food.” The findings of this study lead to the conclusion that token economy systems provide an external stimulus for a conditioned response. During the investigation students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder lacked understanding of on-task behaviors. On-task behavior in the classroom setting is not intrinsically rewarding for these students. By conditioning individuals extrinsically, the administrators of the token economy system developed the intrinsic reward. Furthermore, the study confirmed students that are labeled emotionally disturbed characteristically appear from low socio-economic backgrounds. Background plays a function in the intrinsic reward system conditioned by environment. Acceptable behavior practices in the classroom are not displayed by individuals for the reason that a student does not see the value in education. When students struggle with on-task behavior, academic lessons endure as a consequence. Research supports token economy systems influencing on-task behavior, which created external rewards in higher test scores and academic completion.

Literature supports that token economies although efficient in creating immediate behavioral response, promotes monetary value rather than intrinsically rewarding

productivity. The research indicates students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder do not have intrinsic value for on-task behavior or academic achievement. Due to students' background and influences outside of the classroom, education and authoritative figures are not regarded in high esteem. Research demonstrated by creating a token economy system that is positive, it converts this negative connotation. Teachers, para educators, and therapists that fail to administer the token economy system properly and in a positive manner affect the outcome of utilizing a token economy. Nevertheless, the study confirmed token economies having negative impacts in regards to competition and focus on short-term rewards. However, throughout all the research conducted, the benefits outweigh the negatives. These students struggle to distinguish the significance in education, and token economies are one way to increase that importance. The research showed token economies administered in special education classrooms are a mechanism to get students intrinsically rewarded about education. Once this has been achieved, students are mainstreamed into general education classrooms, where the token economies were less prevalent.

Implications for Action

Research confirms token economies utilized in classrooms for students that require the intrinsic motivation to perform on-task behaviors and complete academic assignments works. The study established that teachers, para educators, and therapists utilizing token economies need to maintain positive verbiage usage when administering token economies. Due to negative behaviors displayed by students, it is easy to conduct token economies in a punitive manner. The research indicated regular debriefing and monthly meetings are essential to maintain that the teachers, para educators, and

therapists are all displaying continuity. Teachers and para educators must individualize token economies for supplementary academic achievement. Research shows token economies should be an evolving structure that is utilized for on-task behaviors. However, research indicated that once the behaviors are extinguished, focus should be shifted towards academic achievement. This dynamic leads to mainstreaming students into general education classrooms. The study confirmed therapists must continue therapy sessions with students when they are mainstreamed into the general education classroom. When designing a token economy system the research confirms, focus on evolving students and coaxing them off the system is imperative. The system needs to construct a transfer from extrinsic to intrinsic rewards with their appropriate on-task behaviors and academic achievement. Once the students develop self-motivation, they can persist in a general education classroom. Therapists need to sustain a relationship with the students to append support and retrieve data for the teachers and para educators on how they can continue to evolve the system. Maintaining this succession of instructions will lead to graduating students from token economy programs rather than graduating from specialized schools.

Recommendations for Further Research

Recommendations to advance this research: Are token economy incentives serving needs that students already should have? Throughout my research I noticed that token economies are geared towards low socio-economic students. These students typically are impoverished and basic necessities are not met. Second recommendation for research: Why is there such a saturation of African American male students diagnosed with emotional disturbance disorder? During my research, population size seemed to

favor African American male students. Third recommendation for research: At what age is emotionally disturbed disorder not diagnosed? When researching in the high schools, a therapist mentioned that there were students who were always in general education classrooms until something tragic happened. Therefore, these students were diagnosed with emotional disturbance disorder and designated to a special education classroom. Fourth recommendation for research: What is the difference between emotional disturbance disorder (ED) and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) at the later age? Students that are diagnosed in high school that have always been in general education classrooms then are designated into a special education classroom due to a tragedy. Military service veterans that return home to utilize their GI Bill and due to PTSD cannot function in a college classroom. Is it age that determines the difference, even though the symptoms on the DSM scale are virtually identical. At what point do we decipher the difference between ED and PTSD? Fifth recommendation for research: College graduation rates of students with emotional disturbance disorder that have been in specialized settings utilizing token economies? At what rate are these token economies serving their purpose and rehabilitating students? Sixth recommendation for research: Token economies in the classroom as related to the workforce? What is the difference between working for an extrinsic reward in the classroom opposed to a paycheck?

