

The Effects of Restorative Practices on Student Discipline

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to determine if the use of Restorative Practices lowers discipline referral and suspension rates in school. The measurement tool was student discipline referrals from Quarter 4 of the 2018-2019 school year and Quarter 1 of the 2019-2020 school year, along with in-school and out-of-school suspension rates. This study uses a quasi-experimental design to determine the effects of restorative practices on student referral and suspension rates in school. The researcher analyzed the data using a one sample z-test. The mean numbers of student discipline referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions under restorative practices (Mean =0.13, 0.03, and 0.07 respectively) were significantly lower than without implementation of restorative practices (Mean=0.46, 0.07, and 0.09 respectively). Further research would be beneficial to see the effect restorative practices can have when it is implemented over a longer duration of time.

Chapter 1

Introduction

Overview

In this study, the relationship between restorative practices and their impact on student behavior was explored. Restorative practices are a framework for responding to challenging student behavior, repairing harm, and building a positive school community. The foundation of restorative practices is a shift from punishment oriented thinking, such as exclusionary approaches toward discipline, to the process of building relationships and solving conflicts. Restorative practices seek to build both school and classroom communities that are supported by meaningful communication and clear agreements, which allows for proper healing from a conflict.

The use of restorative practices plays a crucial role in schoolhouses across the nation by reducing the frequency of exclusionary discipline, increasing student attendance, and improved student achievement. Research has shown that with proper implementation of restorative practices in a school, there was a decrease in both the amount of suspensions and disciplinary referrals that were reported (Bevington, 2015). This school promoted the importance of building relationships, respect for others, as well as taking responsibility for their actions while focusing on their impact on other students. In general, this reduction of suspensions and referrals minimizes the disparities in discipline data at schools that implement the practice with commitment and fidelity. The use of restorative practices provides an opportunity for students to learn about one another while building a positive culture in which students feel like they are respected and cared for. Mirsky (2007) presents substantial evidence that commitment to proper

implementation of restorative practices decreases the amount of disciplinary referrals and suspensions in school.

The use of proactive circles is one form of restorative practices. During the process of proactive circles, students sit in a circle formation, which allows each student to see one another. This formation allows the facilitator to set the tone and build a sense of community amongst the students. The students respond to a teacher-posed question(s) during a proactive circle (Gregory, Clawson, Davis, & Gerewitz, 2016). An additional form of restorative practices is a restorative circle. Restorative circles are used after a conflict or incident occurred between students. The goal of restorative circles is to repair harm and relationships between students and teachers.

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study is to determine if the use of Restorative Practices lowers discipline referral and suspension rates in school.

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis for this study is that there will be no difference in office referrals, out-of-school and in-school suspensions after the introduction and implementation of Restorative Practices in the form of Restorative Circles and Community Building Circles.

Operational Definitions

Restorative Practices consist of daily community building circles during advisory, restorative circles, restorative conversations, and relationship building. Community building circles happen every morning during students' advisory classes in order to build community and foster positive relationships. Restorative circles occur when a student(s) expresses difficulty getting along with another student(s), and they need to resolve their issues and repair harm. The restorative circle can also be used between students and teachers.

Discipline Office Referrals are written reports of significant disruptive behavior that are used by the school to monitor discipline and behavior problems. School staff members write the discipline referrals when a student(s) exhibit negative crisis behaviors. These behaviors include: (a) leaving an area without permission, (b) physical aggression, (c) repeated disrespect, (d) repeated unsafe behavior, (e) threat to others, (f) repeated classroom disruption, (g), bias motivated language, and (h) repeated refusal to follow directions. The referrals are documented into an online database in order to keep track of school wide discipline data, such as student behavior, location of incident, and consequences for behavior (in school or out of school suspensions).

The **independent variable** is the implementation of restorative practices. This intervention includes the use of community building circles, proactive circles, and restorative circles

The **dependent variable** is the number of disciplinary office referrals. This data includes the number of in school and out of school suspensions.

