The Effect of Behavioral Preventions and Interventions on

Disruptive Behaviors in a First Grade Classroom

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Table of Contents

List of Tables

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of The Good Behavior Game on the frequency of disruptive behaviors that were exhibited in a classroom setting. This study utilized a quasi-experimental design with a pre-measure, treatment, and post-measure and included 15 students enrolled in a Baltimore County public school. The participants in this study ranged in age from 6-7 and were in first grade. The study hypothesized that participation in The Good Behavior Game, which involved the students in establishing and following clearly stated rules and provided incentives for success, would have no effect on the frequency of targeted disruptive behaviors. These behaviors included not following directions, unnecessary talking, unnecessary movement, and making noises. The hypothesis was rejected as all four targeted disruptive behaviors decreased over the course of the study. Three out of four of the targeted disruptive behaviors, excluding not following directions, decreased significantly over intervals of the study. Further study of the usefulness of The Good Behavior Game and similar interventions appears warranted.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Overview

Disruptive behaviors exist in every classroom. They distract other students and teachers and interfere with learning. When a student is exhibiting a disruptive behavior, teachers often have to stop teaching to redirect the offending student. This is a serious problem because students are coming to school to learn, not to be distracted by their peers. Each year, teachers struggle to find ways to reduce or eliminate these behaviors. Research suggests that to be effective, interventions should allow the students to be active in deciding what is appropriate and inappropriate, what consequences or rewards should be given, and reflect what students believe is fair. This allows the students to "buy in" to the interventions in which they are participating. Based on its adherence to many of these research-supported principles, The Good Behavior Game is an example of an intervention that might be effective at reducing disruptive behaviors in the classroom.

Statement of Problem

The purpose of this study was to determine the impact of implementing The Good Behavior Game intervention in a first grade classroom on disruptive behaviors during its Daily 5 Reading workshops.

Hypothesis

The frequency of disruptive behaviors observed in the classroom would not differ significantly before, during, or after the implementation of the Good Behavior Game.

Operational Definitions

For the purposes of this study, the terms below are defined as follows:

Disruptive Behaviors: Disruptive behaviors are defined as behaviors that hamper the ability of instructors to teach and students to learn. A disruptive behavior is an observed change in a child's behavior from being calm and quiet to distracting. Disruptive behaviors take away time from student learning in the classroom. Examples of disruptive behaviors are calling out, making noises, unnecessary movement (i.e., walking around the classroom or fidgeting), and inappropriate contact with peers (i.e., poking, hitting, whispering while someone else is talking to the group).

Positive Behaviors: Positive behaviors are defined as behaviors that allow the instructor to teach effectively and students to learn efficiently. Positive behaviors include students working cooperatively and/or behaving respectfully in the classroom. Examples of positive behaviors include students' raising their hands to be called on, sitting quietly on the carpet while the teacher is talking, and following directions.

The Good Behavior Game: The Good Behavior Game is an intervention that is intended to decrease disruptive behaviors in a classroom setting. The Game works by imposing positive peer pressure to 2-to-5 teams of students, who work together to reduce inattentive, disturbing, disruptive, and destructive behaviors that interfere with learning and success. The teams and teachers work together to set goal behaviors so that the expectations are clear. When the teams succeed, all the members earn a reward. Depending on the behavior, all the teams could potentially win.

Daily 5 Reading Workshops: The Daily 5 is an integrated literacy instruction and classroom management system used in reading and writing workshops. It is a system of five literacy tasks

that facilitates differentiation and teaches students independence. The five tasks are: read to self,

read to someone, work on writing, word work, and meet with the teacher.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This literature review discusses disruptive behaviors by elementary school students in the first grade and examines preventions and interventions for improving their disruptive behaviors. The first section of this literature review defines on-task behaviors and disruptive behaviors. The first section also explains the importance of on-task behaviors for student learning. In the second section, the behavior expectations in first grade are described. The third section provides an explanation of the causes of disruptive behaviors. The final section of this literature review describes preventions and interventions for disruptive behaviors in the classroom.

Definition of On-task Behavior in the Classroom

On-task behaviors are described as the behaviors desired by the teacher. On-task behaviors can be defined as the student attending to the teacher or the assigned material (eyes oriented toward work or teacher); it can also be defined as being on-task during academically related writing (while looking at the paper), raising hands to respond to or ask a question, answering questions, looking through the assigned text or reading aloud (Wright & McCurdy, 2012). A student engaged in on-task behaviors is able to actively listen, participate, and complete classwork assignments. On-task behaviors are necessary for student learning. When students are on-task they are able to listen, comprehend, and learn (Tankersley, 1995).

