PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROCESS IN SCHOOLS

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PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROCESS IN SCHOOLS

A Dissertation
Submitted to the School of Education

Duquesne University

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

By
Siddiq M. Siddiq Ahmed

December 2019
DUQUESNE UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF EDUCATION
Department of Counseling, Psychology and Special Education

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PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN THE POSITIVE
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ABSTRACT

PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN THE POSITIVE BEHAVIOR INTERVENTION AND SUPPORT PROCESSES IN SCHOOLS

By
Siddiq M. S. Ahmed

December 2019

Dissertation supervised by Morgan Chitiyo, Ph.D.

The purpose of this study was to explore the experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement with, and interest in, the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) process within school systems. The overarching research question was what are the lived (perceived) experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in the PBIS process? From this main question, there were five subsidiary questions that were addressed: How do parents of children with challenging behavior involved in the PBIS process describe their lived experiences? In what ways have parents made meaning out of their experiences of participation in PBIS interventions of their children with challenging behavior at school? What do parents consider to have been the risk and protective factors in their experiences in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process? How have the parents’ personal characteristics influenced their perceptions of the support they get from...
school systems in their collaboration on PBIS? How do parents evaluate the support they get from the school system during their involvement? In order to answer these research questions, the researcher used semi-structured interviews with parents of children with challenging behavior. Eight parents, who met the criteria of the research selection process, were interviewed. All the interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. The coding and analysis of the eight interviews was informed and guided by the constructivism paradigm of qualitative inquiry called constructivist grounded theory. The five major themes that emerged from the interviews were: (a) parental motivation to be involved in PBIS with the school systems, (b) parents’ roles and support to schools in implementing PBIS, (c) school collaboration for successful implementation of PBIS, (d) school collaboration for successful implementation, and (e) parents’ motivation for collaborating with schools. The findings revealed that the parents had limited knowledge regarding PBIS, played limited roles in supporting PBIS implementation because of lack of knowledge and communication with schools, were highly motivated to be involved in PBIS, and faced several barriers in working with schools. Overall, the findings were consistent with current research and added to the limited literature on the experience of families of children with challenging behavior in the implementation of PBIS. The findings could promote collaboration between parents of children with challenging behavior and the school systems in the PBIS process thereby improving the behavioral, and ultimately, the academic outcomes of children with challenging behavior. The study helped identify areas in need of further research such as the type of training that the parents need in implementing PBIS in the home environment. Practical implications of the findings are provided and discussed.
DEDICATION

To my parents who encouraged me to work hard and succeed in all aspects of my life, prepared me to overcome future challenges, and invested their time and resources in me. To my kids (Omar, Leena, Layan, Sarah, and Ammar) who have been patient with me while I was far away from them. I appreciate their prayers and understanding of the importance of this great work, not only for them, but also for society as a whole.
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

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Also, I would like thank Dr. Temple Lovelace for her contribution to this project. She helped me establish and start working on this research by opening the door in my Social Justice Class in Fall 2017. Thank you for your guidance and direction that has made me successful in ways that extend beyond this project.

Next, I would like to thank Dr. Waganesh Zeleke, who also served on the dissertation committee. Her straightforward feedback and clear guidance helped me complete this project with ease. Her office was always open whenever I ran into trouble or had a question about the implementation of the research methodology.

I would also like to thank the parents who took time out of their busy schedules to share their experiences with me, and to participate in this study. I appreciate their time, effort, and willingness to share information about their children.
Finally, I would like to thank all faculty, staff and colleagues in the Special Education Department at Duquesne University who supported me in different ways towards completion of my Ph.D. Special thank you should be given to Ms. Lisa Chir, who worked hard to provide excellent administrative support from when I applied to the doctoral program in 2015 until I graduated. I appreciate her prompt responses and proper direction and guidance.
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB)
Multi Ties System of Support (MTSS)
Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS)
School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS)
Response to Intervention (RTI)
Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP)
Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA)
Check In Check Out (CICO)
Peer-Mediated Check In Check Out (PM-CICO)
Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA)
Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs)
Office of Special Education Program (OSEP)
Bully Prevention-Positive Behavior Support program (BP-PBS)
Office Discipline Referrals (ODRs)
Class-Wide Function-Related Intervention Team (CWFIT)
Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD)
Daily Behavior Report Card (DBRC)
Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)
Prevent-Teach-Reinforce (PTR)
Individualized Behavior Rating Scale Tool (IBRST)
Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC)
Institutional Review Board (IRB)

Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD)

Culturally Responsive Practices (CRP)

Family–School Practices in PBIS (FSP-PBIS)

Council on Quality Leadership (CQL)
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) is a systematic approach that is designed to establish a positive school culture across school settings (Horner et al., 2009). Turnbull III, Turnbull, and Wilcox (2002) defined PBIS as a:

behaviorally based systems approach, which is applied to enhance the capacity of schools, families, and communities to design effective environments that improve the fit or link between research-validated practices and environments in which teaching and learning occur. Attention in focused on creating and sustaining school environments that improve lifestyle results (personal, health, social, family, work, recreation, etc.) for all children and youth by making problem behavior less effective, efficient, and relevant, and desired behavior more functional. (p. 59)

The purpose of PBIS is to promote academic and social success for all individuals (Horner et al., 2009), particularly for students with challenging behavior (Dunlap, Kincaid, Horner, Knoster & Bradshaw, 2014; Hoyle, Marshall & Yell, 2011). In the long term, PBIS seeks to improve an individual’s quality of life by making them more independent via changing their environment (Lee, Poston & Poston, 2007). PBIS is implemented through a three tier model. The first tier or primary tier comprises of a core social behavior curriculum designed to prevent the occurrence of problem behavior by providing all students and staff across the school with a high quality environment (Lewis, Jones, Horner, & Sugai, 2010). The second tier is referred to as secondary level and serves as a backup plan in case the first one does not work well with all the students; it
targets reducing the frequency and intensity of problem behavior. The third tier is the tertiary level in which professionals educate students with challenging behavior who did not respond to tier one (school-wide level) and tier two (small-group level) interventions. At this level, functional behavior assessments (FBA) are conducted and individualized behavior intervention plans developed in order to provide students with individualized supports.

PBIS first emerged during the 1980s as a means of behavior management that targets improving individuals’ quality of life by reducing or eliminating challenging behavior (Dunlap & Horner, 2006). IDEA 1997 encouraged educators to use reinforcement-based interventions instead of using punitive approaches to address students’ challenging behavior in a school environment. The 1997 amendments to IDEA required school staff to implement reinforcement-based interventions rather than use punishment to address students’ social, emotional, and challenging behavior in schools (Collins, Gresham, & Dart, 2016). In 2004 the law was reauthorized again (i.e., the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act, 2004), this time requiring educational organizations to use a response to intervention (RTI) model, which is consistent with the School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBS) framework—a multi-tiered system to address the needs of all students and avoid school failure (Nocera, Whitbread & Nocera, 2014).

According to Dunlap et al. (2008) PBIS systems offer practical interventions that fit the individual’s unique social context. A continuously growing body of research demonstrates the effectiveness of PBIS (Chitiyo, May & Chitiyo, 2012; Fallon, O'Keeffe & Sugai, 2012; Freeman et al., 2015; Horner et al., 2009; Horner & Sugai, 2015; Kelm,
McIntosh & Cooley, 2014; McClean, & Grey, 2012; Muscott, Mann & LeBrun, 2008). PBIS has proven to be effective in terms of reducing challenging behavior such as aggression (McClean, & Grey, 2012), drug use (Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young, & Young, 2011), school absence (Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010), antisocial behavior (Carter, & Horner, 2009), school violence (Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young, & Young, 2011), persistent self-injury (McClean, & Grey, 2012), internalizing and externalizing problem behaviors (Carter, & Horner, 2009), and property destruction (Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young, & Young, 2011).

**Parental Participation in Special Education**

According to Yell, Katsiyannis and Losinski (2015), the special education laws give parents several rights to be involved in their children’s education. Parents have the right to appeal assessment for their child/ren in special education without delay as well as the right to consent, revoke, and refuse consent for special education for their child/ren. They also have the right to request an independent educational evaluation at no cost if they disagree with the services conducted by the school district.

According to Hart (2011), family involvement is an important factor that enhances educational psychology and special education. Various beneficial outcomes of family involvement in the education of their children have been reported (Alkahtani, 2013; Bailey & Blair, 2015; Blair, Lee, Cho, & Dunlap, 2011). First, parents play a vital role promoting positive behavioral and educational outcomes (Berryhill, 2017); and are able to help educational professionals by defining challenging behavior because they understand their child’s strengths, needs, and challenges (Hart, 2011). Parents can also help special educators to increase their child/ren’s outcomes both in the immediate and
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

long term (Hart, 2011). They are able to build a partnership with school personnel in order to improve the learning environment (Hart, 2011). This relationship presents parents with the opportunity to question school personnel and negotiate with them concerning the services provided, as well as ensure an appropriate education for their child/ren (Hart, 2011).

Several studies (e.g., Binnendyk & Lucyshyn, 2009; Hewitt, Keeling & Pearce, 2016; Lucyshyn et al., 2007; Szu-Yin Chu, 2015; Wang, McCart & Turnbull, 2007) indicate that parents’ participation in their children’s education enhances educational outcomes. For example, Hart (2011) stated that parental participation would increase the successful education of children between the ages 7-10 years. In addition, parents who share background information about their child with a teacher allow an instructor to understand more about the strengths and needs of the child. This could help a teacher correctly define the problem behavior and design effective Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP). Additionally, this alliance would prevent a teacher from making wrong assumptions, which may result in inaccurate judgements (Hart, 2011). According to Hart (2011):

Parental involvement works indirectly on school outcomes by helping the child build a pro-social, pro-learning self-concept and high educational aspirations, suggesting that parents, regardless of their socio-economic status and professional networks, can influence their children’s academic attainment and social and emotional adjustment. (p. 156)

Chu (2015) points to research conducted in Taiwan that showed the positive impact of family involvement. Chu’s study demonstrated that when the family is
involved in their child’s education, the child’s learning outcomes are more successful and positive than when families are not involved. Therefore, family involvement in the PBIS process is a key component throughout the planning, designing, and evaluation of the educational program (Chu, 2015).

Children with special needs might lack social communication competency (McLaughlin, Denney, Snyder & Welsh, 2012). These deficits might lead to challenging behaviors that affect their academic outcomes resulting in “increased rates of high school dropout, and juvenile delinquency” (McLaughlin, Denney, Snyder, & Welsh, 2012, p. 87). PBIS has demonstrated effectiveness in supporting these children across school, home, and the community. Many studies (e.g., Blair, Lee, Cho, & Dunlap, 2011; Hewitt, Keeling, & Pearce, 2016; Wang, McCart, & Turnbull, 2007) demonstrate the benefits of effective family involvement in implementing PBIS in the home context. For this reason, research suggests involving families in the PBIS process (Alkahtani, 2013; McLaughlin, Denney, Snyder, & Welsh, 2012; Szu-Yin Chu, 2015).

Binnendyk and Lucyshyn (2009) evaluated the effectiveness of a family-centered PBIS approach to the amelioration of food refusal behavior with a child with autism. The child’s mother participated in the implementation of the intervention at home during snack time. The family participated through: (a) establishing set eating routines, (b) presenting new non-preferred food, (c) using visual contingency strategy such as two sequence pictures to increase the knowledge and memory of routine steps and expectations, (d) providing positive reinforcement and proactive task prompts in order to promote correct responses, (e) withdrawing of the positive reinforcements when the child refused food, and (g) de-escalating procedure by minimizing the reinforcements if the
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

child engaged in major challenging behaviors. The results showed high levels of food acceptance, successful child involvement, high ratings of social validity and contextual fit by parents, and improvement in family quality of life. The successful implementation generalized to include eating new foods.

Another study was conducted by Lucyshyn et al. (2007) to examine the efficacy, social validity, and durability of PBIS, with family involvement, for a girl with autism and severe challenging behavior. The parents and child’s sister helped in implementing PBIS as interventionists through verifying the assumed functions of challenging behavior. The parents also helped complete an ecological assessment by providing information about the family goals, strengths, stress, resources, and support available to the family. The family participated in creating a Positive Behavior Support Plan (PBSP), routine-specific implementation checklists, problem-solving discussions, reviewing Functional Assessment (FA) results, and participating in meetings to promote generalization of the support plan outcomes. Results demonstrated reduction of challenging behavior by 75% and the effects were maintained for a long period. The outcomes included generalized progress in the child’s behavior and improved community participation. The parents also rated PBIS highly in terms of social validity and contextual fit. By implementing PBIS in school settings and encouraging parental involvement in the process, the study showed the value of parental involvement in the implementation of behavioral assessments and interventions for their children (Lucyshyn et al., 2007). Since, interactions in the home settings differ from school settings, PBIS should also be integrated within the context of household routines and activities to
successfully establish a partnership between educators and parents. This partnership will promote the effectiveness and sustainability of PBIS outcomes (Lucyshyn et al., 2007).

Research demonstrates the importance of the family in the SWPBS process in increasing students’ quality of life and learning (Dunlap, Newton, Fox, Benito & Vaughn, 2001). Dunlap and colleagues stated that families are experts with regard to their children. Professionals cannot move in and out of the child’s life without the family’s contribution in defining and developing goals for a behavior support plan. Having parents participate, with school systems, in PBIS interventions encourages shared ownership of the process, shared decision making, and allows parents and schools to share information more efficiently.

In spite of the importance of family involvement in the PBIS process, the nature of family involvement varies widely across the schools, ranging from complete involvement to a refusal to be involved in the PBIS process (Dunlap, Newton, Fox, Benito, & Vaugh, 2001). Dunlap and colleagues highlighted the importance of family involvement in PBIS in terms of defining and developing goals and providing guidelines for their children with disabilities in order to help them foster positive lifetime outcomes. In addition, Dunlap and colleagues argued that placing families at the center of the PBIS process helps to create practical and contextual goals for individuals with challenging behavior. Given the important role of families in the PBIS process, the current study was designed to investigate the extent to which parents of children with behavioral disorders were involved with school systems in this process. The main goal of PBIS is to improve the quality of life for both the individuals with challenging behavior and their families.
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

(Lucyshyn et al., 2007). Thus, the partnership between families and professionals is extremely important in successfully implementing SWPBS.

Importance of the Study

PBIS has been found to be effective with individuals with challenging behavior (Boyd & Anderson, 2013; Bradshaw, Mitchell & Leaf, 2010; Cihak, Kirk & Boon, 2009; McClean & Grey, 2012). As a result, both the 1997 and 2004 reauthorizations of IDEA recommended schools to use PBIS for children who display challenging behavior or students with disabilities who are at risk for a change in placement due to behavioral problems (Crone, Hawken & Bergstrom, 2007). In addition, school personnel are required to conduct an FBA and develop a Behavior Intervention Plan (BIP) as part of such students’ Individualized Educational Plans (IEPs) (Crone, Hawken & Bergstrom, 2007). According to IDEA the IEP team must include parents as members (Crone, Hawken & Bergstrom, 2007). Apart from the law requiring it, research demonstrates that when families participate with schools in implementing PBIS, the effectiveness of intervention increases (Bailey & Blair, 2015; Blair, Lee, Cho & Dunlap, 2011). Unfortunately, we do not know the experiences of parents participating in the PBIS process as no research has been conducted to that effect (Garbacz et al., 2016). Specifically, we also do not know the extent and nature of their involvement in the PBIS process. Knowing this would be helpful in designing specific guidelines on how schools can collaborate with families in the implementation of PBIS. Therefore, the current study seeks to explore the experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement and interest in the PBIS process in school systems.
Statement of the Problem

Given the increasing rates of disruption, antisocial behaviors, aggression, disobedience, property destruction, substance abuse, and other dangerous behaviors, which remain major barriers to effective learning (Scott, Anderson & Spaulding, 2008), more research needs to be conducted to address challenging behavior in schools. According to Chu (2015) it is essential that families are involved in developing behavior support plans, that they are included in behavior problem solving, and that they are trained to recognize the reduction of challenging behaviors (Chu, 2015). It has also been determined that families struggle with using evidence-based practices at home to solve problem behavior among their children (Chu, 2015). In fact, parents of children with disabilities who face difficulty with their children due to problem behavior, on the one hand, stated that the problem behaviors engendered negative views about their children (Lucyshyn, Horner, Dunlap, Albin, & Ben, 2002). On the other hand, professionals who use PBIS hold positive views of children with disabilities, and believe they can address the problem behaviors if they cooperate with parents and family members (Lucyshyn, Horner, Dunlap, Albin & Ben, 2002). Parents are, therefore, viewed as an important partner in the child’s education, development, and behavioral support because they are a valuable and durable primary resource in terms of their children’s development (Lucyshyn, Horner, Dunlap, Albin & Ben, 2002); they possess unique and in-depth knowledge about their children’s education, history of disabilities, culture, and ecology that educators can benefit from (Lucyshyn, Horner, Dunlap, Albin, & Ben, 2002).