Concluding Remarks and Reflections

As I reflect on the research process and all trials and tribulations that lead me up to this point, I experience pride and accomplishment. Not many individuals are willing to take on the venture of pursuing a doctoral degree. Reflecting on the research process with the obstacles that were laid in front of me, it's almost as if I can't believe it's coming to a

close. When I collected research from the high school district, I lucked out. My cohort mentor just happened to be the superintendent of the Antelope Valley High School District. This allowed me access to the high schools involved in the focus groups. Little did I know coordinating individuals to meet with me for these focus groups would be the challenging part. This educated me on how to develop organizational skills and setting appointments. Furthermore, this also required me to work on my intrapersonal skills when dealing with difficult individuals and trying to achieve an objective. For this, I consider the doctoral degree reading “Organizational Leadership” worthy. Palmdale School District provided its own set of challenges as well. Having to submit paperwork through the hierarchy of the district provided extra obstacles to tolerate. As I look back, I realize that those created positives and an appreciation for dealing with the individuals in the focus groups. I actually utilized the packets that I created from this enterprise on all the focus groups conducted. Another complication was retrieving therapists for the focus groups. They seem to be the odd anomaly within the research. Although the therapists work with the schools, they do not work for the schools. So soliciting them was not a straightforward undertaking. Westside School District had its own set of issues in order to achieve access to their school sites. I had to contact the superintendent and conduct a formal request at a board meeting. In front of the school board, I presented my dissertation in order to gain access to their school sites. Nevertheless, for all this, I'm grateful, for the reason that I learned so much. It was lessons about being professional and how to present myself in front of the administration of school districts. Also, all these fine people helped me attain my objective. One conversation that I had with a teacher sticks out more than the others because of the question that I was asked. When I was

finished conducting a focus group, the teacher asked me "Why are you doing this?" It was perplexing to me that a teacher that serves the needs of emotionally disturbed students would ask me why I would conduct this type of research. For me, I thought that it goes without saying that this group is often overlooked and not fairly represented. However, I simply replied to her that I had worked with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder for ten years. I've always had a passion for working with this type of environment. I feel my aspiration of understanding what makes students achieve would be no better served than with this research. As I reflect back on one of the first questions I was ever asked in training when I became a teacher: "If you died tomorrow what would you want written on your tombstone?" I stated "The world was a better place because he was around." To this day, I would still want that written on my tombstone. Hopefully, with this research, I am making a difference in this small subgroup of students' lives.

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APPENDIX A

School Description and Mission Statement

School Description and Mission Statement (School Year 2011-12)

This section provides information about the school, its programs and its goals.

Mission Statement

The mission of the Yellen Learning Center is to provide a healthy and safe learning environment for students with individual education program (IEP) plans, grades Kindergarten-8th. Our students require a specialized public educational program addressing social skills and emotional health in order to promote independent adaptive functioning and to facilitate academic achievement.

We shall:

- Serve elementary and intermediate students with significant emotional disabilities within the Antelope Valley SELPA
- Utilize research-based interventions and positive behavioral support
- Collaborate with multiple mental health agencies using therapeutic interventions and psychiatric services
- Assess the individual needs of students and utilize case-management
- Provide counseling, behavior interventions and family communication / support
- Promote standard-based instruction and hold high expectations for learning
- Provide ongoing development of Individual Educational Program (IEP) plans
- Develop and maintain meaningful partnerships with support agencies
- Provide fair and equitable levels of service through consistent and standardized policies and procedures
- Providing crisis intervention with integration of non-violent restraint procedures (Pro-Act/NCPI) to insure the physical and emotional safety of students.

APPENDIX B

Academic Performance Index

Academic Performance Index Growth by Student Group – Three-Year Comparison

Group	Actual API Change		
	2009-10	2010-11	2011-12
All Students at the School	15	-16	45
Black or African American			
American Indian or Alaska Native			
Asian			
Filipino			
Hispanic or Latino			
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander			
White			
Two or More Races			
Socioeconomically Disadvantaged			
English Learners			
Students with Disabilities			

APPENDIX C



Brandman University
Department of Education

Research Study: A Case Study Analysis on How Utilizing a Token Economy Impacts
Behavior and Academic Success

Researcher Name: Solomon D. DeFrancis

FOCUS GROUP CONSENT FORM: Adult Participation in a focus Group

What is the Research?

You have been asked to take part in a research study about being teacher/para educator/therapist of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder.

The purpose of this study is to find out how utilizing a token economy impacts behavior and academic success with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder.

Why have I been asked to take part?

You are a teacher/para educator/therapist of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder.

We would like you to take part in a discussion on how utilizing a token economy impacts behavior and academic success with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder. We will talk about how your role as a teacher/para educator/therapist of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder affects token economies and the impact it has on behavior and academic success.