Definition of Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom

Disruptive behaviors are described as the undesired behaviors. Children who perform disruptive behaviors typically exhibit a variety of such behaviors (off task, arguing, defiance, physical aggression) that occur together in some manner (Nelson, 1998). Disruptive behaviors can be verbal and nonverbal; they can range from calling out to playing with other students at

4

inappropriate times. Disruptive behaviors include both verbal (callouts, nonsanctioned talking to peers) and motor (out of seat, bending, physically contacting another student, drawing or writing, playing with others) behaviors (Wright & McCurdy, 2012). These behaviors can seriously impact the learning in the classroom. When a child is exhibiting a disruptive behavior, a teacher often decides to stop and redirect the behavior, causing an interruption of the class lesson. Disruptive behaviors negatively impact the students who are exhibiting these behaviors as well as other students in the classroom (Legray, Dufrene, Sterling-Turner, Olmi & Bellone, 2010). Disruptive behaviors can be challenging for all: the teacher, the students, and the individual exhibiting the behaviors. Disruptive behaviors confront schools and society with a serious challenge but also have an adverse impact on individuals. Disruptive behaviors may interfere with academic and vocational success as well as contribute to chronic maladjustment and unhappiness (Nelson, 1998).

Benefits of On-Task Behavior for Student Learning

Students who engage in on-task behaviors have a higher chance of academic promotion and success. Students who show high rates of disruptive and aggressive behaviors during the first years of school are more likely than well behaved students to repeat a grade early in elementary school (Thomas et al., 2008). Students who engage in on-task behaviors are more likely to have positive relationships with their teachers and peers. High rates of aggressive disruptive behavior exhibited by children during their initial years of elementary school increase their risk for significant behavioral adjustment problems with teachers and peers (Thomas, Bierman, Thompson, & Powers, 2008). Teachers and students do not like disruption. The disruption takes away from learning, which affects everyone in the classroom. Disruptive behaviors can waste a great deal of teaching time in the classroom, leading to feelings of frustration in teachers and an

increase in academic failure in comparison to peers (Ruiz-Olivares, Pino, & Herruzo, 2010).

Teachers' frustration is noticed by the students. Students feel frustrated when their teacher is

constantly interrupted and they are unable to learn. Research suggests that students who have

difficulty following directions and attending to instructions at an early age are less likely to

engage in positive interactions with their teacher and more likely to experience academic

difficulties and peer relations problems later in their development (Wright & McCurdy, 2012).

Peer relation problems can lead to social isolation of the student exhibiting the disruptive

behavior. Students who engage in on-task behaviors are more likely to be socially accepted by

their peers. Disruptive children are regarded as deviant by their non-disruptive peers and are

frequently rejected by them (Van Lier, Van der Sar, Muthen & Crijnen, 2004).

Behavior Expectations in First Grade

As children enter first grade, they face heightened expectations for behavioral

compliance, sustained attention, and social integration (Thomas et al., 2008). The transition from

kindergarten to first grade can be challenging for many students. Students are expected to follow

new routines like unpacking their book bags, putting down their chairs, beginning their morning

work on their own, walking in the hallways, raising their hands, and participating only during

appropriate times. Students are expected to sustain their attention by sitting quietly on a carpet,

on their specific carpet seat, and listening to their teacher. Students are also expected to work in

cooperative groups with their peers. Working in cooperative groups can be challenging for

students because they need to be able to work together and communicate effectively. The

capacity to follow classroom rules, attend to learning task and inhibit aggression when managing

conflicts becomes critical for early school behavioral adjustment and learning (Thomas et al.,

2008). First graders in elementary school are expected to determine behaviors that are "above the

line" and "below the line" at the beginning of the school year. The behaviors that are "above the line" (being respectful, listening to the teacher, participating) are all on-task behaviors. The behaviors that are "below the line" (calling out, making noises, playing with others) are all disruptive behaviors.