IDEA emphasizes the role of parents of children with disabilities as key decision makers in their children’s education and development (Lucyshyn, Horner, Dunlap, Albin,
According to Blair, Lee, Cho, and Dunlap (2011), parental involvement with school staff is needed to develop the children’s education and behaviors, and determine their placements. To achieve real inclusive and collaborative problem solving, families need to be equal partners in their children’s behavioral and academic success (Blair, Lee, Cho & Dunlap, 2011). Blair and colleagues stated that PBIS enables parents/caregivers and school personnel to collaborate to help the child develop desirable behaviors. Hence, parental involvement in SWPBS is profoundly important and yet it appears limited (Blair, Lee, Cho & Dunlap, 2011). Garbacz et al. (2016) indicated that very little research exists regarding the involvement of families in PBIS and urge families, practitioners, and school personnel to enhance home-school communications. Against this background of lack of research about family involvement in PBIS, the little research available demonstrated superior results if families were involved in the PBIS process within the school systems (Dunlap et al., 2001). Since there have been no studies to date regarding how families are involved in the PBIS process in the school systems and their level of involvement and interest, this study is designed to explore the experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior who are involved in the PBIS process with the school system.

**Definition of Family Involvement**

According to Wang, McCart, and Turnbull (2007), family involvement refers to respectful collaboration built upon trust and fidelity between families and school personnel in which the roles of both parties are consistent and equally valid in terms of Functional Behavioral Assessment (FBA), designing Behavior Intervention Plans (BIP), and sharing of responsibilities with regard to PBIS implementation.
Purpose of the Study

In an effort to promote collaboration between parents of children with challenging behavior and school personnel in the implementation of SWPBIS, this study sought to explore the experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement and interest in the PBIS process in school systems.

Research Questions

The research questions that guided this study were defined after an extensive review of the literature related to parents’ involvement in the school system regarding their children with challenging behavior. The aim of this study was to seek answers to the following main question: What are the lived (perceived) experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in the PBIS process? Below are five subsidiary questions that were addressed:

1. How do parents of children with challenging behavior involved in the PBIS process describe their lived experience?

2. In what ways have parents made meaning out of their experience of participation in the PBIS interventions of their children with challenging behavior at school?

3. What do parents consider to have been the risk and protective factors in their experience in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process?

4. How have the parents’ personal characteristics influenced their perceptions of the support they get from school systems in their collaboration on PBIS?

5. How do parents evaluate the support they get from the school system during their involvement?
Rationale for the Study

Children spend most of their off-school time with their parents (Dunlap, Newton, Fox, Benito & Vaughn, 2001). Not surprisingly, the 1997, and more recently 2004, reauthorizations of IDEA support the involvement of families with schools regarding their children’s education (Scott & Cooper, 2013; Yell, Katsiyannis & Losinski, 2015). The two reauthorizations of IDEA also strongly recommended schools to use PBIS for children who exhibit challenging behavior (Collins, Gresham & Dart, 2016). Several studies demonstrate that if a family is involved with a school system, their children’s academic outcomes improve (Blair, Lee, Cho, & Dunlap, 2011; Chu, 2013; Hart, 2012; Cohrs, Shriver, Burke & Allen, 2016; McClean & Grey, 2012). However, research on parental involvement and the nature of parents’ experiences with the PBIS process in the school system is missing (Garbacz et al., 2016). In an effort to address this gap, the purpose of this study was to investigate the extent and nature of parental involvement in the PBIS process. It is hoped that findings of the study will help to promote collaboration between parents of children with challenging behaviors and their school systems in the PBIS process thereby improving the behavioral and, ultimately, the academic outcomes of children with challenging behavior.

The Operational Definition of Parental Experiences in PBIS

Parental experiences in PBIS are the lived experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in the PBIS process within the school systems.
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Summary

Many schools nationwide are implementing PBIS to address challenging behavior among their students. The effectiveness of PBIS in addressing students’ challenging behavior has been documented. Among this research there is evidence to demonstrate that children’s behavioral and academic outcomes are enhanced when their parents are involved with schools in PBIS implementation. Specifically, parents can play an important role in identifying challenging behavior, conducting FBAs, and developing and implementing BIPs. Unfortunately, previous research has identified lack of parental involvement as one of the challenges that schoolteachers face in implementing PBIS. In order to promote more parental involvement, it is necessary to examine the experiences of parents in collaborating with schools in terms of PBIS implementation.
Chapter II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter is a review of literature related to the implementation of Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) as an efficacious approach to addressing challenging behavior. The chapter also gives an overview of the different tiers of PBIS and School-Wide Positive Behavior Support (SWPBIS). Additionally, this chapter lays out the definition of PBIS, describing the three-tier model (i.e., Primary, Secondary, and Tertiary) and reviewing the history and background of PBIS and its development as an outgrowth of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA). The review looks at the PBIS system in terms of the laws that support the family’s participation regarding their children’s education. Furthermore, the review looks at the effectiveness of PBIS in improving school climate, behavioral outcomes such as office discipline referral, suspension, and academic achievement. Finally, the family’s role in facilitating the successful implementation of PBIS will be discussed.

Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports

Skinner is the pioneer theorist who established the significant framework for ABA, which helped to engender the concepts of PBIS (Dunlap & Horner, 2006). For instance, reinforcement, stimulus control, contingency management, prompting, shaping, functional equivalence, generalization, fading, manipulations of stimulus control, and maintenance are concepts used in both PBIS and ABA. Because the principles derive from behavioral science laws, it is not surprising that the two are in concordance with one another (Dunlap & Horner, 2006). Pinkelman and Horner (2019), stated that PBIS “uses
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science to develop, evaluate, and improve the effectiveness and efficiency of practices and operations (p. 236)”.

According to Weiss, DelPizzo-Cheng, LaRue, and Sloman (2010) PBIS utilizes the principles of ABA and applies them across three tiers based on the levels of support that students with challenging behavior need. Therefore, PBIS is beholden to ABA in terms of the practical direct interventions, particularly at the individual level. Moreover, PBIS practices are derived from the principles of interactive learning, such as positive reinforcement, functional analysis, and functional behavior assessment, which developed over the early years of ABA (Dunlap & Horner, 2006). PBIS emerged in response to rising concerns over the use of aversive procedures and out of the desire to produce more meaningful and sustainable behavioral results in complex community settings (Dunlap et al., 2008). PBIS emerged over the past two decades as a practical framework to assist schools to create positive and effective school environments, which enhance academic learning and the social skills of all students (Fallon et al., 2012). It also emerged in response to the use of aversive procedures in order to support positive behavior and to bolster inclusive settings, such as home, school, recreational, and community settings (Hieneman, 2015).

PBIS is a philosophy that focuses on the use of evidence-based practices within a multi-tiered system to address challenging behavior in schools (Bradshaw, Mitchell, & Leaf, 2010; Horner et al., 2009; Sugai & Horner, 2006; Scott, & Cooper, 2013). Chitiyo, May, and Chitiyo (2012) defined School Wide Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (SWPBIS) as a “systems approach that derives from the principles of applied behavior analysis. The approach aims to establish a safe school environment and a
positive school culture that supports positive behavioral and academic outcomes for all students” (p. 2). Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young and Young, (2011), stated that PBIS is a:

Systems model for behavior management that advances beyond punitive, reactive responses to undesired behaviors by employing an applied method of teaching, positively reinforcing, and continually expanding an individual’s behavioral repertoire. Linked to functional behavioral assessment, PBIS is a practical, lifestyle approach focused on improving overall quality of life through strategies that develop appropriate social behaviors and help achieve learning outcomes. (p. 2)

Pinkelman and Horner (2019) stated that “Teaching-Family Model and PBIS are approaches that use the science of ABA to reduce high-impact problematic behavior. Pinkelman and Horner (2019), explained some of the essential lessons that derive from the Teaching-Family Model (TFM) and how PBIS is utilized in schools. PBIS starts:

With stakeholder values, use the science, expand to larger units of analysis, implement through teams, focus on systems, use data to guide improvement, and be persistent. Like the Teaching-Family Model, behavioral science is responsible for the success of PBIS. Values guide the selection of where behavioral science is targeted, research guides the development of effective practices, and implementation science guides the scaling of these practices to levels of significant social impact. (p. 239).
Three-Tier Model of PBIS

The multi-tiered system of PBIS comprises of three tiers namely, primary, secondary and tertiary tiers. It is worthwhile to mention that multi-tiered PBIS has been widely promoted by the U.S. Department of Education and many state departments of education (Bradshaw, Pas, Debnam & Johnson, 2015). As a result, there has been an increase in the number of schools, implementing school-wide disciplinary systems in the United States. Approximately 21,000 schools, including nearly 1,000 high schools, across the country currently implement SWPBIS (Horner & Sugai, 2015; Horner, Sugai & Anderson, 2010).

Primary Level (Schoolwide)

In Tier 1, also known as the universal or primary level of PBIS, all students are included in order to receive preventative and proactive supports. Bradshaw et al. (2010) stated that the primary level of prevention typically involves common rules for the whole school. Thus, the PBIS team should define these rules and the necessary resources to implement SWPBIS successfully. Typically, at this level of the behavioral matrix, 80%-90% of students are shown to exhibit successful positive behavior (Bradshaw et al., 2010).

According to the Office of Special Education Program (OSEP) Technical Assistance Center (2017), the core principles of PBIS concern identifying the assumptions and expectations of appropriate behaviors that all students are expected to exhibit. Also, it is important to identify the contextual setting events and environmental conditions so that students can adopt appropriate behaviors. Also, OSEP (2017) highly
recommends using scientific research to select the most valid and reliable interventions to ensure quality services are provided to all students.

Christofferson and Callahan (2015) investigated the effectiveness of SWPBIS in an Urban Charter School. The participants’ de-identified data described 200 students ranging from kindergarten to second grade, 205 parents, and 54 school personnel. The results showed significant improvement and positive impact of the SWPBIS framework system on students’ behaviors and school environment. In addition, the study reported that after implementing SWPBIS the rates of both office discipline referrals and in-school suspensions decreased. Also, the study showed improvement of students, teachers, administrator and parents’ perceptions regarding the school climate (Christofferson & Callahan, 2015).

Good, McIntosh and Gietz (2011) implemented Bully Prevention-Positive Behavior Support program (BP-PBS) at Ecole Central Middle School. Three students, considered popular by their peers, volunteered to present the BP-PBS program to the school. Staff training took place and was provided by the members of the SWPBS leadership team. As part of the implementation process, the BP-PBS program was presented to parents and they were supportive of the program. The effectiveness of the BP-PBS system was measured by comparing the number of out-of-school suspensions and office discipline referrals (ODRs) per month pre- and post-implementation. The results showed the number of out-of-school suspensions significantly reduced in post-implementation by 65% compared to pre-implementation. In addition, the number of bullying ODRs decreased by 41% following implementation of the BP-PBS program (Good, McIntosh & Gietz, 2011).
Secondary Level (Group Specific)

The secondary prevention level (tier 2) is designed for students who need more individualized supports or who display more serious problem behaviors and do not respond to primary level interventions (Lewis et al., 2017; McIntosh et al., 2009). The secondary level is considered to be successful for 10% to 15% of the school population (McIntosh et al., 2009). Tier-2 interventions target students who need more support than just the primary level supports (McIntosh et al., 2009). In addition, educators must inform parents and invite them to participate in meetings where they can plan and give feedback to educators (Lewis et al., 2017). This allows for an open discussion of how families can best participate at this level. This stage stresses providing parents with a clear awareness of PBIS and supporting them by noting facilities, activities, and centers that will offer services to them and their children (Lewis et al., 2017). One feature that makes the interventions in Tier-2 cost effective and efficient to implement is providing the support to groups of students (McIntosh et al., 2009). Examples of Tier-2 behavior interventions include Check-In Check-Out (CICO), social skills training groups, daily report cards, homework clubs, and anger management programs (McIntosh et al., 2009).

Kamps et al. (2011) demonstrated the effectiveness of Class-Wide Function-related Intervention Team (CWFIT) program in six classes from three schools consisting of 107 students and eight target students with Emotional Behavioral Disorders (EBD). The intervention was provided to all groups of students, who exhibited disruptive behavior and were at risk of EBD. The intervention involved four steps including: the assessment of attention via communicative skills, removal of the potential reinforcement,
teaching replacement behavior, and self-management skills. Results indicated a reduction in disruptive behaviors and an improvement in replacement behavior.

Collins, Gresham, and Dart (2016) examined the effects of peer-mediated CICO on the social skills of students who identified as socially neglected using a sociometric classification system as change agents to serve target students within CICO intervention. CICO is a Tier-2 intervention, which includes four steps (Collins, Gresham, & Dart, 2016). The first step is Check-In involving a meeting between teachers and target students lasting less than five minutes. The teacher reviews target behaviors, sets behavioral goals, and provides encouragement. Secondly, in accordance to the target student’s behavior, the teacher fills out a rating form consisting of the Daily Behavior Report Card (DBRC). Next, the Check-Out process takes place when the student meets with his/her teacher to review behavioral performance at the end of the day. Positive reinforcement is provided to the student during the Check-Out step if the student meets their daily goals. Finally, the teacher sends the DBRC form to the student’s parents in order to obtain the parents’ signatures. Collins and colleagues’ study was conducted in the general education setting and the results indicated that PM-CICO was effective.

**Tertiary Level (Individual)**

Tertiary level supports are meant for individuals who exhibit the most critical problem behaviors and who do not respond to interventions at both the primary and secondary levels and therefore, require resource-intensive individualized supports (Fairbanks, Simonsen & Sugai, 2008). Between 1% and 5% of the student population need these interventions and they may qualify for special education services (Oram, Owens & Maras, 2016). The goal at this level is to both manage challenging behavior and
improve pro-social behavior. According to Korinek (2015) FBA is conducted at this level to identify the functions of challenging behaviors so as to replace those challenging behaviors with acceptable alternative behaviors. The purpose of conducting FBA is to understand the relationship between the challenging behavior and the events in student(s)’ natural settings. Korinek (2015) defines FBA as a process of problem solving that the BIP team utilizes to gather information from the target students, their parents, school records, or through direct observations. The information gathered becomes the basis for developing a function-based BIP for the student. Fairbanks, Simonsen, and Sugai (2008) defined BIP as an environmental change plan created by the school team to minimize the events that predict the occurrence of problem behavior and teach replacement behavior that is more efficient, than the problem behavior, in accessing reinforcement.

Lower et al. (2016) investigated the effectiveness of Tier-3 interventions, with the goal of increasing academic engagement of two elementary students with disruptive behaviors, such as calling out, talking and arguing with peers, and poking peers. According to the FBA, both of the target students were less responsive to Class-Wide Function-related Intervention Teams (CW-FIT) Tier 1 and 2 interventions and engaged in disruptive behaviors to gain attention from peers and/or teachers. The independent variable was CW-FIT, which uses multi-tier classroom management intervention to enhance the positive behaviors for target students. The intervention was designed to use self-management through matching self-ratings with teacher ratings of behavior for the students to learn to accurately self-evaluate the appropriateness of their behavior. The results indicated that using CW-FIT in Tier-3 helped the students with challenging
behavior to overcome their disruptive behaviors and significantly increase their responsiveness and academic achievement (Lower et al., 2016).

Blair, Fox and Lentini (2010) examined the effects of implementation of function-based behavior support plans on the challenging behavior of three young male children in a community early childhood program. All three families were receiving public assistance. The study used multiple-baseline design across the children who interfered with classroom routines and activities. The research involved mothers, two teachers, two researchers, a family counselor, and two administrators who engaged in the FBA process. The intervention included three strategies; prevention, teaching, and reinforcement strategies. The prevention strategy involved giving the child directions and visual cues to help them modify their behavior, make better choices to participate, and comply with classroom activity. The teaching strategy involved visual cues and/or physical or verbal prompts to model and teach the children appropriate choices. Finally, the teacher provided positive reinforcement when the children demonstrated the new skills. The results showed the effectiveness of implementation of the individualized behavior support plan by teachers in the classroom setting. The outcomes indicated elevated levels of engagement, a decrease in challenging behavior, and maintained change in behaviors (Blair, Fox & Lentini, 2010).