Chapter II

Review of the Literature

This literature review explores the impact of restorative practices on decreasing discipline rates and disciplinary referrals in schools. Many schools around the nation are coming to the realization that traditional behavior management systems are no longer working. Restorative practices are becoming an increasingly popular practice in schools as a strategic approach to challenging student behavior, building community between students and school staff members, and holding students accountable for their actions. Restorative practices can make a substantial contribution to thinking about conflict in school. This intervention places responsibility on students, using a collaborative response to wrongdoing (Mirsky, 2007). This literature review will discuss what restorative practices are, how to implement restorative practices in schools, and the effects of restorative practices on student behavior.

What Are Restorative Practices?

Many school systems and educators globally are implementing restorative practices as a means to build student and teacher relationships, foster constructive conflict resolution, and work towards equitable disciplinary practices (Gregory et al., 2016). A restorative practice is a preventative focus on educational approaches. Restorative practices are used to establish positive relationships with students, while responding to conflict and repairing relationships between students and educators (Kline, 2016). The foundational purpose of restorative practices is to teach students how to resolve conflict and build relationships with one another. The term “restorative practices” was derived from the development of criminal justice called “restorative justice.” Being restorative means to believe that decisions are best made, and conflicts are best

resolved, by the people who are most directly involved in them. Restorative practices seek to restore a sense of community and develop sound relationships.

Restorative practices in schools include peer mediation, classroom circles to resolve student and teacher issues, and family group conferencing (Chmelynski, 2005). The key element to an effective restorative practice is the face-to-face interaction used to address the impacts of a student's behavior. Restorative practices affect this behavior by addressing social skills such as empathy, respect for others, and accountability (Silverman & Mee, 2018). The foundation of restorative practices includes the fundamental principles of respect, inclusiveness, developing trust, and forming positive relationships where those involved can right their wrongs. Restorative practices are most effective when behavior is seen as an issue to be addressed through restorative strategies that involve active learning from students and educators (McCluskey, Lloyd, Kane, Riddell, Stead, & Weedon, 2008). The foundational goal of restorative practices is to limit the need of suspensions and to keep students in school. Restorative practices also aims to have students take responsibility for their behavior and actions while finding a way to fix their behavior. A study conducted by Kehoe, Bourke-Taylor, & Broderick (2018) noted that students felt safe in a classroom or restorative community because their teachers were calm and understood the emotional needs of their students.

Research findings provide a number of reasons to implement restorative practices into schools globally. Restorative practices are an alternative to exclusionary practices such as suspensions and support an overall reduction of both referrals and suspensions. This reduction leads to minimizing the disparities in discipline data across schools nationwide (Kline, 2016). Restorative practices are not a discipline replacement, but they are an addition to an existing discipline structure. Using a restorative practices approach leads to a reduction of disciplinary

referrals and suspensions, increased student attendance, better academic performance, and stronger relationships between students and educators.

Implementation of Restorative Practices

The implementation of restorative practices is a shift in mindset for the schoolhouse and school community (Bevington, 2015). However, restorative practices are not a “one size fits all” system for changing school discipline and school relationships. In order for restorative practices to work, school-based staff members must buy into the framework and methods that the practice and intervention entail. For many staff members, this means moving away from traditional view of school discipline. The shift from traditional discipline to the use of restorative practices includes dramatically different concepts such as “moral learning, community participation and caring, respectful dialogue, forgiveness, responsibility, apology, and setting things right or making amends” (Buckmaster, 2016, p.5).

Many restorative practice elements provide community-building opportunities. One essential restorative practice is the “proactive circle.” Many schools use morning circles or community building circles as a form of proactive intervention. Educators use proactive circles as structured group discussions with meaningful exchanges while sitting in a circle (Gregory et al., 2016). During this time, students share their feelings and thoughts about a teacher-posed question. Students also have the opportunity to set goals, talk about emotional topics, and classroom-specific questions. There are certain skills that are essential for a successful restorative practice to occur. Interestingly, research has shown that restorative practices are considered to be effective in developing those same essential skills (Bevington, 2015).