Cause of Disruptive Behaviors

There are many different causes for disruptive behaviors, like an individual's development, their peers, teachers, community, classroom environment, and family members. In relation to an individual's development, attention has been associated with disruptive behavior. Attention has been linked to early childhood characteristics such as coercion, impulsivity and poor self-control (Van Lier et al., 2004). All of these behaviors (characteristics of attention) are related to disruptive behaviors that students exhibit.

Another cause of disruptive behaviors is frustration due to academic expectations. Teachers report that acting out behaviors are sources of significant distress (Thomas et al., 2008). Students' academic expectations increase significantly from kindergarten to first grade. Children who experience difficulties in these domains (transitioning from k-1) show increases in disruptive behavior problems during the first two years of elementary school (Thomas et al., 2008). Students are no longer expected to just write their name on a piece of paper and color. The students are expected to write in complete sentences, use the text to answer questions, and check their work to make sure there are no mistakes.

Another cause of disruptive behaviors can be the students' relationships with teachers and peers. Relationships with peers and teachers plays a crucial role in the emergence, the manifestation, and the maintenance of disruptive behaviors (Van Lier et al., 2004). Once students exhibit disruptive behaviors, they gain a negative reputation. The interaction between disruptive

7

children and their teachers is characterized by disobedience, coercion, and many corrections and punishments, resulting in a negative spiral of emphasis on disruptive behavior (Van Lier et al., 2004). Students pick up on this emphasis on disruptive behavior. If a child is constantly getting into trouble because of his or her behaviors, the students will recognize that child as being "bad." Research has shown that young children are well aware of differences in levels of disruptive behavior in their peers as early as elementary school entry (Van Lier et al., 2004). The emphasis on disruptive behavior can lead to alienation. Students who display disruptive behaviors often become alienated from their teachers, parents, and peers as their early disruptive behavior leads to academic problems (Cholewa, Smith-Adcock, & Amatea, 2010). This alienation can only hurt the child that exhibits the disruptive behavior, although the child will continue to exhibit these behaviors as a cry for help.

Family members can also be the cause of disruptive behaviors. Parental mental health, inconsistent parenting, poor parental monitoring, and socioeconomic disadvantages are all related to the development of serious problem behaviors in children (Duncome, Havighurst, Holland, & Frankling, 2012). Students often bring their learned behaviors into the classroom. If a child observes aggressive behavior patterns at home, then the child is likely to exhibit those same behaviors in other social settings like at school (Thomas et al., 2008).

Poverty is also linked to disruptive behaviors. Disruptive behaviors are common in young children, especially those from disadvantaged backgrounds (Legray et al., 2010). Elementary schools located in impoverished areas have a greater disadvantage with respect to their ability to furnish students with good and reliable supplies, retain qualified teachers, and make available early intervention programs. The level of financial resources available to schools and overall student poverty has been linked to children's behavioral functioning in school (Thomas et al.,

2008). These disadvantages are considered important determinants of the levels of disruptive

behaviors among students.

The classroom environment can also be a determining factor of disruptive behaviors.

Classrooms that contain a high proportion of disruptive, aggressive students significantly

undermine classroom quality by creating negative social environments. Such classroom

conditions to some extent may reflect inadequate classroom management practices by teachers

and poor teacher child relations (Thomas et al., 2008). It is important that teachers establish rules

and runtimes as well as remain consistent with their students.

Prevention of Disruptive Behaviors

There are many steps a teacher can take to prevent disruptive behaviors. Baur, McCarney,

& Wunderlich (1994) insist that using modeling, positive praise, a class wide behavior

management system, as well as establishing class wide rules are all ways to prevent disruptive

behaviors. Modeling is a very effective prevention. The teacher can simply model the desired

behaviors or model how the students should act and react in certain situations. The modeling of

emotional expression and regulation helps children to develop the skills that are necessary to

understand emotions and learn methods to self-regulate negative emotions (Duncome et al.,

2012).

Positive praise of behavior is another great preventative measure for disruptive behaviors.

Disruptive behaviors should not be prevented or addressed with threats of referrals or

notification of parents; when disruptive behaviors are addressed through disciplinary measures

that are punitive, such as referrals, suspensions, and calling parents, these measures may do little

to eliminate such behaviors (Cholewa et al., 2010). It is important that the teacher use positive

praise to support the behaviors that are desired. Research has shown that students attending

classrooms characterized by these positive management practices show fewer behavior problems than students in classrooms characterized by more punitive teacher behaviors (Thomas et al., 2008).