The Legal Foundations of PBIS

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) encourage family engagement and sharing the responsibility of their child/ren’s education with educators (Garbacz et al., 2016). Both legislations regulate the use of evidence-based educational practices, of which PBIS is an example. In addition,
the reauthorization of the IDEA and the U.S. Department of Education’s (2010) *Blueprint for Reform* give families the authority to make decisions concerning the educational plans for their children and promote partnerships among school personnel and parents to stimulate student success (Garbacz et al., 2016).

The 1997 reauthorization of IDEA stated that to the greatest extent possible, school personnel should use reinforcement-based interventions rather than punitive approaches to address students’ social, emotional, and behavioral concerns in the school environment (Collins, Gresham, & Dart, 2016). The SWPBIS approach provides a tiered framework for schools by using reinforcement-based interventions (Collins, Gresham, & Dart, 2016). Also, IDEA gives specific attention to students who exhibit challenging behavior that violate the school’s regulations (Killu, 2008). IDEA supports developing BIPs under specific circumstances when:

(a) a student’s behavior impedes his or her own or others ability to learn; (b) behavioral goals on the IEP are not sufficient to address problem behavior; (c) prior or subsequent to a manifestation determination meeting (student suspended in excess of ten days); and (d) when a student is placed involuntarily into a more restrictive placement due to behavior. (Cook et al., 2007, p. 192)

Additionally, IDEA 2004 stipulated that teachers should use SWPBIS as feasible and preferred supports for students with disabilities (Swain-Bradway, Pinkney & Flannery, 2015; Chitiyo & Wheeler, 2009). IDEA 2004 encouraged school administrators and special educators to extend the use of FBA and PBIS procedures to address the undesirable behavior for all students, with and without disabilities (Killu, 2008). The
rationale for the requirement was to encourage a proactive approach to behavior management.

**The Efficacy of PBIS**

McIntosh et al. (2009) reported SWPBIS as a promising model to deliver and increase support for students and demonstrated the efficacy of SWPBS interventions. Teachers and behavioral consultants applied a Tier-1 intervention with all students at the school and identified students who did not respond to this level through office discipline referrals and standardized behavior rating scales before and after eight weeks of intervention. They were then provided with a Tier-2 intervention (Check-In and Check-Out (CICO) and were monitored through daily points gained and direct observation. The intervention included: training sessions in which students were taught the daily routine through the CICO program, the use of examples and non-examples of appropriate behavior in the school environment, and encouraging the students to practice in the daily routines of the program. For those who did not respond to the Tier-2 intervention, they received individualized function-based support or a Tier-3 intervention. The results showed significant reduction in challenging behavior exhibited by students based on the teacher-identified function of problem behavior.

Freeman et al. (2015) examined the direct and indirect effects of SWPBIS associated with high school dropout rates from 37 states. Freeman and his colleagues used a structural equation model to analyze the web of relationships among important high school outcomes. The independent variable was the implementation of SWPBIS, which was associated with the direct reduction of drop-out rates. The outcomes of the study indicated that SWPBIS significantly increased attendance rates of high school
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students when used with fidelity for long term periods. The study demonstrated that implementing SWPBIS for a long period of time results in improvement in dropout rates in high school. However, the study did not show significant or consistent effects of SWPBIS on dropout rates for the direct short-term. The authors concluded the study by stating that “(a) school-level tiered interventions may increase a school’s capacity to address intensive needs of some students, and (b) began to conceptualize the dropout problem as a system level failure in need of a systemic tiered intervention” (Freeman et al., 2015, p. 306).

In a different study, Freeman et al. (2016) investigated the effectiveness of the application of SWPBIS with fidelity in Tier-1. The sample of the study were from high schools from 37 states. The authors attempted to explore the relationship between exposure to Tier-1 SWPBIS implemented with fidelity and its effectiveness in reducing office discipline referrals (ODR). Freeman et al. (2016) examined the Benchmarks of Quality and School-Wide Evaluation Tool that measured school-wide universal intervention. Results of the study demonstrated an increased rate of attendance and also an improvement of behavioral and academic outcomes. The outcomes demonstrated the effectiveness of SWPBIS implementation in decreasing ODRs as well as increasing the rates of students’ attendance and behavioral outcomes.

Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young, and Young (2011) found that SWPBIS was useful in improving the school environment as well as decreasing the rates of unexcused absences, inappropriate behaviors, and ODRs when compared to the control group. The independent variable consisted of implementing teaching of social skills, how to praise, proactive screening for at-risk students, and public posting of school rules. The outcomes
indicated significant reduction of the rates of unexcused absences, school tardiness, inappropriate behaviors, and ODRs.

Although some studies have indicated that PBIS has little to no effect on academic achievement (Gage, Sugai, Lewis, & Brzozowy, 2015), Lassen, Steele and Sailor (2006) stated that PBIS might be more effective if it is implemented for more than one year. In addition, Chitiyo, Makweche-Chitiyo, Park, Ametepee, and Chitiyo (2011) conducted a meta-analysis that demonstrated that PBIS had a positive effect on academic achievement. Chitiyo and colleagues found a positive correlation between problem behaviors and academic accomplishments.

Christofferson and Callahan (2015) explored the effectiveness of using SWPBIS in order to improve school climate and to discourage disruptive behaviors. The school where the study was conducted experienced a negative environment, student suspensions, and had a high rate of staff turnover. Data were collected from 200 students, 205 parents, and 54 staff members. The independent variable was Positive Behavior Support in Schools (PBSIS) that assisted administrators, teachers and students to apply a consistent discipline approach in the instructional and non-instructional areas. This included active teaching and reinforcing a small group who met the social-behavioral expectations, implementing the consequences for violations of school rules, and the use of data to determine intervention plans. The dependent variables were the number of ODRs and school suspension. The implementation of PBIS resulted in a significant positive change in student behaviors and school environment. Also, the results indicated that using PBIS significantly decreased the number of ODRs and the rates of school suspensions. Clearly,
research has demonstrated the positive impact of SWPBIS in reducing problem behavior (Christofferson & Callahan, 2015).

Horner, Sugai, and Anderson (2010) evaluated the sustainability and cost of implementing SWPBIS and found it to be sustainable. Not surprisingly, the use of SWPBIS practices and systems is increasing (Fallon et al., 2012). However, as aggressive and challenging behaviors have increased and reached critical proportions in schools throughout the country—which worries parents, students, and lawmakers—educators must use and continue to refine effective interventions (Safran & Oswald, 2003). It is therefore, necessary to explore ways to refine and promote effective and sustainable implementation of PBIS in order to maximize behavioral and academic outcomes for all students.

**Role of Families in PBIS**

Families are a key asset in conducting FBA due to their ability to provide a unique opportunity to observe and interact with their child (Dunlap et al., 2001). As they spend more time with their child than special education professionals, family members have access to valuable information that is crucial for successful FBA and PBIS interventions (Dunlap et al., 2001). Specifically, family members can provide the most accurate and precise information regarding a child’s medical history, communication skills, preferences, daily routines, behavioral adaptations, strengths, and weaknesses through data collection methods such as parental interviews (Dunlap et al., 2001). Establishing communication between the family and school regarding progress, improvement, and effective intervention results in the best opportunity for a child’s success (Dunlap et al., 2001). Ultimate success is dependent on the family’s participation.
to inform the process and to be involved in applying the intervention methods (Dunlap et al., 2001). Thus, family members are crucial in developing behavior support plans when taking into consideration cultural, structural, personal, and familial values and contexts to fit the interventions (Dunlap et al., 2001).

Educators are encouraged to support families by sharing responsibilities with parents for implementing appropriate interventions (Blair, Lee, Cho, & Dunlap, 2011). This allows connections to develop between the school and home settings (Lewis et al., 2017). The connection between school and home settings will promote desirable behavior (Lucyshyn et al., 2007). However, there is a general lack of research that investigates the extent to which parents are involved in SWPBIS.

Not much research has been conducted on family involvement in PBIS. This is in spite of the research demonstrating superior outcomes if families are involved in the PBIS process (Dunlap et al., 2001). Alkahtani (2013) examined the use of concept mapping as an adjunct to PBIS in an ecological setting with a four-year old boy who was diagnosed with Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorders collaboratively with his mother in order to help the child to communicate and understand instructions better. The child in focus in this study displayed many challenging behaviors in both the home and kindergarten classroom, such as destructiveness, aggression, and noncompliance. The child engaged in challenging behavior when he was given an exercise to complete and during transition between activities. Alkahtani (2013) used multiple baseline across family routine design to evaluate the effectiveness of concept mapping. Parental involvement in this study included establishing a partnership between home and school, in which, after training, the parent identified behaviors of concern and implemented the
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intervention at home. The training sessions included, the concepts and process of FBA, and types of behavioral functioning. The parents were interviewed by the researcher in order to understand their relationship with their child. During baseline, the child exhibited a high rate of challenging behavior during mealtime, bedtime, and academic time. In addition, one of the parents was involved with the researcher to develop a hypothesis that identified problem behaviors that occurred based on FBA. The parent participated in the intervention by observing daily videotaped recording of the child’s behavior, preparing materials, creating the intervening check lists, and participating in daily discussion about how the intervention worked during mealtime and bedtime routines. The results indicated that implementing PBIS interventions with family support was beneficial for successful interventions. Moreover, the post-interview with the parent pointed out significant improvement in overall family quality of life and less stress and worry about the child engaging in challenging behavior at home and community outings.

Bailey and Blair (2015) examined the efficacy of a family-centered model with three families with children with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) using sensory processing problems. The study used a multiple-baseline design across families to examine the functionality of implementing Prevent-Teach-Reinforce (PTR) intervention to assess the families’ implementation of the intervention and changes in child behavior. Each family monitored the progress of the child’s behavior by completing the Individualized Behavior Rating Scale Tool (IBRST) daily. The research team measured the correspondence between IBRST and direct observation data in order to assure an accurate application of IBRST by the parents. The outcomes demonstrated the effectiveness of PRT in increasing the replacement behavior and decreasing challenging
behavior across the target children. These outcomes encouraged parents to further design and implement the intervention. Additionally, the parents were successfully able to monitor the child’s progress and were extremely satisfied with the implementation process as well as outcomes.

Blair, Lee, Cho, and Dunlap (2011) assessed the impact of individualized behavior support plan implementation through family and school collaboration using a multiple baseline design across three children with autism in two early childhood settings at a public special school in South Korea. The study used a PBIS process that aimed to promote family collaboration with the school to design the individualized intervention. The collaboration involved the parents completing a survey regarding their child’s behavior at home. The collected information helped to develop more comprehensive strategies to address the children’s challenging behaviors. Parental involvement included observation of the child’s progress monitoring, the development of behavior support plans, and the implementation of those plans. Also, the study evaluated the degree to which the home–school collaboration would change the child’s behaviors. The results showed a significant reduction in problem behaviors during the intervention phase and over time both at home and school. During follow-up, the levels of problem behaviors slightly increased and appropriate behaviors slightly decreased. These results strongly encourage the participation of parents in the implementation of PBIS for their children (Dunlap et al., 2001).

However, as Minke and Anderson (2005) noted, there are many obstacles to successfully engage parents in the PBIS process. Furthermore, there is evidence that efforts to involve parents in their child’s education may have unintended negative effects
and consequences as well (Minke & Anderson, 2005). In spite of these obstacles, Minke
and Anderson state that there are numerous benefits when families are involved with
professionals and school staff in implementing PBIS. Establishing a collaborative and
reciprocal relationship between interventionists and families created a trusting, caring,
and respectful dynamic partnership with families in the PBIS process. Students are more
likely to gain greater academic success, display improved behavior, and gain entrance to
postsecondary educational institutions (Minke & Anderson, 2005).

However, according to Minke and Anderson (2005), teachers perceived that
parents of lower socioeconomic class backgrounds were often uninvolved in their
children’s education and behavior. Conversely, working class parents felt that they were
highly involved, even by simply observing their children’s progress or lack thereof.
Research indicates that collaboration between families and school personnel often helps
to reach the goals of appropriate behaviors established by schools (Minke & Anderson,
2005). Nevertheless, collaboration between families and schools has been very slow since
many school personnel lack training geared toward working with families on the use of
PBIS (Minke & Anderson, 2005).

Lower et al. (2016) examined Tier 3 interventions with two students with
challenging behavior who previously did not reach the desired level based on Tiers 1 and
2. The parents of these students were vital in implementing PBIS. They communicated
daily with teachers via text messaging, and offered positive reinforcement in the home
setting. The dependent variables were academic achievement and destructive behavior,
including banging the chair against the floor, whistling, and talking out. Results showed a
significant reduction in disruptive behavior and substantial improvement in academic outcomes and social skills.

The level of family involvement in PBIS depends on the way that they are participating with schools and teachers (Minke & Anderson, 2005). While working parents consider themselves active participants working with their children, teachers defined them as uninvolved (Minke & Anderson, 2005). However, middle class parents tended to have more active involvement with schools due to greater flexibility in job schedules, access to transportation and child care, and more extensive social networks (Minke & Anderson, 2005).

It has been shown that lack of teachers’ training in working with families is a significant barrier to improving family participation in education (Minke & Anderson, 2005). Therefore, when asking families to participate in conducting FBA and PBIS, it is important for teachers to recognize, respect, and accommodate family’s individuality (Minke & Anderson, 2005). Also, it is necessary for teachers to take into account that families have different levels of understanding, motivation, and availability in order to promote familial participation (Dunlap et al., 2001).

**The Importance of Family Involvement in the PBIS Process**

The partnership between families and school personnel should be equal in order to encourage positive outcomes for children (Weist, Garbacz, Lane & Kincaid, 2017). This level of family engagement would support family empowerment and equal partnership and lead to inclusive practices—such as cultural recognition—and a variety of different types of communication (Weist, Garbacz, Lane & Kincaid, 2017). In addition, family engagement with PBIS, when implemented across school systems, offers assistance to
unique student populations while acknowledging cultural differences and promoting cultural competency (Weist, Garbacz, Lane & Kincaid, 2017). Garbacz et al. (2016) stated that involving parents in the PBIS process would increase the positive outcomes for children and adolescents in math, reading, and overall academic success. In addition, parental involvement is positively associated with school attendance and classroom preparation, and negatively correlated with student behavioral challenges and dropout rates (Garbacz et al., 2016).

Garbacz et al. (2016) explained how schools and families can work more closely through parental volunteering within the classroom or extracurricular activities. Parental involvement allows and increases the implementation of multidirectional communication and practicing school curriculum in the home using and implementing PBIS (Garbacz et al., 2016). However, very few teachers receive practical guidelines on how to involve parents in PBIS (Garbacz et al., 2016).

Furthermore, Dishion et al. (2008) reported evidence that the application of PBIS by parents would prevent disruptive behavior. Minke and Anderson (2005) stated that family collaboration and their support of teachers and schools is likely to increase academic accomplishment, successful learners, and improve behavior regardless of the families’ socio-economical background. Schools can engage with families by distributing school policy regulations and offering enough instructions so that the families understand learning expectations, reinforcement procedures, and school guidelines (Reinke et al., 2006). The implementation of PBIS across different settings would probably generate appropriate behaviors and would engage families within the school setting as well as
establish collaboration and build connections between the school staff and parents (Reinke et al., 2006).

Dunlap, Newton, Fox, Benito and Vaughn (2001) stated that researchers, parents, and practitioners have to pay careful attention to using FBA as an effective method to reduce undesirable behavior. Lewis et al. (2017) indicated that there is no one specific definition of “family participation” or “family engagement.” To increase family engagement, it is important to define family broadly in a manner that is inclusive and reflective of community culture. School personnel must understand how to involve families and to recognize that family participation may vary, and to understand family dynamics and traditions. To accomplish this, personnel must be familiar with the ethnicity, socio-economic status, and cultural sensitivity of the families they are serving (Lewis et al., 2017).

The PBIS model is collaborative and should involve multiple stakeholders both within and outside schools such as parents and families (Reinke, Herman & Tucker, 2006). It is highly recommended to invite parents, families, and other community members to be involved in the application of PBIS and to identify the cultural context of target behaviors, select the acceptable interventions based on the principles of PBIS, and measure the academic outcomes, as part of the PBIS process (Reinke et al., 2006). When deciding on the evaluation and intervention services of young children with challenging behavior, it is important to involve families in these assessments so that parents can practice conducting PBIS, while building a partnership with the schools (Chu, 2015). To develop a strong PBIS program with families, it is necessary to ensure that the needs of the child and the family are all being met and to provide a plan to make PBIS
implementation sustainable (Chu, 2015). Doing so when there is high levels of parent involvement should empower and strengthen families and the intervention services they are receiving (Chu, 2015).