Restorative practice interventions are used after an incident between students or students and teachers occurs. This element of restorative practice is used to repair harm and to restore a

sense of community (Mirsky, 2007). During this intervention, restorative questions are often used with the student(s), which address the negative behaviors that caused the issue or incident. For example, “who was affected by what you have done?”, “in what way?”, “what were you thinking at the time?” and “what do you think you need to do to make things right?” There are also restorative questions that can be used to help those harmed by others’ actions. For example, “what did you think when you realized what had happened?”, “what impact has this incident had on you and others?” and “what do you think needs to happen to make things right?” Restorative circles are an additional restorative practice intervention that can be used. Restorative circles are different from proactive circles in that proactive circles are used as a structured group discussion in which the students discuss topics such as “academics, emotions, and classroom-specific topics” (Gregory et al. 2016). This intervention allows students the opportunity to work together in a safe and collaborative environment in which they can solve problems together (Silverman & Mee, 2018). The goal of the restorative circle is to build empathy and trust in one another. When restorative practices are used to repair harm or hurt, students learn how to take accountability for their actions while also learning how to be empathetic.

Prior to the implementation of restorative practices in schools nationwide, the traditional viewpoint was that teachers were an authoritative figure and they controlled the classroom and schoolhouse. Restorative practices allow students to become actively engaged in meaningful conversations, which include relationships, emotions, and school community (Mirsky, 2007). This shift in culture and practice must also include a shift in thinking. This shift in ideology can be a difficult transition for stakeholders. In order for restorative practices to be implemented with fidelity, the school community must work together to create an environment and culture that is respectful, accountable, and safe. Once a school recognizes a need for change and articulates a

vision for the future, the next step is to determine the implementation process for the desired change. Staff and students must be introduced to the concepts of restorative practices before implementation (Kennedy-Lewis, 2013). Parents and guardians must also be familiar with the concept of restorative practices. In doing so, the impact of restorative practices will begin to become clear while the process is refined at the school. Teachers and students work together to create a school community that is respectful and safe for one another (Bevington, 2015). Implementing restorative practices with fidelity can provide schools a positive channel with conflict resolution and behavior management.

Effects of Restorative Practices on Student Behavior

A variety of research has shown that the use of restorative practices can alter student behavior and build strong and healthy school communities. Prior research, which tested the racial threat hypothesis, found that the racial composition of schools is associated with the use of more punitive punishments and less restorative approaches to discipline (Payne & Welch, 2015). The findings from Payne and Welch's study showed that "schools with a greater percentage of African American students are less likely to use restorative practices in response to student behavior" (p.19). Schools that implement restorative practices with fidelity will allow them to emphasize "social engagement over social control" which can reduce the use of exclusionary practices and create a positive school community (p.20). The use of restorative practices involves the engagement of all parties associated with an incident. The person who facilitates the restorative practice does the intervention with the students rather than using a punitive consequence such as a detention or suspension. The use of restorative practices allows students involved to understand the impact of their behavior on themselves and others. This understanding allows a greater chance of influencing their future behavior in a positive way.

Implementing these practices can create a positive school community, which can enhance students of all races' connection to their school. When implemented with fidelity and commitment, restorative practice can end the racial threat hypothesis and decrease students' involvement in negative behaviors.

A foundational aspect of restorative practice is that students who misbehave are not aware of the impact of their behavior (Hashim, Strunk, & Dhaliwal, 2018). Research has shown that exclusion from school is linked to academic failure, school drop out rates, and involvement in the juvenile justice system. In a recent study conducted in the United Kingdom, researchers found that restorative practices responded to a human's need to belong, feel safe, and have healthy relationships with other people (Kline, 2016). During an additional study, a 2-year evaluation was done at 18 different schools using restorative practices. The research showed a decrease in both in-school discipline referrals and out of school suspensions. Each school focused on the importance of fostering social relationships in a school community of mutual agreement; responsibility and accountability for one's actions and their impact of others actions; respect for other people, empathy with the feelings of others affected by one's own actions, their views and feelings; fairness; commitments to equitable process, and willingness to create opportunities for reflective change in the school community. Kline's research found that all 18 schools that participated in the study made progress, while 14 of the schools made significant progress.