Class wide behavior management systems can be used to prevent disruptive behaviors and should be introduced to students on the first day of school. The expectations of the behavior management system should be made clear to the students. Most students enjoy the buy-in with behavior management systems, especially if they include a token economy. Differential reinforcement, response cost, token economies, and group-oriented contingencies are various classroom management strategies that have proven to be effective in preventing and reducing problem behavior (Donaldson, Vollmer, Krous, Downs & Berard, 2011).

Establishing classroom rules is another great strategy to prevent disruptive behaviors. High quality teachers manage classrooms effectively by establishing predictable routines, monitoring their students, preventing negative behavior, and using rules and natural consequences consistently (Thomas et al., 2008). It is important that the students feel ownership of their rules; therefore the rules should be established with the students.

Classroom rules and class wide behavior management systems can go hand in hand. The teacher needs to make it clear to the students that when a classroom rule is broken, it will affect the behavior management system. At a Baltimore County Public School, the first grade students have a bonus card behavior management system. The students start each day with three bonus cards and need to earn at least two bonus cards to have a star day. The students are able to earn bonus cards (based on positive, on-task behaviors) and lose bonus cards (based on off-task, disruptive behaviors).

Behavioral Intervention for Disruptive Behaviors

The Good Behavior Game is an effective, easy to implement class wide intervention that

works on the concept of group reinforcement contingency (Elswick & Casey, 2011). The Good

Behavior Game aims to improve children's behavior. Before beginning The Good Behavior

Game, it is important to observe the most frequent disruptive behaviors in the classroom and

decide which behaviors are the most problematic in terms of classroom dynamics (Ruiz-Olivares

et al., 2010). Once those problematic behaviors are determined, the teacher will be able to

measure the data and discover if the disruptive behaviors are decreasing. The Good Behavior

Game promotes pro-social behavior through explicitly defining and systematically rewarding

appropriate behavior, thus placing emphasis on positive rather than on negative behavior (Van

Lier et al., 2004). The teacher assigns the students to one of the 3 or 4 teams. The teams contain

an equal number of disruptive and non-disruptive students. The students are encouraged to

manage their own behavior as well as their teammates' behavior through a process of group

reinforcement. There are a variety of ways to "play" the Good Behavior Game. In one variation,

each team receives a number of cards and the teams are rewarded for the number of cards that

remain on their desk at the end of a 15-60 minute period (Van Lier et al., 2004). In this variation,

the teacher takes away a card when a student violates one of the rules. The teams and students

are always rewarded with compliments. The winning teams receive tangible rewards directly

after each game (like candy, stickers, and pencils). In another variation of The Good Behavior

Game the students are rewarded with cards (or marks) for appropriate behaviors, instead of

receiving marks (or losing cards) for inappropriate behaviors (Tankersley, 1995). In one study,

Ruiz-Olivares et al., (2010) found that it was effective to have the students engage in a say-do

response before beginning The Good Behavior Game. The students would say "no" to specific

11

statements; for example, the teacher would say, "Team one, are you going to get up?" The

students would reply, "No, we are not going to get up." This helped remind the students of their

expectations. The Good Behavior Game is a convenient intervention because it can be

incorporated into any existing classes during the entire duration of class time if the teacher

wished (Tankersley, 1995). The teacher could conduct the good behavior game for three 10

minute sessions or a 60 minute session, depending on the needs of the students. In all the articles

and studies on The Good Behavior Game, the teachers or guidance counselors found the game to

be successful in the classroom. These studies were conducted in a variety of settings, ranging

from urban classrooms to kindergarten classrooms.

Summary

Studies have found that teachers reported that disruptive classroom behaviors were the

largest problem within the school and classroom (Elswick & Casey, 2011). On-task behaviors

are crucial to the overall success of students. Through the use of prevention and intervention,

teachers can help eliminate disruptive behaviors in the classroom.

CHAPTER III

METHODS

This study was conducted in order to determine whether using The Good Behavior Game impacted the number of disruptive behaviors displayed by first grade students during the Daily 5.

Design

This study utilized a quasi-experimental time series design that consisted of collecting and comparing frequencies of disruptive behaviors before, during, and after the implementation of the intervention. The independent variable was The Good Behavior Game. The dependent variable was the number of disruptive behaviors per round of the Daily 5 Reading Workshop. Mean frequencies were computed and compared to determine whether the intervention impacted the frequency with which students exhibited disruptive behaviors.