Carter and Horner (2009) conducted research using First Step to Success program to investigate the FBA process with students with challenging behavior. The target student was a six-year-old Caucasian male who exhibited challenging behavior including: unnecessarily talking in the classroom, moving from his seat, and behaving aggressively. The First Step to Success intervention entailed a protocol that utilized FBA, and individualized function-based intervention. The student was referred to the office of behavioral discipline by his teacher. The study used an A-B-C-D-C single-subject reversal design. The function-based support system included daily at-home check-in with the child’s family, as well as in-class check-in with the child’s instructor. The observations took place for a duration of 20 minutes in each session by trained observers. The family participated in this study through daily communication with the school regarding the child’s behavior at home. The results of the study showed a significant decrease of challenging behavior and increased the student’s academic achievement. This study demonstrated successful involvement of families in the school system when conducting the FBA process.

Moore et al. (2016) studied the strengths and needs of the multiple-gating approach to show proactive positive behavior support for families. Moore and colleagues stated that the rate of behavioral problems can be efficiently reduced if parents collaboratively engaged the tier support process that is appropriate for their needs through communication with the school system and coordinated PBIS process. Moore and
colleagues reported three principles of educational efficient interventions: family participation in the intervention must be integrated within the school system of behavioral support, the family interventions should be adapted to the specific needs of children and families, and family interventions will be most effective when deployed proactively rather than reactively in the school context. These three principles are translated into the evidence-based parent support process and should be implemented by the school system (Moore et al., 2016).

Many studies suggest that involving families in training and behavioral support promotes positive behavior among children and ensures the efficacy of the implementation of PBIS (Carter, & Horner, 2009; Fettig, Schultz, & Sreckovic, 2015; Hindin & Paratore, 2007; LeBel, Chafouleas, Britner & Simonsen, 2013; Lucyshyn et al., 2007). Muscott, Mann, and LeBrun (2008) indicated that family support preserves the social-emotional well-being and achievement of all students. A universal PBIS structure was created via the shared input of families and teachers in this study (Muscott, Mann, & LeBrun, 2008). Formal introductions were employed to instruct teachers, staff, and families with regard to the implementation of the created universal PBIS structure. Muscott, Mann, and LeBrun also reported that when parents were involved in the PBIS program, the outcomes showed improvement of family functioning and established a high quality of leaders and learners. One parent in the study, observed that after using PBIS, the child’s bedtime routine had been more peaceful. This means that collaboration between families and professionals is an important component in the successful implementation of PBIS (Muscott, Mann & LeBrun, 2008)
Hawkins et al. (2011) examined the effectiveness of behavior contracts in home and school settings with four boys who were diagnosed with autism in order to address antisocial behaviors and reduce being excluded from classrooms. According to Hawkins et al. (2011), parental involvement and behavior contract components were added in order to show the effectiveness of collaboration between family and home. All participants in this study showed significant improvement in behavior as a result of using behavior contracts in the two environments of home and school.

LeBel, Chafouleas, Britner, and Simonsen (2013) examined how the Daily Report Card (DRC) intervention reduced disruptive behavior in preschoolers both at home and at school. The participants were four boys (two White non-Hispanic, one White Hispanic, and one Black non-Hispanic), who attended a public preschool in New England. Also, two teachers and the mothers of the children participated in this study. The children were selected based on the disruptive behavior they exhibited in the classroom. The teachers and parents were asked to complete the Behavior Assessment System for Children (BASC-2) rating scales to confirm the problem behavior. The norms of selecting children were aggression, hyperactivity, and attention problems. During the intervention, researchers, teachers, and parents were asked to complete the intervention checklists to assess the degree of the implementation of the intervention procedures, which included use of positive rewards. The study demonstrated that parental involvement with classroom teachers promotes positive outcomes.

**Theories of Family Involvement**

The two main theories of family engagement are Bronfenbrenner’s ecological theoretical model and the transactional theory model. The ecological theoretical model
states that circumstances that influence a child’s development should be taken into account; for example, this would include the child’s background, such as coming from a one parent home (Garbacz et al., 2016). The transactional theory model states that family and school are interconnected and influence each other, and thus the child’s behavior and health (Garbacz et al., 2016). Both models note the importance of family engagement as an essential component of equal partnership with the school. In order to establish equal partnership, the PBIS team should take cultural differences into consideration when planning the child’s education (Garbacz, Witte & Houck, 2017). Such considerations include the parents’ native language, religion, and work schedules among others (Garbacz, Witte & Houck, 2017). Student differences and diversity are encouraged and embraced when families are more involved in their schooling. Thus, it is important to take into account such differences and the needs of each family according to their culture (Garbacz et al., 2016). Specifically, family characteristics play an important role in determining the child’s behavioral problems; for example, families in high stress situations are more likely to have children with disruptive behaviors (Chu, 2015).

Wang, McCart, and Turnbull (2007) stated that professionals should take into consideration the cultural values of families when they teach students from diverse backgrounds. PBIS is a systematic framework that acknowledges cultural and familial values with regard to the participants involved (Wang, McCart, & Turnbull, 2007). Even though there are more than 600 articles referencing PBIS and identified research outcomes, very little has been written about the way that educators can integrate PBIS into practice and extend the approach to working with families (Ziomek-Daigle & Cavin, 2015). Chitiyo and Wheeler (2009) examined the challenges encountered by teachers in
implementing PBIS. They found many challenges including insufficient time to conduct PBIS, lack of knowledge of dealing with all the data once collected, inadequate training or professional development, lack of consistency among staff, lack of resources, and most importantly, lack of parental support. The lack of collaboration with parents affects the successful implementation of PBIS (Chitiyo & Wheeler, 2009). This means, family collaboration is a fundamental factor that should be considered in the implementation of PBIS in school and classroom environments.

A study conducted by Garbacz, McIntosh, Vatland, Minch, and Eagle (2018) aimed to identify and examine school practices in the implementation of schoolwide positive behavioral interventions and supports (SWPBIS) at tier-1. The participants of this study were team leaders of PBIS from 302 schools and three states, which were selected according to the states’ focus on family engagement to PBIS as a core element of implementation. The study used the Family–School Practices in PBIS (FSP-PBIS) survey that was developed by the team. The findings showed the common ways that the school communicated with family regarding PBIS, supported school system by working cooperatively with families, supported families at home, and built partnerships to support PBIS. The results also showed that a majority of schools fostered families to help their children follow school expectations at home by assigning at least one family member to work with the PBIS team.

**Summary**

Given research documenting lack of parental involvement in the PBIS process (Garbacz et al., 2018), there is a clear need for studies that examine the nature of parental involvement with school systems in the implementation of PBIS. Currently, there is
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limited research examining the extent and nature of family involvement in PBIS. More specifically, there is no research examining the experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior in terms of their participation with schools in the PBIS process. The purpose of this study was therefore, to investigate the experience of parents of children with challenging behavior participating with school systems in implementing PBIS. This will be helpful in developing sustainable family collaboration practices for school personnel, with the ultimate goal of maximizing the utility of PBIS.
Chapter III

RESEARCH METHODS

This chapter presents the methods that were used for this current study. This research was conducted using qualitative data gathered from interviews with parents. The researcher analyzed data collected to affirm or cross-validate findings of parental involvement and interest. This chapter is organized into six main sections. The first section describes choice of research paradigm, approach, tradition, and design. The second section presents the target population, participants, settings, method of sampling, interviewee characteristics, and includes subsections on inclusion and exclusion criteria, and interviewee demographics as well as interview sampling procedures. The third section describes the data collection and data analysis processes. Additionally, this section includes subsections on the recruitment strategies used, information provided to potential interviewees, interview settings, and how confidentiality was maintained. The fourth section describes the measurement tools and instrumentation, and includes subsections on the semi-structured interview protocol and the technical materials that were used to record and transcribe the interviews. The fifth section explains the procedures and subsample of interviews that were transcribed verbatim, coded, and analyzed for this study. The sixth section explains the data analysis and includes subsections on the data analytic procedures, the way inter-coder reliability was calculated, and the steps that were taken to ensure the methodological quality of this study. The current research was designed to answer the following question: What are the lived (perceived) experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in PBIS?
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The following five subsidiary questions were addressed:

1. How do parents of children with challenging behavior involved in the PBIS process describe their lived experiences?

2. In what ways have parents made meaning out of their experiences of participation in the PBIS for their children with challenging behavior at school?

3. What do parents consider to have been the risk and protective factors in their experience in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process?

4. How have the parents’ personal characteristics influenced their perceptions of the support they get from school systems in their collaboration on PBIS?

5. How do parents evaluate the support they get from the school systems during their involvement?

Choice of Research Paradigm, Approach, Tradition and Design

Research Paradigm

The objective of the current research was to explore parents’ experiences in terms of their involvement in their children’s PBIS in the school system. The researcher believes that a constructivist philosophical epistemology is most suitable for this study. According to Creswell (2009), the philosophy of constructivists assumes that people desire to create their own subjective meanings when interpreting their worlds and daily work. The multiplicities of these meanings compel researchers to understand the complexity of such views rather than coercing such meaning into minute categories/ideas. The purpose of constructivist research is to study the participants’ perspectives and perceptions, and open-end questions are the best way to understand their situations and life settings. The inquirers need to process interactions among several individuals across
historical experiences and cultural norms to more fully operate within individuals’ lives. Hence, the researcher intend to interpret the individuals’ meanings about the world, then generate and develop a particular theory with particular patterns that correspond most adequately to participant responses.

**Research Approach**

The constructivist approach focuses on humans’ perspectives and understanding of their life settings, engages participants to answer open-end questions, and allows them to share their views about particular issues. Qualitative research seeks to understand the context of participants by gathering personal information and interpreting findings based upon the researcher’s background and experiences. Thus, it is the best framework to use in the current study.

In order to conduct this research, the researcher built the study upon interpretive phenomenology process, which was established by Denzin (2001). Denzin stated that the interpretive phenomenology method focuses on personal experiences or stories of the subjects and broke the process into six steps, which are:

1. Framing the research question
2. Deconstructing and analyzing critically prior conceptions of the phenomenon.
3. Capturing the phenomenon, including locating and situating it in the natural world and obtaining multiple instances of it
4. Bracketing the phenomenon, or reducing it to its essential elements and cutting it loose from the natural world so that its essential structures and features may be uncovered
5. Constructing the phenomenon, or putting the phenomenon back together in terms of its essential parts, pieces, and structures

6. Contextualizing the phenomenon, or relocating the phenomenon back in the natural social world. (p. 70)

This study fits extremely well with the interpretive phenomenology methods because it frames its practice around questions for participants that help them to answer *how* versus *why* questions. The use of *how* questions creates open-end responses rather than having *yes or no* answers, which allows the researcher to explore the participants’ personal experiences and stories with greater depth about the PBIS process.

**Research Tradition**

A phenomenological orientation describes the common meaning for a number of individuals regarding their lived experiences and perception of a phenomenon. Also, it focuses on describing universal experiences between what all participants perceived and their shared phenomenon (Crewell, 2013). In other words, among the different research traditions in qualitative research, the phenomenological approach has been used to reduce human experiences with a phenomenon and to describe universal events, such as insomnia, being left out, grief, or anger. Hence, the researchers collect data from individuals who have experienced the phenomenon, then develop a complex description of the core of the experience for all of the participants (Crewell, 2013). In addition, “A phenomenology ends with a descriptive passage that discusses the essence of the experience for individuals incorporating “what” they have experienced and “how” they experienced it. The “essence” is the culminating aspect of a phenomenological study”
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(Crewell, 2013, p. 79). It is important to mention that phenomenology is not only the descriptions of the common perspectives of individuals, but it is also an interpretive process between different meanings of the lived experiences (Crewell, 2013).

Research Design

The purpose of interpretative phenomenology is to discover in detail how participants are making sense about their personal lived experiences or their social worlds. Additionally, an interpretative phenomenology study can help investigate the meanings of specific experiences, occasions, and states for participants. Thus, interpretative phenomenology is the best method to generate findings of lived experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in PBIS. Also, it helps to understand several individuals’ opinions or shared experiences of a phenomenon in order to develop practices and a deeper understanding regarding the features of the phenomenon. Moreover, phenomenology helps to recognize and specify broad philosophical assumptions. Accordingly, the researcher bracketed out his own experiences to obtain more fully the participants’ view of phenomenon. Thus, the researcher interviewed eight parents who had all experienced the phenomenon of the involvement with school system in the PBIS process. The research aimed to answer one general question: What are the lived (perceived) experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in the PBIS process?

The following five subsidiary questions were used to answer the main question: (1) How do parents of children with challenging behavior involved in the PBIS process describe their lived experiences? (2) In what ways have parents made meaning out of their experiences of participation in the PBIS intervention of their children with
challenging behavior at school? (3) What do parents consider to have been the risk and protective factors in their experience in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process? (4) How have the parents’ personal characteristics influenced their perceptions of the support they get from school systems in their collaboration on PBIS? (5) How do parents evaluate the support they get from the school system during their involvement? In addition, they were asked open-end questions that focused on gathering data to lead to essential description of the experiences, and eventually provide an understanding of their common experiences.

A qualitative interview method using open-end questions is a flexible and powerful tool that was used to collect qualitative data that allowed participants’ voices to be heard and the researcher’s observations to be interpreted (Rabionet, 2011). The Department of Exceptional Children (2007) advises the implementation of PBIS using a family-centered method in which families of children with challenging behaviors work more intimately with school systems (Duda et al., 2008; Dunlap & Fox, 1999; Marshall & Mirenda, 2002; Paul & Frea, 2002). For this reason, a qualitative interview method will aid interviewers as they gather data concerning the complex and intimate relationships between parents and school systems.

Previous research has demonstrated the effectiveness of the involvement of families of children with challenging behavior with school systems in decreasing challenging behavior (Caldarella, Shatzer, Gray, Young, & Young, 2011; Carter & Horner, 2009; Fallon, O’Keeffe & Sugai, 2012; Horner et al., 2009; McClean, & Grey, 2012; Muscott, Mann & LeBrun, 2008). Qualitative research was used to foster a deeper understanding of family interest in, and involvement with, the school system in the PBIS
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process. Interviews were used to collect qualitative data regarding parents of children with challenging behavior in order to develop a better understanding of family involvement and their interest in PBIS. For the qualitative method, semi-structured interviews were appropriate for the current research because it explains how people interpret their experiences. Also, the research will attempt to understand parents’ perceptions, perspectives, and understanding of the PBIS framework. By conducting semi-structured interviews, the current research sought to understand the nature of parents’ involvement with school systems in terms of implementing PBIS and therefore, promote the effective and sustainable use of PBIS.

The purpose of this research was to investigate parental experiences regarding their involvement with school systems in implementing PBIS. Thus, interviews were conducted to provide broader perspectives about parents’ opinions regarding their involvement in the implementation of PBIS. Specifically, the interviews were used in order to answer the main question: What are the lived experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in the PBIS process? The interviews also addressed the following subsidiary questions:

1. How do parents of children with challenging behavior involved in the PBIS process describe their lived experiences?
2. In what ways have parents made meaning out of their experiences of participation in the PBIS for their children with challenging behavior at school?
3. What do parents consider to have been the risk and protective factors in their experience in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process?
4. How have the parents’ personal characteristics influenced their perceptions of the support they get from school systems in their collaboration on PBIS?

5. How do parents evaluate the support they get from the school systems during their involvement?

The research took place in schools that implemented PBIS in the states of Pennsylvania and Maryland.

**Sample and Sampling Method**

Sampling is a process of selecting the "best fitting" participants to provide data for your study. Exploratory studies usually involve a relatively small sample of research participants. This study aimed to explore the experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior. Participants were recruited and selected through purposeful sampling. The definition of purposeful sampling is selecting participants who meet the inclusion criteria for the study and who can provide meaningful information about their lived experiences in the same phenomenon (Creswell, 2013). The target population for this study were parents or guardians of children with challenging behavior in schools located in Pennsylvania and Maryland. The sample consisted of eight parents who had children with challenging behavior. The participants were selected based on the ability to provide substantial contributions to the current study since the intention was not to generalize but to elucidate the specific perception of parents regarding their involvement with schools in the implementation of PBIS (Creswell, 2013). The participants were parents whose children attended schools that implemented SWPBIS. They were interviewed and asked questions that were created by the researcher. To participate in this study, the participants had to meet the following criteria: (a) parents of children with
challenging behavior who had experience collaborating with schools in terms of PBIS for at least two years, (b) willingness to be audio-recorded in the interview, (c) having a child who received special education services and exhibited challenging behavior at school, (d) the child should have had a behavior intervention plan and therefore, received PBIS services at tier 3, (e) the schools, where the child attended, should have been implementing PBIS for at least three years, (d) the child should have been in grades kindergarten through 8th. For the purpose of clarity, it was important to write a three-letter code specifying whether they were fathers, mothers or guardians. The researcher reached out, via email, to the target participants through the schools that implemented PBIS (Appendix B). The schools identified the target participants and sent the invitation letter directly to the participants (Appendix C). Parents who were interested in participating contacted the researcher who then checked to make sure they met the stated criteria before contacting them with detailed information about the study.