Voluntary Participation

This discussion is *voluntary*—you do not have to take part if you do not want to. If you do not take part, it will have no effect on your employment or career status. If any questions make you feel uncomfortable, you do not have to answer them. You may leave the group at any time for any reason.

Risks

We do not think any risks are involved in taking part in this study. This study may include risks that are unknown at this time.

Benefits

There are no benefits for taking part in this research. We hope to learn more about how utilizing a token economy impacts behavior and academic success with students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder.

Privacy

Your privacy will be protected.

Your name will not be used in any report that is published.

The discussion will be kept *strictly confidential*.

The other participants in the group will be asked to keep what we talk about private, but this cannot be assured.

If a BU researcher finds out during the talk that that child abuse or neglect is suspected, the BU researcher is required by law to report suspected child abuse or neglect to state officials as required by California State law .

Regulators, sponsors or Institutional Review Board Members that oversee research may see research records to make sure that the researchers have followed regulatory requirements

If the video recorder is used, it will only be used to remind staff what participants said.

All research data will be stored in a locked file cabinet and the video will be destroyed after the discussion has been studied.

Video/Audiotape Permission

I have been told that the discussion will be video recorded only if all participants agree.

I have been told that I can state that I don't want the discussion to be videotaped and it will not be. I can ask that the videotape be turned off at any time.

I agree to be videotaped ___Yes ___No

Questions

I have been given the opportunity to ask any questions I wish regarding this evaluation. If

I have any additional questions about the evaluation, I may call Solomon D. DeFrancis.

If I have any questions about my rights as a research subject, I may contact the Brandman

University for Research Protections at (800) 746-0082 or irb@brandman.edu. I have

received (or will receive) a copy of this form.

Please write your name below and check yes or no. If you want to take part Sign your name at the bottom.

NAME

_____ Yes, I would like to take part in the focus group.

_____ No, I would not like to participate in the focus group.

SIGNATURE

DATE

APPENDIX D

Location:

Date and Time:

In attendance:

#1 School Teacher

#2 Para educator

#3 Therapist

General Welcome and Guidelines

Moderator: Thank you all for participating in today's focus group. I'm going to go over the consent form and review guidelines before I commence the focus group. This focus group discussion is going to examine possible factors responsible for the positive and negative effects of a token economy when working with students with emotional disturbance disorder.

My first question is: **What are the perceived positive discoveries of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?**

#1

#2

#3

Moderator: Does anyone have anything to add?

#1

#2

#3

Moderator: What are the perceived negative discoveries of a token economy on the behavior of students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder?

#1

#2

#3

Moderator: Does anyone have anything to add?

#1

#2

#3

Moderator: What are the perceived positive discoveries of a student's academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

#1

#2

#3

Moderator: Does anyone have anything to add?

#1

#2

#3

Moderator: What are the perceived negative discoveries of student academic achievement for students that suffer from emotional disturbance disorder when utilizing a token economy?

#1

#2

#3

Moderator: Does anyone have anything to add?

#1

#2

#3

Moderator: Any further comments? Thank you all for making time to participate in this focus group. Your time and support to my research is invaluable and extremely appreciated. Thank you.

Focus Group Question	Teacher Member 1	Para Educator Member 2	Therapist Member 3
1			
2			
3			
4			
Keywords			

The following notations can be entered in the cells:

A = Indicated agreement (i.e., verbal or nonverbal)

D = Indicated dissent (i.e., verbal or nonverbal)

SE = Provided significant statement or example suggesting agreement

SD = Provided significant statement or example suggesting dissent

NR = Did not indicate agreement or dissent (i.e., nonresponse)

APPENDIX E

Synthesis Matrix

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
Source #1	Understanding behavior requires a change in the "independent variable" and effect in the "dependent variable" which creates a "cause-and-effect connection" which becomes a "functional relation" (Skinn			"Education is what survives when what has been learned has been forgotten." (B. F. Skinner, 1957)	According to Skinner (1954), classroom management is often the saving grace, if not the biggest factor, when dealing with students; especially those who display severe behavioral issues.			