The use of restorative practices fosters a more positive relationship between students and teachers. The effectiveness of restorative practices lies within the schools' commitment to create a positive school culture while also promoting positive relationships amongst students and teachers. When solid relationships are formed between students and teachers, the likelihood of

conflict diminishes (Kennedy-Lewis, 2013). Restorative practices intend to establish positive relationships and resolutions to conflict for both students and teachers. When implemented with fidelity, restorative practices can lower the use of exclusionary punishments while building healthy school communities.

Summary

The use of restorative practices attempts to transform school discipline and improve relationships in the school building. Restorative practices are certainly not an easy or quick implementation of an intervention to fix student behaviors. The use of this intervention requires building trust and forming strong relationships. In order for restorative practices to be successful, all involved must exercise empathy and respect for one another. A restorative school must commit itself to collaborative problem solving involving students, teachers, and family members. A foundational belief of restorative practices is that staff members need to be actively involved in the intervention with the students rather than doing using exclusionary approaches to school discipline.

Chapter III

Methods

The purpose of this study is to determine if the use of Restorative Practices lowers discipline referral and suspension rates in a school.

Design

The study uses a quasi-experimental design to determine the effects of restorative practices on student referral and suspension rates in school. This study used data gathered by school behavior records in the form of office referrals. The office referrals are written reports of significant disruptive behavior that are used by the school to monitor discipline and behavior problems. School staff members write the discipline referrals when a student(s) exhibit negative crisis behaviors. Once the office referral is written, it is processed by administration and documented into a school-wide data system. The independent variable is the implementation of restorative practices. The independent variable is operationally defined by the two groups: without implementation of restorative practices (last school year) and with implementation of restorative practices (current year). The dependant variable is the number of disciplinary office referrals. This school year is the first year implementing restorative practices school wide. The researcher will examine behavior data from the 2018-2019 school year when there was no implementation of restorative practices and compare behavior data to the current 2019-2020 school year where there is implementation of restorative practices school wide.

Participants

The participants in this study were sixth, seventh, and eighth grade students from a public school in Fort Meade, Maryland. During the 2018-2019 school year, the control group, which is the population of the school, included 749 total students in grades 6-8. Out of the 749 total

students, 402 students were male and 347 were female. During the 2018-2019 school year, 305 students were African American, 72 were White, 261 were Hispanic, 35 were Asian, 69 were Multi-Racial, 5 were American Indian, and 2 were Pacific Islander. Out of the 749 total students, 108 students receive special education services, 46 students have a 504 plan, and 412 students receive free and reduced meals.

During the 2019-2020 school year, the focal group, which is the population of the school, included 841 total students in grades 6-8. Out of the 841 total students, 440 students were male and 401 were female. During the 2019-2020 school year, 381 students were African American, 70 were White, 318 were Hispanic, 29 were Asian, 40 were Multi-Racial, 2 were American Indian, and 1 was Pacific Islander. Out of the 841 total students, 120 students receive special education services, 44 students have a 504 plan, and 554 students receive free and reduced meals. These students are receiving restorative practices in the current school year and were not receiving the implementation of restorative practices during the 2018-2019 school year.

Instrument

Student behavior data was collected using student office referral forms during the first quarter of the 2019-2020 school year with the implementation of restorative practices. This data was compared to student office referral forms from the fourth quarter of the 2018-2019 school year, which was without the implementation of restorative practices. The office referrals were completed by school staff members when a student displays significant disruptive behavior. School staff members write the discipline referrals when a student(s) exhibit negative crisis behaviors. These behaviors include: (a) leaving an area without permission, (b) physical aggression, (c) repeated disrespect, (d) repeated unsafe behavior, (e) threat to others, (f) repeated classroom disruption, (g), bias motivated language, and (h) repeated refusal to follow directions.

The referrals are documented into an online database in order to keep track of school wide discipline data, such as student behavior, location of incident, and consequences for behavior (in school or out of school suspensions).