Instrumentation

Semi-Structured Interviews

The current research, including the “semi-structured interview form” along with parental consent forms, were approved by the Institutional Review Board (IRB). The 45-60 minute audio-recorded interviews were conducted by the researcher and research assistant. After reviewing current literature related to the current study topic, the researcher developed a semi-structured interview form. The semi-structured interview questions were used to measure the experiences of parents and their interest in the PBIS process. The researcher used the interview approach to understand the concepts of the sample population of the study regarding the PBIS process.
Parental Experiences Participating in PBIS

Qualitative researchers are the main instruments of data collection and analysis. This means that data collected are processed through the person collecting them. Some principles in collecting qualitative data are being aware of our biases and considering that data collection is a two way street where the research participants tell their stories and in turn the researcher tells them his/her understanding of their stories. Hence, a process of checks and balances occur. Hence, I used a semi-structured in-depth interview to guide the data collection. The interviews were performed over a six-week timeframe (see Appendix D). A semi-structured interview is defined as a qualitative method of inquiry that consists of a standardized interview that includes the ability of the researcher to ask questions based on the participants’ responses to the first question. This method ensures different responses are due to the individuals and not the questions (Fox, 2009). All participants completed a semi-structured interview that was provided to them in order to discuss their thoughts regarding their involvement with PBIS. The interview included questions that examined parents’ understanding of PBIS, as well as their current involvement and interest in participating with the school system in implementing PBIS. In addition, the interviews assessed the current level of support received by their school system. According to Louise and Barriball (1994) there are many advantages in using a semi-structured interview approach, such as: overcoming potentially poor response rates from the interviewees, allowing the interviewees to further explain their experiences, values, attitudes, and beliefs in detail, offering an opportunity to observe the interviewees’ non-verbal reactions and encouraging the interviewees to self-evaluate to augment the validity of their responses and ascertain the collected themes between all participants. Also, semi-structured approaches ensure that all participants can address
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each question without receiving assistance from others and discuss and raise issues that may not have been brought to the researcher’s attention before.

The researcher asked direct questions and focused on the participants’ observations, the development of the follow-up questions/prompting, note taking, and recording the interviews in order to capture the essence and meaningfulness of their experiences about the PBIS process. Such qualitative data is used to improve the quality of parental involvement and their interests in participating in a PBIS process with school systems that reflects their expressed needs. This qualitative technique helps to better pick up nuances that could easily be missed during the interview process and to capture the essence of the common experiences across participants to the most possible degree.

The interview guide was designed in a way to tap into in-depth information concerning the participants’ experiences. The guide was semi-structured with open-ended questions, allowing the interviewer to probe into personal experiences. The researcher created a semi-structured interview guide. The interview guide included background questions about the family and their children with challenging behaviors. Potential topics identified in advance were parents’ interests to participate with the school system, parents’ motivations, and challenges parents faced in their involvement with the school systems.

**Audiotapes**

To obtain high fidelity during data collection, I used audio recording, with the consent of the participants, along with note pads and reflective journaling for field notes. According to Ortlipp (2008) “Reflective practice ... aims to make visible to the reader the constructed nature of research outcomes” (p. 695). Reflective journaling is an important
approach for the researcher to examine the people’s thoughts; these thoughts include both those of the subject and the researcher. It is also a method whereby the researcher can explore their own relationships to their opinions and those of their subjects. The significance of the reflective journal is to make the acts of data collection and analysis transparent. In other words, the results of the study and any inherent biases are made as easily discernible as possible (Ortlipp, 2008). Much like Ortlipp (2008), “My aim [was] to make my decisions, and the thinking, values, and experiences behind those decisions visible, to both myself and to the reader” (p. 697).

**Researcher as Instrument**

In qualitative inquiry, the human instrument is the primary tool for collecting data on phenomenological experience (Creswell, 2013). The human researcher is the only tool that can capably grasp the world of phenomena and their surrounding contexts as a whole (Creswell, 2013). The researcher in this study interviewed the parents of children with challenging behavior. Also, the researcher was responsible for transcribing interviews, reviewing the qualitative data, returning such interviews to the interviewees, and coding the themes from the transcriptions and research notes. Finally, the researcher was responsible for analyzing the collected data and writing the final report.

The researcher assessed the parents’ involvement, willingness, and potential challenges to participate with the school systems in the PBIS process. According to Brantlinger, Jimenez, Klingner, Pugach and Richardson (2005):

*Qualitative studies explore attitudes, opinions, and beliefs of a number of parties involved in special education as well as the general public, and examine personal reactions to special education contexts and teaching strategies… qualitative*
designed can explore the nature and extent to which a practice has a constructive impact on individuals with disabilities, their families or on settings where they tend to work, reside or be educated. (p.196)

**Description of Research Site**

Four different schools were identified as the schools that the children of parents in this study attended. Each of the four schools had been implementing SWPBIS (across the three tiers) for more than five years. Also, all schools provided special education and related services to students with special needs. Summary data about the schools is presented in Table 1.

Table 1

*Description of the Schools*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schools</th>
<th>States</th>
<th>Years Implementing SWPBIS</th>
<th>Number of Participating Parents</th>
<th>Private or Public School</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School#1</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School#2</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School#3</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Public</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School#4</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Private</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

School 1 is a private and religious school located in the State of Pennsylvania and serves students in pre-K through 8th grade. The school’s primary focus on developing the academic, intellectual, social, and spiritual competencies upon the students in order to thrive in the 21st century. The school’s mission is to provide opportunities to help students grow intellectually, socially, and spiritually. The teachers at the school implemented PBIS to facilitate a learning environment that allows the students to achieve
academic and behavioral objectives without feeling overwhelmed. The school implemented many educational strategies within the classroom to facilitate independent learning of the students, such as working one-on-one with struggling students and peer-mediated intervention to allow students to help one another. Also, in-class intervention, the school has English as a Second Language teacher who works with students who are non-English speakers. The school partners with Allegheny Intermediate Unit (AIU) and provides special education services to support individuals with challenging behaviors and their families with effective and efficient intervention to maximize their potential. The school works with AIU collaboratively to design and implement SWPBIS by setting behavioral expectations, providing professional development to teachers and staff, and teaching students to follow the expectations. Students needing more supports than those provided schoolwide received more targeted supports through tiers II and III. Tier-III supports allowed individual students with IEPs to fulfill their academic and behavioral goals.

School 2 is a public school and located in the State of Pennsylvania and serves students in pre-K through 5th grade. Their philosophy in learning is to focus on reading to learn. The school academic curriculum emphasizes an advanced level of thinking skills and problem-solving creatively and respecting the individual, the community, and the educational environment. The school’s mission is to work with families collaboratively to provide children a safe and natural learning environment and to achieve academic excellence as well as develop socially and emotionally. The school offers educational experiences based on best practices in the educational field. The school provides a variety of special education services that include supporting an individual with autism, emotional...
disorders, learning disabilities, speech and language, occupation therapy, and physical therapy. The school uses the SWPBIS system that includes setting goals and behavioral expectations, providing support to teach those expectations to staff, and monitoring students’ progress toward expectations. Students who needed more supports received more targeted supports at tier 11 and more intensive individual supports that include teaching replacement behavior based on functional behavior assessment and behavior intervention plans.

School 3 is a public school located in the State of Maryland, and it includes a culturally diverse population in grades pre-K through 5. The vision of the school is a school-community partnership where all members are valued and respected in a safe and caring environment. The school sets high expectations for all students to create life-long learners who are prepared for the future. According to the school’s mission, the school works with the students, staff, parents, and community collaboratively to provide a respectful and nurturing learning environment for every learner by enhancing students’ achievement. The school implements SWPBIS by setting three to five behavioral expectations, providing training to teach those expectations to students and staff, following students whether they demonstrate established expectations, or need a further intervention when students do not meet the expectation. The school team is trained on implementing PBIS in all three tiers by PBIS specialist by providing a framework to design, develop an action plan, implement, and evaluate PBIS. The specialist work with staff to establish an efficient intervention for small groups and coaches the staff to implement PBIS in tier III interventions to reduce the intensity of problem behaviors.
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

School 4 is a private school and located in Maryland State and offers educational services to students in grade Kindergarten - 8th grade. The school focuses on the development of academic, emotional, social, and behavioral skills by recognizing and capitalizing on the students’ individual strengths. The classroom in the school includes a small number of students in order to offer comprehensive and integrated related services, use of technology to enhance student learning. The school implements SWPBIS by teaching students the behavioral expectations, allowing them to practice the expectation in different settings, mentoring teachers in implementing the established expectations. Also, the teachers and staff are trained to design individualized intervention for students who do not meet the school’s expectations at tiers I and II. The school offers special education and related services and includes PBIS and BIP in the students’ IEPs within the least restrictive environment.

Data Collection

Procedures of Data Collection

The researcher contacted the potential interviewees via phone and/or e-mail to schedule time for the interviews. The interviews were conducted with an audio-recording device and were transcribed verbatim by a complete transcription and dictation device with the semi-structured qualitative interviews with parents. Furthermore, since scheduling limitations of the researcher and interviewers’ availability, interviews were conducted with only individual parents. Participants were informed that their participation was completely voluntary; that they could withdraw at any time for any reason without penalty; that no personal, private information that identified them would be collected, and their participation would be kept anonymous in reporting results. The
researcher then scheduled meetings with the interviewees. The researcher acquired the consent of the participants prior to starting the interviews. The researcher asked the interviewees to conduct the interview at home in order to obtain a more complete picture of the parental involvement in their natural setting. The interview started by having the participants review and sign an informed consent form (see Appendix A). The consent form described the goals of the study, potential risks, participants’ rights, and contact information of the researcher and advisor. The participants were given one copy of the consent form and the researcher kept a signed copy of the consent form.

Additionally, the participants were asked if they had any questions about the consent form. Participants were informed that the interview would take 45 to 60 minutes and involved the use of semi-structured interview questions that directed the participants to describe and share information regarding their experience and believes that may not be adequately covered by the interview questions. At the conclusion of the interview, the participants were asked to share any concluding thoughts about their experience in terms of involvement with school systems that may not have been adequately addressed over the interview. The participants were also informed that they could contact the researcher via e-mail if they had further questions, thoughts, and experience about the study.

Finally, it is important to collect the demographic information of the participants, who came from diverse backgrounds, in order to obtain a holistic view of their involvement with their children’s schools in implementing PBIS. Understanding the parents’ background helps to contextualize the findings of the study as it may influence the extent to which parents get involved in their children’s education (Minke & Anderson, 2005).
Data Storage and Retention

Copies of all the collected data were securely stored in a locked one drive computer file for easy retrieval and confidentiality. Electronic data storage, including the external hard drive, were password protected. In addition, the hard copies of all primary data – interviews, audio, written notes/reflective journals – pertaining to the study and the participants’ identities were maintained in a locked cabinet that was accessible only to the researcher. After successful defense of this dissertation, only the unidentified versions of the tapes and transcripts were retained.

Process of Data Analysis

Qualitative data analysis begins while data is gathered (Patton, 2002). Thus, the researcher’s analysis proceeded immediately following the analytic data collection and coding. I analyzed the data step by step through the data analysis methods outlined by Creswell (2009). First, I listened to the audio-recorded dialogues and took notes in order to categorize themes and patterns found in the participants’ responses. The analysis process as indicated by Creswell (2009), included the use of semi-structured, audio-recorded dialogues, and transcribed verbatim by a complete transcription. The central purpose of this process was to sort, and organize the masses of data acquired during the data collection phase in such a way that the themes and interpretations that emerged from the process accurately addressed the original research questions (Patton, 2002). Secondly, I analyzed the data by identifying the themes and patterns of the data, writing deductive coding, predicating the results on the literature review and conceptual framework of coding process. Finally, I organized the data into a table to further emphasize the themes/patterns in a way that the readers can easily access. During the coding process, I
consulted the dissertation committee on the themes and topics I had found to reconcile personal bias.

Units of meaning were identified and examined, which provided wide categorical information from the transcription of the interviews. Data analysis strategies involved coding open-end questions, generating the development of primary and secondary categories, and making sense of the essential meanings of the semi-structured interviews. The final analytic structure was provided to the participants with an included narrative and description of the findings. Also, participants were asked for feedback and clarification about the concepts of PBIS. According to Feuerborn, Wallace, and Tyre (2016) this method of analysis is commonly implemented to explore a phenomenon, like PBIS, without previous expectation.

**Ethical Consideration**

The participants were made aware that their involvement in this study was voluntary. In addition, they were provided with verbal and written information about the research goals, the questions they were asked during the interviews, and the possibility to withdraw at any point during the study. Data storage, security, and confidentiality for this research were maintained through the use of a password-protected computer for digital data, and a locked storage cabinet for hard copy data was kept at Duquesne University. By assigning codes to each participant, transcripts of the interviews, and consent forms, the participants’ anonymity was protected. Pseudonyms were used for all participants in the research and all written forms. The researcher checked and utilized the interviews to ensure accuracy of the data; within two weeks following each interview, the participants
were sent transcripts to review and were given the choice of changing or adding further information.

Consideration to Enhance Quality of the Research

Trustworthiness. The researcher transcribed each interview, after which two auditors reviewed the transcriptions of the interviews to come up with consensus about the transcribing and documentation of all of the data sources. Then, I sent the transcriptions to each interviewee to check for discrepancies and to ensure the trustworthiness of the data before it was analyzed. After creating the themes and clusters, I performed respondent validation, or member checks process with the participants to make sure that I accurately represented the participants’ responses and feelings, and avoided my own biases. I also kept an audit trail as a way to document changes within the study, and this was available to my advisors at Duquesne University and other dissertation committee members. Also, the final manuscript of the research was available to the participants.

Credibility. Credibility refers to the need for written constructions to be accurate descriptions of study participants' perspective. The researcher achieves this by means of prolonged engagement with the research setting, ongoing analysis of, and reflection on data in the form of written accounts of interview and observations, and completions of constructions from key players with diverse points of view. For the study, I used materials such as a tape recorder, notebook, and a pen. The interviews started on 11/01/2018 and ended on 12/20/2018. The anticipated constraints and potential obstacles included time management in the face of conflicting schedules. Particular care was given
to protect participants or their identifiable data. Finally, the duration of each interview ranged from 45 to 60 minutes.

It is important to mention that the researcher’s deep understanding of the concepts of PBIS and its implementation in all three tiers prepared him for the study. The researcher gained experiences working with families as a teacher, for general and special education students, as well as consultant and social worker. In addition, while working as a vice principal, the researcher obtained skills to make fast connections with parents to advise them regarding their children’s challenging behavior. Working as a vice principal required providing professional development to teachers for many years, and this experience helped in the study by fostering better communication and taking into consideration the parents’ need to be more involved in their school systems in the PBIS process. The researcher, through his teaching and working with diverse cultures, has gained the ability to communicate with parents positively and effectively across cultural barriers. Finally, studying and living in the United States for seven years where he performed behavioral intervention plans and conducted research in the Pittsburgh local schools familiarized the researcher with the American culture and education system; these experiences helped the researcher to obtain the qualifications and necessary skills to work with families with children with behavioral needs and therefore conduct this study.

**Dependability and Conformability.** Dependability and conformability refer to the validity of the data and the reliability of the interpretation of the data. To address the question of how the data were collected and interpretation made, the researcher documents all processes of data collection, which include interviews and transcription, and the specific steps of data analysis used in order to confirm the results and build
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

constructions in journals. The researcher neutralized his beliefs, values, assumptions, experiences, and biases by using memos during the interview process to avoid subjectivity.