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
	er, 1957).							
Source #2	Social learning theory is "most human behavior is learned of observation only through modeling from observing others, one form of an idea of how new behaviors are performed, and on later occasions this code							

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
	information service as a guide for action " (Bandura, 1977).							
Source #3		“There is no ‘best method’ of dealing with discipline in the classroom; rather there are many different methods for different children in different circumstances.”		“Responsible students who have learned to manage themselves require much less management from the teacher.” (Frederic Jones, 2000)				

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
		(Frederic Jones, 2000)						
Source #4			<p>“Some who support [more] coercive strategies assume that children will run wild if they are not controlled. However, the children for whom this is true typically turn out to be those accustomed to being controlled—those</p>	<p>“In short, with each of the thousand-and-one problems that present themselves in family life, our choice is between controlling and teaching , between creating an atmosphere of distrust and one of trust, between setting an example of power and helping</p>	<p>Kohn (1993) believed that it was not merely the interventions, but also what was portrayed through the educator or educators in the classroom that led to student growth .</p>			

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
			<p>who are not trusted, given explanations, encouraged to think for themselves, helped to develop and internalize good values, and so on. Control breeds the need for more control, which is used to justify the use of control.” (Alfie Kohn, 1993)</p>	<p>children to learn responsibility, between quick-fix parenting and the kind that's focused on long-term goals.” (Alfie Kohn, 1997)</p>				

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
Source #5			“Many of the discipline models that are employed Rob student s of their potential to become more responsible self-governi ng.” (Clifford Edward , 2011)	“In learning communities, instruction would be consiste nt with the way humans naturally learn.” (Clifford Edward, 2011)				
Source #6							“An inability to learn which cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory , or health factors” accordi	

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
							ng to Individuals With Disabilities Education Act (1997)	
Source #7						The fallacy is that students who suffer from emotional disturbances cannot learn or lack the capacity to learn (Henley, 2010).		
Source #8						Although state testing is an efficient way to grade multiple		

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
						le students and get a snapshot of academic proficiency, it has also been shown to be a big money maker in America (Miner, 2005).		
Source #9		“One of our primary responsibilities as teachers is to help our students learn. It is difficu						

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
		It for learning to take place in chaotic environments” (Leong, 2005, p.11).						
Source #10						“The idea that test scores should be considered when evaluating a teacher’s effectiveness grew out of a desire to reform education system		

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
						s across the country” (Kastnerbaum, 2012, p.1).		
Source #11					“A token economy is a form of behavior modification designed to increase desirable behavior and decrease undesirable behavior with the use of tokens” (Moore,			

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
					James W., 2001, p.53).			
Source #12						“Also it changes the classroom dynamic as the focus of attention shifts from the academic tasks at hand to the distractions provided by disruptive behaviours” (Parsonson, 2012, p. 427).		

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
Source #13								<p>“teacher awareness that poor classroom management is an important factor associated with disruptive behaviour, then it would follow that intervention which target teaching skills and classroom behaviour management have the potential to produce significant impacts on disruptive behaviour”</p> <p>(Johansen, Little, & Akin-Little, 2011, p. 17).</p>

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
Source #14				“Everyone needs to succeed and to be recognized for success” (Harlan & Rowland, 2002, p. 5).				
Source #15								“results indicated that the self-management intervention led to decreases in disruptive behavior, which is maintained in the absence of the teacher” (Hoff & DuPaul, 1998, p. 290.).
Source #16					Weingarten (2012) opines		Weingarten (2010) states	Weingarten (2012), one simple

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
					that, token economies can be utilized to reinforce appropriate social skills when addressing inappropriate behavior.		that, the unpredictability of certain student's lives can present behavior problems.	behavior management technique such as, checking in on students individually over the course of the instructional period can demonstrate to be effective.
Source #17								Monitoring is just the simple circulation of the teacher throughout the classroom interweaving through the chairs making sure that all students are on task and finishing

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
								the work (Tauber, 2007).
Source #18						According to Hodgson, Lazarus, Thurlow, and National Center on Education (2010), regardless of disabilities all students are accountable for state testing.		
Source #19						“Federal legislation requires that all studen		

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
						ts participate in state accountability systems” (Hodgson, Lazarus, Thurlow, & National Center on Education, 2010, p .1).		
Source #20						High-stakes tests for schools and districts often determine school funding levels and guide school restructuring		

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
						turing efforts (Blazer, C., & Miami-Dade County Public Schools, R., 2011).		
Source #21						According to Mcneil and Gewertz (2013), growing concerns of common testing presented in the near future have various school districts stressed		

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
						d regarding the accountability that the test will present.		
Source #22					“A token economy is a contingency management system that allows participants to earn tokens for presenting specific, positive behaviors that are later exchanged			

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
					ged for predetermined backup reinforcement” (Kazdin, 1977, p. 342).			
Source #23					Maggi n, Chafouleas, Goddard, and Johnson (2011) state that, token economies are utilized as a behavior intervention strategy which produc			

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
					es unique features by representing tokens as a monetary value for acceptable behavior.			
Source #24							Children and youth receiving special education services for emotional disturbance (ED) experience bleak short and long-term outcomes,	

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
							including increased rates of arrest, and present many challenges to schools, families, and communities (Gage, Josephs, & Lunde, 2012).	
Source #25						“are diagnosed with disabilities that do not necessarily mean reduced mental ability, which has led many		

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
						to argue that, with special accommodations and support services, the majority of students with disabilities should be able to perform at grade level and graduate from high school with a regular diploma” (Cortie lla & Dillion 2009, p.1).		