Procedure

In the current school year (2019-2020 school year), it was an expectation that all classrooms and advisories implement restorative practices in the form of community building circles, which occur every morning during advisory. Community building circles nurture a classroom culture in which each student feels a sense of belonging. Classroom staff members and students sit in a circle formation during community building circles to build a sense of community. During the community building circle, the facilitator uses a talking piece of their choice. The talking piece allows the person holding the piece to speak while the other students in the circle listen to one another. During this time, students shared their feelings and thoughts about a teacher-posed question. Students also had the opportunity to set goals, talk about emotional topics, and classroom-specific questions. Some examples of the prompts students respond to during their community building circles include: Who is a mentor/role model of yours? How do you show your friends that you care? If you could have one superpower what would it be and why? What is a caring thing someone has done for you? Some of the questions and prompts that are presented to the students address student challenges while others build a sense of community.

Restorative practice interventions such as restorative circles are used after an incident between students or students and teachers occurs. This element of restorative practice is used to repair harm and to restore a sense of community. During this intervention, restorative questions are often used with the student(s), which address the negative behaviors that caused the issue or

incident. Some examples of these questions are: Who was affected by what you have done? In what way? What were you thinking at the time? What do you think you need to do to make things right? There are also restorative questions that can be used to help those harmed by others' actions. Examples of these questions are: What did you think when you realized what had happened? What impact has this incident had on you and others? What do you think needs to happen to make things right? The above questions are used to address challenging student behaviors while also repairing harm between all parties involved. Behavior data and office referral data from the 4th marking period of the 2018-2019 school year was compared to behavior and office referral data from the 1st marking period of the 2019-2020 school year. Through the evaluation of office referral data, the researcher will evaluate the effects of restorative practices on discipline referral and suspension rates.

Chapter IV

Results

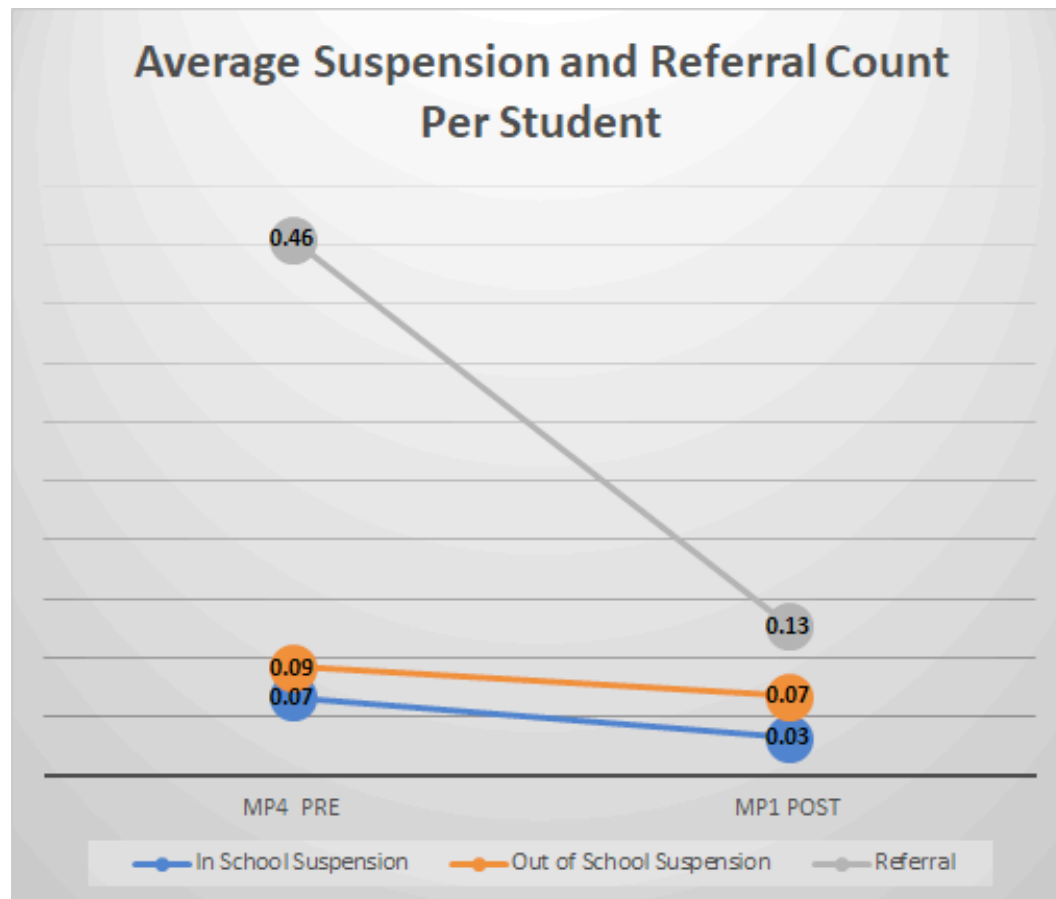
The purpose of this study is to determine if the use of Restorative Practices lowers discipline referral and suspension rates in a school.