Summary

A qualitative method was used to collect and analyze data in order to answer the research questions related to parents’ experiences in collaborating with schools in the implementation of PBIS in the school systems. The parents of children with challenging behavior were purposefully sampled, and a semi-structured interview guide was designed to gain information from the parents about their experiences with the school systems. The interviews were transcribed and coded. The resulting data were analyzed to answer the main and subsidiary research questions. Chapter four presents the results of the research.
Chapter IV

RESULTS

In this chapter, I describe the demographics of the informants and their children. I present the clusters and the common themes that emerged from each cluster through the parent interviews, and I analyze the parents’ experiences with school systems in Positive Behavior Support (PBIS) as they relate to my exploratory questions. There are five clusters and 22 common themes that emerged from the parents’ interviews. I identify each theme in the beginning and present the parents’ responses under each theme. The numbering of participants and their children’s and schools’ pseudonyms were selected by the researcher.

Brief Descriptions of Informant Profiles

Parent 1 is a first generation immigrant from Iraq. She is the mother of a ten-year-old boy in fifth grade, who exhibits aggressive behavior, and received special education and related services. She works as a full-time teacher at a private school. She has lived in the United States for a long time. She has a bachelor’s degree in education.

Parent 2 is a White American mother of a nine-year-old boy in fourth grade with autism, and received special education and related services. She worked a full-time job (occupation is not specified), and she has a bachelor’s degree.

Parent 3 is from an Asian background, and she is a medical professional, working as a Certified Professional Coder and as a Certified Professional Biller. She works as an office manager at a medical center with her husband who is a child psychiatrist. She has lived in the United States for a long time. She is the mother of a thirteen-year-old boy
with autism in seventh grade. The child, who is nonverbal, was diagnosed before he
turned three years old, and he received special education and related services.

Parent 4 is an African-American, stay-at-home mother with a bachelor’s degree, and she has no current profession. Her child is a fourteen-year-old boy in eighth grade who was diagnosed with global developmental delay and the school identifies him as having an intellectual disability, and he received special education and related services.

Parent 5 is from Saudi Arabia and is currently a stay-at-home mother. She completed high school. She has lived in the United States for more than three years, and her child has studied in public school. Her child is a nine-year-old boy in third grade who was diagnosed with autism at age two and a half, and he received special education and related services.

Parent 6 is a mother from Saudi Arabia with a bachelor’s degree. She works as a full-time instructor. She has lived in the United States for more than three years, and her child was enrolled in a public school. Her child is an eleven-year-old boy in fifth grade. He was diagnosed with autism and ADHD when he was three years old, and he received special education and related services.

Parent 7 is an African-American father with a master’s degree in system engineering. His wife is a stay-at-home mother. He has a fourteen-year-old daughter who was diagnosed with autism before she was five years old, and he received special education and related services. The daughter attended a private middle school where she received special education services.
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

Parent 8 is an African-American mother with a bachelor’s degree in psychology, and she is a stay-at-home mother. She has an eight-year-old boy in third grade who was diagnosed with autism and received special education and related services.

All eight parents had at least two years or more of experience collaborating with schools working on PBIS, and all their children had BIPs and received behavioral supports across the three tiers. Table 2 summarizes the demographic information of the participants in this study.

Clusters and Themes

The findings of this study are divided into five clusters, which identify the parents’ experiences with PBIS within the school system. These clusters are: (1) prior knowledge and expectations (four themes) (2) parental efforts in the implementation of PBIS (five themes), (3) risk and protective factors for participating in PBIS (five themes), (4) factors to motivate parents (three themes), and (5) parents’ participation in interventions (five themes). Under each cluster, there are common themes shared by parents that explain their experiences and interests regarding the application of PBIS in the school system.

Each cluster and theme are presented in Tables 3-7 that demonstrate the corresponding results showing the number of parents who responded within each theme.
Table 2

*The Demographics of the Participants*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parents</th>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>Position</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Children’s Age, gender</th>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Type of challenging behavior</th>
<th>Diagnosis</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parent#1</td>
<td>Iraqi</td>
<td>Teacher</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>10, boy</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Aggression</td>
<td>Not specified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent#2</td>
<td>Caucasian American</td>
<td>Full time job (occupation not specified)</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>PA</td>
<td>9, boy</td>
<td>4th</td>
<td>Disrupting behavior</td>
<td>Autism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent#3</td>
<td>Asian</td>
<td>Medical professional</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>13, boy</td>
<td>7th</td>
<td>Anxiety</td>
<td>Autism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent#4</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>A stay-at-home</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>14, boy</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Throwing things away</td>
<td>Global developmental delay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent#5</td>
<td>Saudi</td>
<td>Stay-at-home</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>9, boy</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Social isolation</td>
<td>Autism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent#6</td>
<td>Saudi</td>
<td>Professor</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>11, boy</td>
<td>5th</td>
<td>Refusing to follow instructions</td>
<td>ADHD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent#7</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Engineer</td>
<td>Father</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>14, daughter</td>
<td>8th</td>
<td>Tantrums</td>
<td>Autism</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent#8</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>Stay-at-home</td>
<td>Mother</td>
<td>MD</td>
<td>8, boy</td>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>Lack of communication</td>
<td>Autism</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cluster 1: Prior Knowledge and Expectations Regarding PBIS

Four themes emerged from this cluster that explain the parents’ prior knowledge and understanding of PBIS (see Table 3). The themes in this cluster are: (a) parents’ knowledge and understanding of PBIS, (b) parents’ views about PBIS implementation, (c) how parents learned about PBIS, (d) parents’ satisfaction with PBIS. The parents revealed that they became informed about PBIS in several ways, such as working with the school systems, studying at college, and attending professional development programs provided by their children’s schools. All eight parents demonstrated their prior knowledge and expectations regarding PBIS by describing their knowledge and understanding about the concept of the PBIS approach and its implementation of PBIS in the home environment. Even though parent 5 had no knowledge of PBIS, she was able to explain the PBIS features that she applied cooperatively with homeroom teachers.

Table 3

Prior Knowledge and Expectations Regarding PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Parent Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' knowledge and understanding of PBIS</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ views about PBIS implementation</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How parents learned about PBIS</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parent’s satisfaction with PBIS</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Parents’ knowledge and understanding of PBIS. The definition of this theme is the parents’ current knowledge and understanding of PBIS. All parents revealed that they were knowledgeable about and understood the concept of PBIS before their participation in its implementation. The common factors that they mentioned were the principles of PBIS, management systems, positive reinforcement, reward systems, reduction of challenging behaviors, and teaching of replacement behaviors. Parent 1 stated:

It is a system to manage and conduct the behavior issues, uh based on research. Um, in the school they have um they have great system to manage the behavior issues, you know they teach them the rules, they teach them uh how to follow these rules, they make it easy and give them clear directions and if they break the rules, they have steps of consequences. So yes, they can handle it.

The parents’ responses indicated that there were rules that students should follow to receive positive reinforcement. They emphasized the directions or steps that guide children to apply the rules of PBIS. They also mentioned knowledge about consequences for unacceptable behavior or disregard for the rules set up by the schools. Parent 2 stated:

They’re helping kids who are having behavioral problems and issues and talking to them to see what is going on and hopefully fix the problem to get them a better education, help them stay focused in class, and do better in school all together. Also, I understand that um they definitely made an impact on his school behavior which is amazing.
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

Speaking specifically about children who participated in tier-3 of PBIS, Parent 3 indicated that PBIS helps educators to improve students’ behaviors in order to receive a better education. She highlighted that PBIS made a significant impact in fixing problematic behaviors if the program was applied properly. Parent 3 stated:

It is a type of a support that can really help the challenging students uh the challenging kids who have special needs through that they are trying to manage their behavior and try to sort of redirect them to positive behavior or setting up examples or something like that...

Parent 4 stated:

…positive behavior intervention support umm what I know about it is it helps the child turn the negative behaviors into positive ones umm and I think it makes them less frustrated umm and you know it makes it like a pleasant experience you know when you have the interaction with them when you have the positive behavior intervention support versus if you don't have it umm to what extent umm they use it as uhhh they as far as his behavior they try to deflect from him umm him having negative behaviors towards.

The parents quoted here revealed knowing PBIS as being designed for children with challenging behavior or special needs in order to manage their behavior in positive ways. For example, Parent 5 stated: “It’s a program … like to reward their positive behavior and not to focus on their negative or unwanted behavior”. PBIS helps children to replace negative behavior with positive behavior without frustration or disappointment,
which is the ultimate goal of PBIS. In other words, PBIS focuses on positive rather than negative behavior. Parent 7 stated:

I read about it and learned some things from it but it seems like it’s the same type of program that I heard from him before when dealing with children with disabilities ... it’s a system that has been [in] place that they’re trying to get things out of the children with the disabilities in a positive way.

Parent 8 stated:

What I understand about positive behavior approach or support, in my case it is like uhh ... they trying to encourage my son in case he does anything that something good they try to reward him especially positive or if he does something that is not appropriate they try to change something that is more appropriate different incentives.

From the parents’ responses, PBIS is considered a system that assists children with disabilities or challenging behaviors to exhibit appropriate behavior by using a variety of rewards or incentives. In conclusion, all parents showed general knowledge and understanding of the concept of PBIS as a system that helps educators and parents reduce challenging behavior and teach replacement behavior.

Parents’ views about PBIS implementation. The second theme that emerged from this cluster is parental involvement in PBIS implementation. The definition of this theme is how parents are engaged in the implementation of PBIS within school systems in both the school and home settings. The parents reported a positive experiences regarding their engagement with the school system in terms of PBIS implementation.
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

Also, they revealed that PBIS is a helpful approach to reduce challenging behavior and teach replacement behavior to their children. Parental involvement with the school systems was instrumental in improving children’s behavior. Parent 1 stated: “they can solve a lot of issues, a lot of behavior issues. Yeah and it’s a positive experience.” Parent 2 stated:

He’s been doing wonderful and I really think if we didn’t have that program … So I would definitely say that they played a big role in how he has managed to progress over only a year you know he was having problems, issues, almost every day and now it’s just green every day you know what I mean and I have a lot to thank them for that too you know and there is also the parent’s part to stay on him but with all the extra support with the school and over the summer you know it really helped him improve.

Parent 3 explained:

PBIS might be working at school but not at home. I don’t see any like uh, if they are telling me that he is behaving like this at school, something positive or something good, I do not see it at home, he doesn’t carry it on.

Participant 3 had a slightly different opinion about PBIS. She showed that the implementation of PBIS may work more effectively and successful at school setting rather than at home environment. Parent 4 stated:

It’s a pleasant experience for the child as far as you know umm like the learning process without having like negative you know I guess negative views or like negative vibes type thing with the positive behavior
intervention umm I think without that I don't think that you know I think that there would be more negative behaviors without the positive intervention is concerned well that well that’s how they explained it you know with the positive behavior you know the things that they do for the kids umm in order for them to keep the positive behavior you know they would they have certain things that they do as far as keeping the child engaged you know umm and happy versus you know I guess instead of just letting them do whatever they want to do so they can actually get things done as well as keep the child happy … I see my sons behavior change dramatically with that even at the house as well because they would give me tips on how to keep his behavior in a positive direction and kind of deflect from the negative behavior they teach you how to incorporate things like that even in the home from school to the home.

Parent 8 stated:

Some of the things I don’t know or most of the things that they do at school we try to do it at home as well. We try to apply the same strategy that the school do. For example my child is non-verbal so they use the tablet to help them to communicate with his classmate and we use the same strategy with him when we go to the store … I try to regulate to him to something that he likes it or more appropriate instead of saying to him stop or no they tried to like sometime he would be quiet and they would take him to some other activity where he can learn from other things.
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

A few of the parents’ responses indicated that their engagement with the school was beneficial due to the accurate instruction and direction that they received from the schools to apply in the home environment. They also highlighted that their engagement with the school as a partner played a vital role to change their children’s behavior. Overall, they found PBIS to be a pleasant experience for them and their children, which promoted positive learning. Finally, the participants noted that the implementation of PBIS in the school is crucial in helping their child to acquire appropriate behavior.

**How parents learned about PBIS.** The third theme that emerged from this cluster is how parents learned about PBIS. The focus of this theme is how school systems informed and communicated with parents regarding PBIS. Most of the participants acknowledged that the school systems helped them to understand and learn about PBIS through the BIP that was included in their children’s IEP. For example, parent 1 was a teacher, who attended workshops frequently, within their child’s school system. Another parent explained that communication with the principal of the school helped her to deeply understand PBIS. Besides the school’s behavioral modification or restructuring program, some parents had read about PBIS or had watched YouTube videos about it to help their children to overcome their challenging behavior. Parent 1 stated: “I’m a teacher so I attended the professional development workshops so I learned about it and that’s how…” Parent 2 stated:

> When my kids going to school at Kindergarten uh like I said he was having difficulties behaving in school and his principal actually we were on um a pretty close basis emailing back and forth about him and his behavior and he introduced it to me and said you know I think this might
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

really help and might be a positive thing for him and so we found it out
and ever since you know it was just great, he loved it and so he has been
doing absolutely amazing in his new school.

Parent 4 stated: “When he was in middle school, when they first approached me with that
because I think that’s when his behavior started to change in middle school.” Parent 7
stated: “Well, the system, this particular system learned from my dear friend here but at
XX (school name) they have it worded a different way. There are other organizations that
are doing the same thing.” Parent 8 stated: “I learned about this from the teachers; I took
psychology too back home I learned a bit about it as well.”

Some parents’ responses indicated that PBIS was delivered to them through
communication with a child psychiatrist and a behavior therapist as an intervention they
used with their children. Parent 3 stated:

Basically, it’s been a while since our son has been diagnosed with Autism,
and uh, so since then, we have been sort of involved with him and my
spouse, the father of our son, is also a child psychiatrist and he basically
through him also we have learned a lot about positive behavior since he
sees his clients and implements it on them.

Parent 5 stated:

Maybe from his therapist, he diagnosed it early on. Like six years ago … I
used to sit with his therapist and she teach me these things, the way how
she rewards him … so I talk and communicate with her. I try to read and
see YouTube videos.
Parent’s satisfaction with PBIS. The fourth theme that emerged from the first cluster is parental satisfaction with PBIS. The definition of this theme is the extent to which parents were satisfied with the implementation of PBIS by their children’s school systems. A majority of the parents stated that they found PBIS to be beneficial and helpful. Parent 1 stated: “In the school they have um they have great system to manage the behavior issues, you know they teach them the rules, they teach them uh how to follow these rules.” Parent 4 stated: “Yes it helps … it like a pleasant experience you know when you have the interaction with them when you have the positive behavior intervention support versus if you don't have it.”

Parent 2 stated:

I really think that it is a positive program and can do a lot of good for other students just what I’ve seen it do for him …. Yeah I would say that it is definitely a great program … I would just say they’re just a really great program and they are really professional and anything you need they are there to help.

However, parent 5 was unsatisfied with the school because her child’s school did not explain the PBIS process to her and the school focused more on her child’s academic achievement rather than behavioral issues. Parent 6 stated: “No they didn’t explain the behavior plan, they just put IEP, which has many sections for academics (reading, writing, math) they put in every section one of…”

Cluster 2: Parental Efforts in the Implementation of PBIS

Six themes emerged in the second cluster regarding parental efforts in the implementation of PBIS. The six themes are: (a) Parents’ motivation to be involved in
PBIS with the school system (b) Parents' contribution and support in developing BIPs (c) Parents' roles and support to schools in implementing PBIS (d) Parents’ involvement in FBA (e) Communication regarding the child’s behavior. These themes are presented in Table 4.

Table 4

Parental Efforts in the Implementation of PBIS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Parent Participants</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parental motivation to be involved in PBIS with the schools</td>
<td>X X X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents' contribution and support in developing BIPs</td>
<td>X X X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ roles and support to schools in implementing PBIS</td>
<td>X X X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ involvement in FBA</td>
<td>X X X X X X X X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Parental motivation to be involved in PBIS with the schools.** The definition of this theme is parents’ motivation to participate in the PBIS process with the school system regarding their child’s BIPs. Most of the parents indicated that they were highly motivated to be involved in PBIS with their child’s school system. They highlighted that they considered themselves part of the education system and believed their involvement was extremely important. Thus, they tried to be involved with the school system as much as they could. Parent 2 explained that the responsibility of addressing challenging behavior should be equally distributed between the school and the family. Most of the
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

parents were involved with their child’s BIPs as much as they could. The parents disclosed several ways they were involved, such as daily communication with the school, implementation of BIPs, and attendance at IEP meetings. Parent 5 had a different experience with the school due to miscommunication between herself and her child’s school. Nevertheless, all parents believed in the importance of their involvement and the equal sharing of responsibility between parents and schools to enhance the child’s appropriate behavior and reduce their challenging behavior. Overall, they supported their involvement and contribution toward the development and implementation of their children’s BIPs and FBAs.