Participants

The study took place in a first grade classroom at an elementary school that was part of the Baltimore County Public School system. The elementary school educates students in kindergarten through fifth grade. Participants consisted of a convenience sample of fifteen first grade students. The sample was convenient because it was the researcher's own class to which she had daily access. Six of the students were female and nine were male. Fourteen students were Caucasian and one student was African American. One student had an Individualized Education Program (IEP) for speech.

Instrument

The instruments used were The Good Behavior Game and a tally chart to record the frequency of disruptive behaviors observed. The tally chart was teacher-made and a copy is located in the Appendix. The independent variable of this study was The Good Behavior Game.

This intervention was selected and used to decrease the frequency of disruptive behaviors as it gave the students an active role in achieving this goal. According to the literature review regarding how to best reduce disruptive behaviors in school, the teacher can define the behaviors to be reduced or targeted by the game, but the game can be just as effective when students define the behaviors to be reduced to make a better learning environment. As noted below, students helped establish the goals for this study. The game can be used during normal instruction—such as during lectures, seatwork, cooperative learning, and even during transitions. When the children and their teacher are first learning to play the game, it is important to play during simple activities so that the teacher can watch closely and the students have few distractions As the students succeed, the times and activities during which the game is played are typically expanded.

Procedure

To begin this study, the teacher observed the students during the Daily 5 rotations for one week before the intervention. During Daily 5, the students are in four different groups and each group consists of three to four students. Group membership is determined by student members' reading ability. The teacher did not inform students that they were being observed. While observing them, the teacher used a chart to tally the frequency of those disruptive behaviors that reflected violation of the classroom rules that were already in place. The teacher tallied the disruptive behaviors that caught her attention. At this point in the study, no new behavioral expectations had been set by the class, but the teacher was observing for behaviors that violated existing rules. In accord with the game rules, once the teacher and the students established behavior expectations for The Good Behavior Game, the teacher continued to observe for the specific targeted disruptive behaviors. The teacher tallied the number of targeted disruptive

behaviors per day and per group for the baseline week so the data for the selected behaviors could later be compared across phases of the study.

After the baseline week, the teacher introduced and explained The Good Behavior Game to the students. The teacher made it clear to the students that the team or teams with the lowest frequency of targeted disruptive behaviors for a week would win a prize from the prize box. The teams with the lowest frequency of disruptive behaviors for each day would win a fox paw sticker, which was a part of the school-wide behavior plan. The teacher informed the students that before they begin the game, they must choose the rules because every game has rules. Based on her observations in the baseline week, the teacher gave the students a list of specific behaviors from which to select behaviors they might want to address and discussed which positive behaviors were the goals. Based on a consensus, behaviors selected included not following directions, unnecessary talking, unnecessary movement, and making noises.

The class then created a poster called "The Good Behavior Game Rules." The poster was displayed in the classroom so that it was visible to all students at all times. After setting rules and expectations for The Good Behavior Game, the teacher observed the students for three weeks. Each week the teacher averaged the frequency of the selected disruptive behaviors per child per day per group. After three weeks of the intervention, the class discontinued playing the game. The teacher took down the poster of the rules and the students no longer received extra awards for the targeted behaviors. The teacher then continued to monitor and record the targeted disruptive behaviors in the same manner during the Daily 5 for one more week. After that week, the researcher compiled the mean frequency of each targeted disruptive behavior per child per day per group across the three phases of the study. These frequencies were then aggregated and

compared in order to determine whether the intervention had an impact on the frequency with which students demonstrated the targeted disruptive behaviors.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The null hypothesis of study was that there would be no difference in the mean frequency of targeted disruptive behaviors observed in the classroom before, during, or after the implementation of The Good Behavior Game. The disruptive behaviors selected for monitoring included not following directions, unnecessary talking, unnecessary movement, and making noises.