A one sample z-test was conducted with the independent variable being the type of classroom management practice. The use of traditional classroom management procedures was the baseline while the implementation of restorative practices procedures was the intervention. The dependant variable was the number of disciplinary office referrals. The mean numbers of student discipline referrals, in school suspensions, and out of school suspensions with the implementation of restorative practices (Mean =0.13, 0.03, and 0.07 respectively) were significantly lower than the average number of student discipline referrals, in school suspensions, and out of school suspensions without the implementation of restorative practices (0.46, 0.07, and 0.09 respectively). The results are presented in Table 1. Consequently, the null hypothesis that there will be no difference in office referrals, out-of-school and in-school suspensions after the introduction and implementation of Restorative Practices in the form of Restorative Circles and Community Building Circles was rejected.

Table 1

Means for number of student office referrals, in school and out of school suspensions under Traditional Classroom Management Practices and under implementation of Restorative Practices

Average Suspension and Referral Counts Per Student					
Category	MP4 Pre	MP1 Post	Difference	P Value	Significant?
In School Suspension	0.07	0.03	-0.04	< 0.00001	Yes
Out of School Suspension	0.09	0.07	-0.02	< 0.00001	Yes
Referral	0.46	0.13	-0.33	< 0.00001	Yes



Graph 1. Average Suspension and Referral Count per Student.

Chapter V

Discussion

The purpose of this study is to determine if the use of Restorative Practices lowers discipline referral and suspension rates in a school. The null hypothesis for this study is that there will be no difference in office referrals, out-of-school and in-school suspensions after the introduction and implementation of Restorative Practices in the form of Restorative Circles and Community Building Circles. Restorative practices include morning community circles, restorative conversations, restorative circles, and relationship building.

The study used a z-test to determine the effects of restorative practices on student discipline referral and suspension rates. The results of the experiment rejected the null hypothesis that there will be no difference in office referrals, out-of-school and in-school suspensions after the introduction and implementation of Restorative Practices in the form of Restorative Circles and Community Building Circles. The mean numbers of student discipline referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions with the implementation of restorative practices were significantly lower than the average number of student discipline referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions without the implementation of restorative practices.

Implications of the Results

According to the results of the study, the number of student discipline referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions was lower during the 1st marking period in the 2019-2020 school year than in the 4th marking period in the 2018-2019 school year. This difference was statistically significant. Therefore, this study shows that the implementation of restorative practices can lower discipline referral and suspensions rates in schools.

The use of restorative practices can promote a positive school culture, one in which each student feels respected and cared for. According to the data, the number of times a student received an office referral and/or received in-school or out-of school suspensions for demonstrating a crisis behavior decreased during the 1st marking period of the 2019-2020 school year when restorative practices were implemented school wide. The implementation of restorative practices also helped to create a positive school community with the use of community building circles. Additionally, when there were conflicts between students or students and a teacher, the parties involved were able to respond to their disagreement and resolve the issue at hand. Overall, restorative practices helped promote school community as well as safe, caring, and healthy relationships school wide.

Theoretical Consequences

On a theoretical level, the results of this study support the theory that promoting and fostering positive relationships between students and staff members greatly benefits students and the school community. The use of restorative practices is a strategic method that helps change a school's climate and culture by holding students accountable for their actions as well as building a positive school community in which students feel cared for and respected.