Parent 1 stated:

The parents play big role in fixing and conducting the behavior issues besides the school, like both of them, 50/50. Uh, we collaborate with the information that we got from the school and uh issues and we um work on them at home with the child.

Parent 2 stated:

We met um the first time E (child’s name) was going to see his therapist and we met in the school … so it was really family-based to keep everybody together and on the same page and task … then when school started back up um they started seeing him again alone during school which was great though.

Parent 3 stated:

We have been pretty much involved, like it depends on which behavior he is having, like currently he um, he used to have a behavior of sort of, uh,
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peeing here and there so we sort of started implementing it by …

rewarding him by something that he likes … and try to tell him you have
to do this in order to get this, sort of, you know, redirecting him again and
again and again and sort of making him aware that what he wants, he
cannot get it all the time, there are certain things he needs to follow, first
this and then that.

Parent 4 stated:

I've been involved from the start when they first umm put the plan in place
because of the self-harm and everything that he was doing to himself umm
we would have like the meetings at the school as far as you know what
type of things they would have in place for him ummm with this plan and
as well as like ummm they give me tips on how to deal with it at the house
you know in the home ummm with other children as well.

Parent 5 stated, “We text each other mostly every day. Sometimes we have charts for
him, every time he uses the laptop as the teachers watch they let me know. Every day we
have charts so sometimes the teacher ask me.”

Parent 7 stated:

I am very involved, you know they have this plan at IEP meetings, once a
year they have this plan my children have goals they have to achieve
what’s in their IEP, we have to try and achieve these goals.

Parent 8 stated:

Yeah like most of the time one at the beginning of the year or in the
middle we sit for the IEP for his individualized program so before the
program they send me some type of list asking what he likes what he
doesn’t like and they ask us to write down the things that we think we
want to improve in his behavior school to make him comfortable so we
use these things to when they try to get him to do something this is a
reinforcement that we use some of the things and say this is some kind of
toy that he likes it then we use in a way to get him to sit down and
whatever they are trying to do and after they make it then they tell us if its
working or not and what they are trying to do or if they should add another
one and also try a different things but if it doesn’t work they would tell us
and if they use something different they would tell us so we can also do
the same thing as possible.

**Parents' contribution and support in developing BIPs.** The definition of this
theme is how parents supported the school in developing BIPs. Most of the parents’
responses indicated that they fully supported the school personnel by working with their
children at home according to the BIP, reinforcing the same interventions implemented
by the teachers at school. Most parents described their contribution as communicating
with their children’s teachers about the children’s BIPs on a daily basis. Parent 2
mentioned that she coordinated with the school concerning her child’s BIP even when her
child was receiving home services, which helped her to imitate the daily school routine at
home.

Parent 2 stated:

> I would say keeping on task with him you know talking to him every day
> for an extended period of time about how school has been, what he did,
what he learned, what the most fun part was, what the least fun part was,
what were the interesting parts you know and just make sure that he is not
having problems with bullies.

Parent 3 stated:

I would say that, uh, it varies. There are times when he was younger, so
we were pretty much, uh, because he used to receive in-home services and
uh they used to sort of implement the behavior plan, they used to
implement his behavior plan and then they used to carry that plan in our
daily routine after once they left and they were here for 2 hours, 20 hours
per week, and um, that is how we carried the behavior plan.

Parent 4 stated:

Development of it umm I guess just by supporting like the teachers as far
as sticking to the plan that they have in place at school ummm because to
me it seems if you don't implement it in the house as well as at school it
kind of has to merge together because if you only have it at one place I
don't think that’s sufficient you know I think it need to be everyday even
with them being out of school it needs to be implemented in the household
as well in order for it to be successful, yes they invite me to the IEP
meetings.

Parent 5 stated:

I tell the team what the services he needs in terms of behavior. Then, we
agreed to apply the behavior intervention plan. We have the same rules at
home and at school and with the ABA therapist. We have the same plan.
Parent 6 stated:

The intervention plan I think they are doing great, we have the meetings and we go to discuss everything with the teachers … I think I know my child’s behavior and why he does these behaviors, I think I should provide information about every behavior he does and what makes do these behaviors again.

Parent 7 stated:

Just telling them what things work, what things don’t. We exchange experiences on from the home and the school what works what does not work and then we talk about what’s a good idea and what’s not a good idea … We come all we have to come away. We agree on certain things they need. We agree author of survey they need in the class. And we talk we discuss this. So you know certain areas know what they want to do in the summertime or they won't do? How are they going to do it? What type of support they're going to have to live in a different like this? And then if they have issues with behavioral things you know how to de-escalate the problem really.

Parent 8 stated:

We try to tell about the things that we can help and if they like it or they don’t like it like incentives yes sometimes if you’re not comfortable with something because when they do the program we have to be there we do it together so sometime we read about things we propose the issue they are
Parents’ roles and support to schools in implementing PBIS. The third theme of this cluster is parents’ roles in supporting the implementation of PBIS. The definition of this theme is the specific roles that parents assume in supporting schools’ implementation of PBIS. All the parents indicated that they supported the school personnel by working with their children at home in terms of the children’s BIPs. Thus, they shared the responsibilities of addressing their children’s behavior with the schools. They also shared the responsibility of explaining the PBIS procedures to their children at home, rewarding them, and helping to maintain the children’s daily schedules or routines. Parent 4 added that they shared their experiences with their child’s teachers and provided them with important information that could help the teachers to work with their children effectively. Most of the study participants indicated that they followed and implemented the school’s PBIS guidelines and communicated any concerns with the BIP.

Parent 1 stated:

Sitting with the child and talking to him a lot, um this has fixed a lot of issues, and you know encouragement and the consequences, he knows about the consequences, and he knows about the rewards that he’s going to get, that’s at home … We explain to the child the importance of following the directions at the school and um we encourage him to fix his behavior.
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Parent 2 stated:

Teaching him how he could do things differently which would be better um teaching him about his feelings, other people’s feelings, even how you treat people how you want to be treated … I would support it um by staying on task with whatever um they want him to work on and basically just keep in touch, making sure he is meeting his guidelines and if he needs help, providing extra help and support for him um yeah.

Parent 3 stated:

I used to keep in touch with them, I used to update them, I used to provide my input and used to take their input really seriously and used to sort of work on it and um provide them with whatever they needed, the materials or anything else that is required for him or any child in the class, so you know, in that way.

Parent 4 stated:

By giving them like information because they ask like how he is at the house you know how he responds what’s his behaviors as far as like with his siblings and everything and they usually try to help me implement in the household as well as take it from the school as well … I support it at home umm by giving them like you know uhhh the information when they ask for information as far as how he is doing at the house versus how he does at school umm they would ask and I try to work together with the teachers and try to you know be on the same page as the teachers as far as
how to do how to control his behavior and how to manage it and
everything like that.

Parent 5 stated:

I make and keep the schedule for him every day … I buy him things so the
special ed teacher can reward him with those things. Sometimes like two
years ago I participated with them, every day they make a chart with the
shouting so if he doesn’t shout they call me to come have lunch with him
and sometimes … By applying some strategy that they do at school …
reinforcement with the laptop, I didn’t let him watch TV until he finishes
his homework, and with his assigned reading he can go to YouTube when
he’s finished.

Parent 7 stated:

We exchange experience or from the home and from school what works
what does not work and then you know telling them what's a good idea
will find a good idea you know from my standpoint and how often do you
communicate with schools that I think your child's behavior at least once a
year once at least once a year sometimes twice … I'll just despite
implementing the things I learned from the system implementing the
things I learned pretty much you know pretty much doing that is
implement the thing that I learned from the system ... It just implements
everything that I do.”
PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS

Parent 8 stated:

Most of the time especially with the communication part what they tell us most have to do with communication so he would go and snatch things grab things … At home most of it is the teachers normally what they do is they would tell us what they do at school so I would ask whatever they use so we can do it at home.

Parent 8 indicated that he had difficulty working with his child’s school because the school system did not focus on the behavior issues. So, he found that the school did not share with the parent the responsibility to apply PBIS at home or participate in BIP at school. Parent 6 stated:

We don’t have a plan yet … But before there was a behavior plan and I worked with the teachers to implement this plan … We don’t have mutual plan where we work together, and they just show me what they do. They don’t show me what they do but I ask them and they said you should follow this but they don’t follow a long term plan or they track the behavior in the school and at home. I don’t think they give behavior that much of importance.

Parents’ involvement in FBA. The definition of this theme is how the parents were involved in conducting FBAs and what they were doing to assist school systems to apply FBA successfully. Most of the parents stated that they were involved in FBAs. For example, they mentioned that they provided critical information via daily communication about their child’s challenging behavior and what the behavior looked like. Parent 3 stated:
At the elementary school and until 6th grade, yes, but this year, no. I used to keep them updated about his behavior and the behaviors I was concerned about, I used to ask them to work that, on those behaviors in school and then they used to sort of let me know how to work with those behaviors.

Parent 4 stated:

By giving them information about my child as far as how he functions at the house versus school what types of things trigger him umm you know for the negative behaviors and what things trigger him for positive behavior umm and usually they would send home ummm communication notebook that would go back and forth to school to let them know if there was any challenging type behaviors that triggered him anything that helped.

Parent 5 stated, “I talk to them and tell them the behavior … they write what happens before and after. We have the chart so that the teacher will write what happens before and after.” Parent 7 stated: “they invite you for like an informal meeting. Oh yes. Yeah. You're kind of on your assessment.” Parent 8 stated:

Assessment like if they are there looking at him besides the notes they send sometimes they would measure their needs so we use that information to build whatever they want to use for his IEP program like we are going to be there when they are looking at them but they send something but then we sit down together and they give the information to us and they would tell us what they observed him, no not really.
Parent 6 stated that the school neither conducted an FBA nor developed a BIP for their child even though her child was diagnosed and considered as having special needs. Parent 6 stated, “They don’t ask me to do this and for me also, we don’t have a behavior plan so they don’t put a strategy or to see what causes this behavior.”

**Communication regarding the child's behavior.** The definition of this theme is how the parents communicated with school systems regarding their children’s behavior. Most of the parents indicated that they communicated frequently with the schools regarding their children’s challenging behavior; most of them had a daily communication schedule with the school. The parents mentioned several ways of communication they used with the schools, such as in-person by visiting the school three times a year for meetings, daily communication by email and text messages, and their children’s notebooks. Parent 1 stated: “Let’s say um three times a year”; she also stated “Only if there’s an issue, only if something pops up on the surface, they will tell me if there is something, if he’s in trouble or something.” Parent 5 stated: “Almost every day. By email and text.” Parent 2 stated:

> Well me and his teachers we stay on an email um type of thingy and she tells me um his progress every day. So, if something happens, you know she will put it in an email and say you know E (Child’s name) did this or that today but like I said since he’s been in school, we haven’t had any problems, he’s been doing so good and I’m so proud of him.

Parent 4 stated:

> Usually it’s once a week ummm sometimes it’s more depending on I guess the mood of my son ummm sometimes it’s worse than other times
sometimes its everyday of the week ummm that I'm in contact you know
in constant contact with the teachers and sometimes I will have to go you
know into the school as well you know when they call when they can't
really get him under control.

Parent 6 stated:

The teachers write in the notes every day and this year she starts to use the
app and I think with the app it’s easy because when she seeds me a
message I am able to ask her, like we can communicate about issues every
day. The communication is also important because with these children
you need to know every day what happens ... I usually ask them what
happens every Friday and they told me he is doing well usually.

Parent 7 stated:

I mean it's usually a meeting at the beginning of the school year and then I
mean at the end of the school year goes to meetings … At least once a
year, sometimes it’s twice but they have an IEP meeting once a year,
actually its twice a year, in the beginning of the school year and in the end
of the school so its two meeting.

Parent 8 stated:

Almost every day because we have a teacher in there if something is going
on it would be almost every day normally the teachers would write a note
every day the teacher I would write a note if something is going on at
home I would tell them if he did something good and if something
happened at school they would let me know if at home if something
happened we would speak or we would text or write notes almost every
day.

Parents 3 stated that she used to communicate with her child’s school daily when
he was in elementary school until 6th and 7th grades, but her communication with the
school system reduced after that. Another parent was disappointed with the school’s
communication regarding her child’s behavior; the school did not include a BIP in his
IEP and did not update her on his daily performance, which enabled them to
communicate effectively. Parent 3 stated:

Currently, I am not communicating much with them, but initially I used to
when he was in elementary school. I used to communicate a lot and I used
to communicate through, usually through, um his uh, he had a notebook,
so I used to write and then I used to have parent teacher conferences, so I
did a lot back in elementary school, and until the 7th grade, and in the 6th
grade I did a lot … collaboration and staying on the same page and
working together so that, uh, we were always on the same page and uh,
whatever they noticed and they felt they would communicate with me and
whatever I would notice I would communicate with them and that would
make their lives also easier and my life also easier so because we could
talk to each other, we could communicate with each other and let them
know that I’m trying to do this, this, this, and this works and this doesn’t
work and they would let me know, okay we have done this in school, so
why don’t you try doing this at home and see if that works for you or not
and if not we can come up with a different plan or something like that.
Similarly, parent 6 explained that her child’s school system did not collaborate with her. When she asked the school to include a BIP in her child’s IEP, the school refused her demand because they believed that the child did not need this service. Parent 6 stated:

Actually, there is no behavior plan maybe they don’t want to put pressure on him for behavior. So this year we will start with the behavior plan and until then we didn’t make it … Yes we have the meetings for the IEP and they said there is no need for behavior plan but I asked for it because we have challenges at home.

Cluster 3: Risk and Protective Factors for Participating in PBIS

There are five themes that emerged from this cluster. The themes are: (a) School ethical practice, (b) Parents’ relationship with teachers, (c) Confidentiality, (d) Schools collaboration to successfully implement PBIS, and (e) Challenges parents face in participating in PBIS. These themes are presented in Table 5.

Table 5

Risk and Protective Factors for Participating in PBIS

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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Parent Participants</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>School ethical practice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Parents’ relationship with teachers</td>
<td>X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confidentially</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools Collaboration to Successfully Implement PBIS</td>
<td>X X X X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Challenges parents face in participating in PBIS</td>
<td>X X X X X X</td>
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**School ethical practice.** The first theme that emerged from this cluster is the school ethical practice, which refers to how the school interacts and deals with parents professionally. Most of the parents indicated that there were no risk factors or problems that prevented them from being involved with their children’s schools’ PBIS processes. In fact, they believed that the schools worked with them in a highly professional manner. Parent 1 stated: “The school does not expose us to any you know risk and protective factors, you know I didn’t face any problems when dealing with the school.” Parent 3 stated: “I don’t think there’re any risk factors, um, no I don’t consider any risk factors” Parent 5 stated: “No, there is none”. Parent 7 stated: “I don’t think there, I think it’s a positive system.” Parent 2 stated:

I wouldn’t say there’s any risk factors that I am aware of. It seems like everything we went through from day one was just a plus you know what was the risk? There really wasn’t a risk … I really wouldn’t say there is any really protective measures you want to take because everybody is really professional … It’s just not like you have to worry or anything everyone there is so professional and great, there really is nothing to worry about.

Parent 4 stated:

As far as like what is the negative effects of the positive behaviors ummm I don't see any risk in collaborating with them umm I think it more so helps you know helpful for people to have the positive behavior intervention I don't think there are any risks involved in that umm I think
it’s very very helpful I think it’s more helpful than any risk involved I don’t feel like there are any risks.

Parent 8 stated:

I don’t know, no we never get to go there and see him its mostly what they tell us like he has been doing this and that but if we want to do that then maybe we can ask for it or get invited.

**Parents’ relationship with teachers.** The second theme from this cluster is *parents’ relationship with their child’s teachers.* This refers to the nature of the relationship between parents and teachers as they collaborate about their children’s behavior. Some of the parents’ noted that trusting the school personnel with their child’s behavioral issue was a concern. Hence, parental trust of the confidentiality of the program is crucial to the success of the implementation of PBIS. Parent 1 stated:

If you trust the school, there’s no risk factors. But, if you don’t trust, if you think that they could mess up with your child, you know, then yes, this is going to be an issue. You should not uh leave your child to the school if you don’t know what’s going on, if you don’t trust them … if I know that the teacher um is aware and trained in uh dealing with the children and fixing their behavior, I will let her go. But, if I think that she is missing the training and she doesn’t know how to deal with my child, I will stop her, but I don’t have this issue actual.