Table 1 below presents descriptive statistics for the daily frequencies with which students exhibited the four targeted disruptive behaviors during the intervals before, during and after The Good Behavior Game intervention. The statistics are aggregated for the whole group, although four small groups played during the daily 5. It is notable that some children were not in school every day during the intervention and post-intervention phases. This was accounted for by dividing each student's total frequency of the behaviors by the number of days he or she attended school in each phase.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics for Pre-, During, and Post-intervention Mean Daily Frequencies of Disruptive Behaviors

Disruptive Behavior	Phase of Study	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Range
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound	
Not following directions	Pre	15	1.067	.813	.210	.616	1.517	0-2.20
	During	15	.720	.416	.107	.490	.951	0-1.38
	Post	15	.983	.993	.256	.433	1.533	0-3.00
Unnecessary talking	Pre	15	1.147	.823	.212	.691	1.602	0-2.60
	During	15	.374	.248	.064	.236	.511	0-.69
	Post	15	.300	.544	.141	-.002	.602	0-2.00
Unnecessary movement	Pre	15	.440	.422	.109	.206	.674	0-1.40
	During	15	.144	.212	.055	.026	.261	0-.67
	Post	15	.050	.104	.027	-.007	.107	0-.25
Making noises	Pre	15	.347	.463	.119	.090	.603	0-1.40
	During	15	.061	.168	.043	-.032	.154	0-.58
	Post	15	.033	.129	.033	-.038	.105	0-.50

Comparisons of the mean daily frequencies of each of the four target behaviors across the three phases of the study (before, during and after The Good Behavior Game) were then made using three one-way analyses of variance. Results follow in Table 2.

Table 2

Results of one-way ANOVAs comparing the Mean Daily Frequency of Disruptive Behaviors for Before, During, and After The Good Behavior Game

DAILY MEANS COMPARED		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
NOT FOLLOWING DIRECTIONS	Between Groups	.982	2	.491	.809	.452
	Within Groups	25.486	42	.607		
	Total	26.468	44			
UNNECESSARY TALKING	Between Groups	6.600	2	3.300	9.568	.000
	Within Groups	14.487	42	.345		
	Total	21.087	44			
UNNECCESSARY MOVEMENT	Between Groups	1.243	2	.622	7.966	.001
	Within Groups	3.277	42	.078		
	Total	4.521	44			
MAKING NOISE	Between Groups	.902	2	.451	5.227	.009
	Within Groups	3.626	42	.086		
	Total	4.528	44			

The results of the ANOVAs showed that three of the 4 targeted behaviors' mean daily frequencies differed significantly across the 3 phases of the study. These included unnecessary talking (p<.000), unnecessary movement (p<.001) and making noise (p<.009). The probability of finding mean differences as large as that found for not following directions across the three phases was less than .452, which did not meet the criterion (p<.05) for significance or follow-up testing. Given that the ANOVAs found significant differences in mean frequencies of three of the four targeted disruptive behaviors across phases of the study, the null hypothesis that there would be no difference in the number of disruptive behaviors observed before, during, or after The Good Behavior Game was rejected.

To determine specifically which behaviors differed significantly across which phases and in what direction the changes were, post-hoc tests (using Scheffe's tests) were run. The results follow in Table 3.

Table 3

Post-Hoc Comparisons of Mean Daily Behavior Frequencies across Phases

Disruptive Behavior	Phase (I)	Phase (J)	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Not following directions	Pre	During	.3466	.2844	.482	-.3753	1.0684
		post	.0833	.2844	.958	-.6385	.8052
	During						
		post	-.2632	.2844	.654	-.9851	.4586
Unnecessary talking	Pre	during	.7732*	.2145	0.003	.2290	1.3174
		post	.8467*	.2145	0.001	.3025	1.3909
	During						
		post	.0735	.2145	.943	-.4707	.6177
Unnecessary movement	Pre	during	.2962*	.1020	0.021	.0373	.5550
		post	.3900*	.1020	0.002	.1312	.6488
	During						
		post	.0938	.1020	.658	-.1650	.3527
Making noises	Pre	during	.2856*	.1073	0.038	.0133	.5578
		post	.3133*	.1073	0.0021	.0411	.5856
	During						
		post	.0278	.1073	.967	-.2445	.3000

While all of the target behaviors, except for not following directions, decreased over each phase, the results of the post-hoc tests indicated that the following mean daily frequencies of

disruptive behaviors were different enough to meet the criteria for statistical significance

(p<.05):

- **Unnecessary talking:** pre (mean=1.14) and during (mean=.37) (mean difference= .773) and pre and post (mean= .3) (mean difference=.847)

- **Unnecessary movement:** pre (mean=.44) and during (mean= .1438) (mean difference=.296) and pre and post (mean= .05) (mean difference=.39)

- **Making Noises:** pre (mean= .3467) and during (mean= .0611) (mean difference=..285) and pre and post (mean= .0333) (mean difference=.313)

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to determine the impact of The Good Behavior Game on disruptive behaviors in the classroom. The null hypothesis was that the frequency of disruptive behaviors observed in the classroom would not differ significantly before, during, or after the implementation of The Good Behavior Game. The null hypothesis was rejected because the ANOVAs found significant differences in the mean frequencies of three of the disruptive behaviors over the phases of the study.