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Source #26					“The Token Economy system is a powerful tool used to shape and strengthen desired behaviors and responses in the classroom and at home” (Hernandez, D., & Reitman, D., 2015, p.6).			
Source #27						"As the Adequate Yearly Progress		

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						(AYP) standards increase to 77 percent proficiency in the current school year and a hundred percent in the following year, educators feel that more schools will fail to make that AYP, even when the students demonstrate growth"		

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						(Schultz, 2014, pp. 2-3).		
Source #28							"Defined as patient attacks involving either another patient or staff and resulting in an injury" (Bellus, Vergo, Kost, Stewart, & Barkstrom, 1999, p. 3).	
Source #29					Prearranged to students in substitute for a definite quantity of			

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					tokens · Administration is simply restricted by a teacher's thoughts (Kerr & Nelson, 1998).			
Source #30	"The portion of the organism's interaction with its environment that is characterized by detectable displacement in space							

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	<p>through time of some part of the organism and that results in a measurable change in at least one aspect of its environment "</p> <p>(Johnston & Penny packer , 1993, p. 23).</p>							
<p>Source</p> <p>#31</p>								<p>The customs individual s encourage and educate students to follow classroom regulation</p>

Common Themes	Behaviorism and Classical conditioning	Positive Discipline	Negative Effects of Token Economies	Educational Evolution	Token Economies	Academic Testing	Emotional Disturbance	Classroom Management
								s and expectations as well as the achievement of their academic responsibilities (Witzel & Mercer, 2003).
Source #32							An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and teachers, and an inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual,	

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							sensory, or health factors (United States Office of Special Education, 2004).	
Source #33							"Conceptualized as a clinically significant behavioral or psychological syndrome or pattern" (Francis, First, & Pincus, 1995, p. 15).	
Source #34								Once a learner does not emerge as if he or she is not vigorously engaging

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								in a particular education action (Levin & Nolan, 2006).
Source #35					An enhancement in the power of a reaction following the alteration in situation directly is following that alteration (Cooper, Heron, & Heward, 2007).			
Source #36					Something that might be			

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					communal, motion-oriented, restricted-oriented, or worldly in nature that students can receive as an enticement for not signifying a target behavior (Zeigler-Dendy, Durham, & Ellison, 2006).			
Source #37							"Deliberate self-inflicted	

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							injuries that are not considered a suicide attempt, regardless of the degree of injury" (Bellus, Vergo, Kost, Stewart, & Barkstrom, 1999, p. 28)	
Source #38	Observed detrimental or unsuitable manners targeted for development (i.e., decrease of period							

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	the conduct occurs) (Bicard, Bicard, & the IRIS Center, 2012)							
Source #39					"A structured treatment in which desirable behaviors are rewarded with tokens that are exchangeable for valuable goods or activities" (Lecomte, Liber			

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					man, & Wallace, 2000, p. 1312).			
Source #40		"reasonable rules, firmly enforced through separation from the program (not punishment).. .. are an essay part of helping students become responsible enough to take advantage of						

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		what is made available to them" (Glasser, 1998, p. 194).						
Source #41		"When ever possible, simply ignore the covert hostility of a student. By ignoring the behavior, you will diffuse [sic] the situation. Remember, what you really want is for						

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		the student to comply with your request. Whether or not the student does it in an angry manner is not the issue." (Cantor & Canter, 2001, p. 57).						
Source #42							According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) (2014), "approximately 8.3 million	

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							children (14.5%) aged 4–17 years have parents who have talked with a health care provider or school staff about the child’s emotional or behavioral difficulties” (p. 2).	
Source #43							“High teacher turnover rates, specifically in programs serving students with E/BD,	

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							have been attributed to environmental/workplace variables” (Adera, 2007, p.3).	
Source #44						“Current federal education policy that specifically addresses students with disabilities requires that these students be fully included in the provisions of Title I		

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						of NCLB and thus endorses the notion of “closing the achievement gap” between students with disabilities and other student groups” (McLaughlin, 2011, p.11)		
Source #45							According to the Legislative Analysis Office (LAO) of California	

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							(2013) approximately 686,000 students with disabilities ages 3 to 22 obtain special education services in California, approximately 618,000 are in grades K through 12, comprising regarding 10 percent of the state's overall K through 12 public school enrollment.	