Threats to Validity

During this study, there could have been threats to validity that may have impacted the results. For example, one threat to validity was the short time frame of the implementation of restorative practices. The results can be generalized to the impact of the use of restorative practices as an intervention only over a short time period. An additional threat to validity could have been the use of restorative practices with fidelity. The use of restorative practices was supposed to be implemented by all school staff members' school wide. However, some staff

members could not have been implementing restorative practices interventions such as community building circles during their daily advisory meetings in order to build a positive school community. An additional threat to validity that could have impacted the results is the comparison between 1st and 4th quarter discipline data. The first quarter discipline data could be lower due to students being more hesitant at the start of a new school year when compared to students being comfortable during the fourth quarter. For example, comparing discipline data during the month of March would allow for higher validity of results due to March being a time of the year that students are often stressed.

Connections to Literature

When examining the current study in the context of the previous literature, there are many similarities that can be made. As McCluskey et al., 2008 states, “restorative practices are most effective when behavior is seen as an issue to be addressed through restorative strategies that involve active learning from students and educators” (p. 407). Within the current study, in the 2019-2020 school year, restorative practices were introduced and implemented school wide. Within the current study, the number of disciplinary office referrals that were written, as well as in- school and out- of- school suspensions that were administered, decreased with the implementation of restorative practices school-wide. Additionally, all school staff members were trained in the implementation of community building circles. Current results are similar to a study that was conducted in which restorative practices were implemented across 18 urban, rural, and suburban schools located in Scotland. Throughout the study, McCluskey et al. (2008) found a decrease in both in-school discipline referrals and out-of-school suspensions. This study was run over a longer period of time than the current study, as it was a two-year study. This study also stressed the importance of a whole school approach to restorative practices. Both studies

proved that fostering positive student-teacher relationships can reduce student disciplinary referrals as well as the amount of exclusionary approaches to discipline that are administered.

Within this study, the null hypothesis was rejected in that the number of student discipline referrals, in-school suspensions, and out-of-school suspensions was lower during the 1st marking period in the 2019-2020 school year with the implementation of restorative practices than in the 4th marking period in the 2018-2019 school year before the introduction of restorative practices. These differences were statistically significant. Buckmaster (2016) states that restorative practices in schools require a shift from traditional discipline, which includes different concepts such as respectful dialogue, responsibility, and making amends. When a conflict occurs between students or between a teacher and a student, the focus is to understand what happened, who was affected, what is needed to make things right, and what learning has happened to reduce the risk of further harm. Throughout this study, restorative practices were implemented school-wide, and all staff and students were presented with similar respectful dialogue and language to be used during this intervention. Throughout the school, staff members were able to use respectful dialogue with students in order to decrease the frequency of conflict while also working collaboratively to resolve disagreements. Although the study was brief, it was still able to provide evidence that the intervention is effective.

Implications for Future Research

A review of the current study could result in the conclusion that more research should be conducted on (a) which restorative practice interventions display a decrease in student behavior and (b) how to effectively measure the effect of restorative practice interventions in schools. Previous research shows that more schools around the globe are starting to implement the use of restorative practices in schools. A school that implements and promotes the use of restorative

practices advocates for a commitment from staff members, students, and parents to work together collaboratively to solve conflicts. Further research should be conducted to determine how to effectively measure the effect of restorative practice interventions in schools.

Further research should also be conducted to better determine which restorative practice interventions should be used to decrease negative student behavior. Preventative interventions such as community building circles are used to build positive relationships and build community while restorative conferences are used after a conflict to repair harm. Future research can determine which type of intervention lowers student discipline rates in schools.

It would also be beneficial for future research to focus on a longer duration of time for the intervention. The short time span of the intervention used for this study shows that negative behaviors can be decreased; however, the lasting effects of this intervention over the length of the whole year school with proper implementation is not known.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine if the use of Restorative Practices lowers discipline referral and suspension rates in a school. The null hypothesis that there would be no difference in office referrals, out-of-school and in-school suspensions after the introduction and implementation of Restorative Practices in the form of Restorative Circles and Community Building Circles was rejected. After analyzing and comparing the baseline and intervention data, there was a significant decrease in the amount of student disciplinary referrals as well as students who were assigned out- of- school and in- school suspensions. Future research would be beneficial to determine the effects restorative practices can have on a school when implemented over a longer period of time. In conclusion, the current study provides evidence, which is

consistent with various research, which states that restorative practices decreases student discipline in schools.

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