Limitations of the study

There were many limitations that may have impacted the implementation and results of this study. These limitations included the schedule, the students, individual student schedules, and the teacher. In particular, the schedule of the Daily 5 can be inconsistent. There are days that the rotations are longer than others. If a student is in a particular center that he or she does not enjoy, the student may be more likely to exhibit disruptive behaviors. The students are only human; if a student is having a bad day, that could be reflected in their behaviors. Teachers are never totally sure what type of personal or family struggles the student could be facing. These struggles can, of course, affect a person's behavior.

Some students in the class are removed during Daily 5 to participate in reading enrichment, speech therapy, occupational therapy, and ESOL supports. The majority of the students who are pulled have a schedule, but sometimes those schedules change at the last minute, impacting Daily 5 attendance. Such impromptu changes in their personal schedules can result in changes in students' behavior. The teacher also adds limitations to the study. Because the observations were based on what the teacher noticed, they may have been biased by teacher

expectations and preferences. For example, if the teacher knew that specific students tended to exhibit disruptive behaviors, the teacher may have focused more on those students than the others, which may have allowed the other students to exhibit some target behaviors without them being acknowledged or tallied.

Connections to Previous Research

The review of literature indicated that students' participation in disruptive behavior prevention and intervention strategies can lead to a decrease of disruptive behaviors within the classroom. With both prevention and intervention strategies, it is important to establish expectations, follow routines, and be consistent. Thomas et al., (2008) agreed that without predictable routines and consistency, teachers would not be able to effectively manage classroom behavior. Accordingly, students in the study were introduced to the routines of The Good Behavior Game during the study. The teacher made it clear that the students were playing a game and the game was based on their behaviors. The students understood that The Good Behavior Game was only being played during Daily 5. Once the game began, the students knew that when they saw their teacher with a clipboard, that she was tallying the disruptive behaviors. Throughout the study, the students were held to their own expectations, as they made the rules for The Good Behavior Game. The expectations were made clear by the poster of the "rules" that was created by the teacher and the students. The teacher kept The Good Behavior Game routines and expectations consistent throughout the study so that the students knew what to expect and there were never any surprises. The results of the study showed statistically significant changes in three out of the four targeted disruptive behaviors, three of which continued to decrease in the week after The Good Behavior Game was discontinued.

Recommendations for Future Studies

In future studies it is recommended to have more than one person tracking the disruptive behaviors. The classroom is a busy place, and it is difficult for one person to observe all of the disruptive behaviors without overlooking behaviors or demonstrating bias. The reliability of the observations could improve if there were two sets of data collected by two different people. It would be interesting to see if the data were similar or if another person would have a different perspective on the classroom. The study could also improve by establishing a more effective way to collect data. The tally chart works and is simple to use, but it also takes time away from the teacher's work with students. Instead of working with the students, the teacher has to be constantly scanning the classroom. The study could improve and perhaps be more effective if a stopwatch or timer was used to ensure regular observation intervals and to ensure the length of the Daily 5 rotations was more consistent. It could also be beneficial to the students to use a timer so that they could manage their work time and know when to switch rotations based on the sound of the buzzer.

Conclusion

This study supported contentions in the literature that disruptive behaviors can be decreased with clear expectations, routines, and consistency. Students playing The Good Behavior Game decreased targeted disruptive behaviors and appeared motivated by the game. Anecdotally, prior to the study, various students were exhibiting disruptive behaviors. When the intervention was introduced to the students, the behaviors began to decrease. The behaviors continued to decrease even after the intervention ceased.   Therefore, further research into positive behavioral strategies like The Good Behavior Game appears warranted to reduce disruptive behavior in the classroom.

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Appendix

	Unnecessary Movement	Unnecessary Talking	Making Noises	Not Following Directions
Student Name				
Student Name				
Student Name				
Student Name				
Student Name				
Student Name				
Student Name				
Student Name				
Student Name				
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