Parent 2 stated:

I really wouldn’t say there is any really protective measures you want to take because everybody is really professional … It’s just not like you have
to worry or anything everyone there is so professional and great, there really is nothing to worry about.

Parent 3 stated:

Protective factors, um so definitely I think that the protective factors would be that, um, because they have more staffing on hand and the teachers are much more trained when compared to the parents so we get that influence from them and then we can make it better for our son and for our kids so that’s the biggest protective factor for me.

Confidentially. This theme refers to how schools maintained confidentiality of students’ information. Although most parents did not identify confidentiality as a risk factor associated with implementing PBIS, some parents indicated that they wanted their child’s information to be held confidential and not be released without parental consent.

Parent 1 stated:

The school should be aware about the confidentiality of the child and the school should um during the process of uh solving the issues should not label the child, should not put him under a label that this child needs uh that this child is different or special or something, yeah these are the risks and the protective factors, yes, these are the confidentiality.

Parent 4 stated:

They do keep it confidential they usually its only seen by the teachers any of his like if he is doing speech therapy or physical therapy in the school it would be kept confidential unless I ask to forward it to a doctor or
something like that then before they do that I would have to sign you know like a consent for in order for them to do that.

**Schools collaboration to successful implement PBIS.** This theme refers to how parental approval of PBIS system relies on the school systems’ collaboration with parents. Most of the parents indicated the school systems should offer assistance to anyone who needs support regarding PBIS. Parent 4 mentioned that parental involvement leads to successful implementation of positive behavior intervention. Parent 2 also stated that the school should be strict with the rules and clarify that with everyone. The last parent interviewed said that the school should know how to react with both the children with challenging behavior and their parents to address behavioral problems. As a result, parental assistance leads to the successful implementation of PBIS in the school settings. Parent 1 stated: “The parents play a big role in fixing and conducting the behavior issues besides the school, like both of them, 50/50. Uh, we collaborate with the information that we got from the school and uh issues and we um work on them at home with the child.” Parent 2 stated:

I’d say if they could help out more kids who need it, I think it was a generally pretty great for the school to help everybody succeed you know what I mean because some people they have certain problems and certain things like he did, and a lot of schools they might just overlook it and say hey they’re bad, you know they’re just not doing their work and we’re just not going to look into, we’re just going to fail him or whatever the case may be, change schools.
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Parent 4 stated:

It leads to the involvement I guess umm because I saw that this is something necessary and beneficial in order for my son to be in the learning environment as well as you know umm as well as having the positive behavior versus having the negative behavior.

The response of parent 6 indicated that her child’s school was very formal in dealing with parents and they had strict rules for any visitors, which may give the parents a limited opportunity to be involved with the school systems. Parent 6 stated: “I think usually the school are very strict on the rules and they try to clarify everything, and when they able to do something they do it and when they are not able to they say no.”

Challenges parents face in participating in PBIS. This theme is about the challenges that parents faced when they participated with schools in the schools’ implementation of PBIS. While most of the parents stated that there were no challenges, parent 2’s response indicated that the teachers had no authority to change their child’s behavior plan and only implemented what had been approved by the administration. Another parent’s response indicated that the atmosphere created by the principal of the school played a vital role in making the implementation of PBIS successful. For example, Parent 6 said that the former principal did not welcome any parents who wanted to visit the school. Parent 1 stated: “Challenges, I don’t have, you know what, I told you that if I know the teacher is not trained well, I will not let her deal with my child, but I did not have such issue.” Parent 8 stated: “there’s not much challenge the communication is there and they try their best.” Parent 5 stated: “previously, there was a principal who doesn’t like parents to visit to the school.” Parent 2 stated:
I wouldn’t say any challenges, everybody you know everybody gets like nervous whenever their kids first start school, I was one of those mom’s but I’ll tell you the teachers and principals, they are really like some of the best people you would ever even want around your kid so uh I never run in to any problems.

Parent 3 stated:

They on their end they don’t have the power to do anything, they can just implement what is provided to them, but they cannot make any changes, or maybe they can just suggest changes, but they cannot make changes to the curriculum, they cannot make changes to the system, so it’s really not much in their hands, it just comes from the top, that everything has already been decided as to how to work, so I really don’t face any more challenges.

Parent 4 stated:

As far as now I don't face any challenge you know as long as they follow the positive behavior intervention support they have in place because since I do communicate with the teachers on a regular basis you know I kind of know what they are doing as far as you know with his behavior management and then as far as them communicating with me they know what is going on with him as well at the home.

Parent 6 disclosed that she did not have enough opportunity to communicate with public schools and there was a gap between her and her child’s school. Parent 6 stated:
I think the challenges are that I don’t know about the rules … the public school system I found a gap between us and the school and I don’t know if it’s because the teachers don’t have experience enough. I don’t see it as focused like what happens at the house, they just focus on the IEP goals, there is no behavior goals and they don’t work on it … In the school system it is difficult to be with your child in the classroom because there are other children and usually they don’t welcome parents.

Parent 7 stated:

I don't have any and any challenges is that they're pretty good in time I actually do something … for the parents you kind of mold your child.

Pertaining to this process and pertains to how they react to it. So it's very important. I mean is very important is very important. Yeah so much at most your child is different. It was a child needs help with you kind of use this on the PBS system too.

Cluster 4: The Extra Therapeutic Factors to Motivate Parents

The fourth cluster is the extra therapeutic factors to motivate parents and includes the following four themes: (a) Parents’ interest in participating in PBIS, (b) Parents’ preferences in participating in PBIS, and (c) Parents’ Motivation for communicating with schools. These themes are presented in Table 6.
Table 6

The Extra Therapeutic Factors to Motivate Parents

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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
<th>Parent Participants</th>
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<tr>
<td>Parents’ interest in participating in PBIS</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ preferences in participating in PBIS</td>
<td>X  X  X  X  X  X  X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents’ Motivation for Communicating With Schools</td>
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**Parents’ interest in participating in PBIS.** This theme refers to parents’ desire to be involved in PBIS with schools. A majority of the parents’ explained that they were fully interested in participating with schools in implementing PBIS especially if the results of this intervention were remarkable and noticeable. Parent 2 stated: “I’d say on a 1 to 10, I would say a 10, cause I gotta make sure he is keeping up with everything.”

Parent 3 stated: “I am interested 100% I am interested, as long as I can see some results”

Parent 5 stated: “Yes, I want to work with him not just at home but at school” Parent 8 stated: “Interested whatever they do it doesn’t stay at school he also goes at home also lunch as well and the team has more information to give to me about him regarding him than anybody.” Parent 4 stated:

I’m very interested because i see that it does work and I see a huge you know difference in the way that he behaves you know at school as well as at the home as well he is more easier to deal with umm and we have like the plan in place so say if I was to even have a provider to come in to
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watch him or anything like that then I can always you know give that to them and they can see that ok this is what works you know as far as the positive behavior you know is concerned or if they have any type of negative behavior then they will know how to approach it.

Parent 6 stated:

I am 100 percent … When I know a teacher do well with his behaviors I try to learn how they do it so I can use these strategies with him. And I want to see him and understand how people can make him calm down or make him follow instructions.

Parent 7 stated:

Very 100 percent active and actually you know I'm always you know corresponding with. Well pretty much. They sent us letters home every day of how progress so there's progress in particular. So every day we get a law about what they do.

Parents’ preferences in participating in PBIS. This theme refers to how parents would like to participate with school systems in PBIS. The parents stated that there were several ways they were interested in participating with the schools systems, such as applying the same rules and expectations (at home) that the school established, visiting their children’s school, and working with homeroom teachers and special education teachers on their children’s behavior. Parent 1 stated: “Yes, in the details of the plan.” Parent 2 stated: “I would love to um do more like for the PTA and go to the meetings …I’d say if I had the time, I would love to participate as much as I could.” Parent 5 stated: “I can use the same chalk his teachers use at school during the weekends and
spring break. I would buy things for rewards for him and things he likes and wants more.” Parent 3 stated:

I would love to participate more with school systems as long as they are more flexible with their policies and making arrangements and not just sticking to one sort of assessment for all special needs kids, which they have currently, so special needs is a big dome and it encompasses a lot of kids, but they have to really put in an effort and categorize them and prepare stuff according to their needs and not just one general curriculum in general stuff for all the kids … I would participate more if they are willing to sort of change the curriculum, um and then change their ways of sort of, implementing behavior strategies with the kids.

Parent 4 stated:

I don't necessarily think I need to participate more umm I mean as far as now is concerned there’s really nothing else they can do I've spoken to the teacher and everything they have in place as of right now there is like nothing else you know more to help him participate in that aspect.

Parent 6 stated:

I think for autism especially it should be a plan for the family and the school. You can’t just rely on the school because the other children do something in the school and when they go back home and do it and nobody tells him it’s not wrong he will do it and will not understand until the same rules are in the school and at home. I think this is the best strategy for them and they like to understand the way people understand.
Like usually with my son, he doesn’t like he gets confused when things aren’t the same with what he does at school and at home. Family work together for the growth of the child.

Parent 7 stated:

I try to participate you know so I can aid on them being educated and really benefiting from the PBS system … I just go and go into form being able to go to school more has been known to be more hands on at school would be better.

Parent 8 stated:

Yeah maybe more involved with school to see what they do because a lot of things is like what they tell us maybe when we see we can see once in a while and see the results because if we are participating on giving some information and they also give us some information but if we are allowed to be there once in a while.

Parents’ motivation for communicating with schools. This theme refers to parents’ motivation to communicate with school systems regarding BIPs. According to parents’ responses, it is clear that most of them communicated with the schools daily and frequently. The common ways to communicate with the schools were by email, phone, communication apps and written notes. Some parents commented that they visited the school three to four times a year, and if there were urgent issues, they visited the school immediately. On the other hand, the schools reached out to them through daily or weekly letters to report on any progress or misbehaviors. Parent 1 Stated: “Only if there’s an issue, only if something pops up on the surface, they will tell me if there is something, if
he’s in trouble or something … directly, verbally, meetings or uh you know, meetings, yeah, meetings.” Parent 3 stated: “No, not now, I don’t … Through notebooks, meetings, and sometimes phone calls.” Parent 5 stated: “Yes. I email them all and talk to them at the school. We have the IEP forms.” Parent 2 Stated:

Yeah we communicate almost every day and with the therapist like I said it’s about once a week and um we just make sure he is staying on task and he’s not getting off track um I’d say we talk mostly through email or over the phone, that’s usually the best way to get ahold of us, so yeah that’s how we do it.

Parent 4 Stated:

Yes I do usually we communicate by text message or emails or sometimes phone calls depending on how severe the situation is as far as now I don't face any challenge you know as long as they follow the positive behavior intervention support they have in place because since I do communicate with the teachers on a regular basis you know I kind of know what they are doing as far as you know with his behavior management and then as far as them communicating with me they know what is going on with him as well at the home yes I was invited.

Parent 6 Stated:

I communicate with the teachers and I think she’s the special education major. And there is a behavior specialist but she saw him just one time and usually they don’t focus on the behavior just the behavior in the school.
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Parent 7 Stated:

Basically they write, the teachers write a log of what happened today. If she has a problem or if she was successful and on the back the teacher tells us more if they need any help from us or how she did in school, and if we have concerns, we could also write back to them on the log, we actually have to sign this log every day and she’s supposed to return it every day, it’s a daily communication.

Parent 8 Stated:

Yes, how like in person how the thing I was saying normally we communicate through either through email or when we have meetings once in a while no like 3 months maybe twice a year sometimes if there is a change or if there is something that they want to implement they can be flexible yeah but mostly it’s about twice a year or unless something that comes up.

Cluster 5: Parents’ Engagement with Treatment

The fifth cluster is the extra therapeutic factor to motivate parents to become involved within the school systems. The findings of the research include five themes. The following are the themes: (a) parents’ responsibilities in BIP, (b) Parents’ reflections and evaluation for PBIS, (c) Parents’ concerns about BIP, (d) The right contact person, and (e) Schools communication with parents. These themes are presented in Table 7.
Table 7

*Parents’ Engagement with Treatment*

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<tr>
<th>Themes</th>
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<td>Parents’ responsibilities in BIP</td>
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<td>Parents’ reflections and evaluation for PBIS</td>
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<td>Parents’ concerns about BIP</td>
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<td>The right Contact Person</td>
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<td>Schools’ communication with parents</td>
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**Parents’ responsibilities in BIP.** The definition of this theme is what the parents need to do in implementing BIP. A majority of the parents indicated that the schools invited and requested parents to attend BIP meetings in order to discuss potential problems with their children. Nevertheless, their responses indicated that the number of school meetings was limited to three times a year, which included an emergency meeting concerning an urgent situation with their children. Parent 1 stated: “I don’t know, only three a year, three per year, I don’t have that much frequent visits to, you know, discuss my child’s issue because it’s not that much, you know.” Parent 4 stated: “Yes I was invited, my responsibilities in the meeting to support the teachers in following the plan that is in place and hopefully follow and reinforce it at the house as well.” Parent 5 stated: “yes … They ask me what I want to add in the plan … I’m the one who makes decisions.”

Parent 2 stated:

Yes … just like coming to identify what problems he’s having at times um
and see if there’s a way we can work on and whatever we thought together
would the best thing to be, that’s what we do and we stay with it so you
know it’s all about consistency, as long as you’re consistent with it you
know what I mean, you shouldn’t really have a problem after too long.

Parent 3 stated:
Not separately, but they’ve discussed this all in the IEP meetings, yeah …
my role is that of a parent and I just sort of voice my concerns and um,
regarding my responsibility, I don’t think, um, at this point I would
consider the responsibility because my son has such extensive needs and
such intense needs, that they know that, uh, we are doing everything we
can do from our end, so that’s not much of a responsibility, but it’s just a
shared type of a thing.

Parent 6 stated:
They call me to answer the questionnaire, I think … I received a call from
them to answer a questionnaire. Each one is about one hour … It was an
assessment so they just ask a question and I give them the answers but it
was a phone call not a meeting. And they don’t ask me what is your
suggestion they just ask about the behaviors that will make it a challenge
for us, but I didn’t see goals for this.

Parent 7 stated:
They inform us on what happened this year and what’s been happening in
this past year, and we have to come up with a plan on how to, what
recommendations we need to make or if she needs help with anything or
any improvements she can do. They just tell us how she’s doing overall academically, so we just have to come up on ways we agree on different things so they can be more effective in school. That makes her to be more effective pretty much.

Parent 8 stated:

Yeah, what is what, trying to get information about my son and to approve whatever has been proposed or sometimes if the teacher or the therapist they come up with a plan they propose to help us stick to the plan or I can come up with it as well if they implement it at school so I don’t think we do much there’s nothing much we can do because they are doing the implementation at school and we are not there.

**Parents’ reflections and evaluation for PBIS.** The definition of this theme is how parents evaluate PBIS services provided by school systems. The majority of parents showed satisfaction with school performance and appreciated the services that were offered to their children. They also believed that the schools did the best that they could to make the program more effective outside of the classroom environment. Moreover, a majority of the parents indicated that the schools tried to implement parents’ feedback to improve the BIPs. Parent 1 stated: “I can evaluate, like a grade, like nine out 10.” Parent 2 stated: “I would say on a scale to one to 10, I would say about a 10, they’re really great.” Parent 5 stated: “It’s acceptable and excellent and they are a great team and they are trying their best to work with us” Parent 8 stated: I believe its ok they try their best to get us to participate.” Parent 4 stated:

I think for the most part they meet the needs of my child as far as the plan
is concerned I'm ecstatic and fine with everything they have in place as of now and they get my feedback as to how everything is going yes I think they are doing a great job.

Parent 7 stated:

I am evaluated on their feedback, what type of feedback I get from them, if it’s a positive feedback, you know when I asked them to do something they do it right away if she has any issues at school how they de-escalate the issues, that’s how I evaluate it over the years. Her progress, is she getting better in school academically emotionally, how is she doing … I evaluate it based on my child’s feedback, if they are having a lot of problems at school then I realize it could be the school, because they are put in place to try and make my child better and successful and if that’s not being achieved then that means maybe she needs to move, maybe she needs to go to another school. I pretty much evaluate the school how it affects my children, are the doing better academically socially. How it affects them … And the serviced and support they provide if its making a positive change in my son and daughters life, if it’s not being positive then we have to reevaluate it whether she’s going to go to that school or not.

The following parents indicated that the services were great and more acceptable in elementary school but the quality of services reduced in middle school. Also, the parent stated that the IEP goals should be explained and be clear to the parents with sufficient examples to apply at the home environment. Parent 3 stated:

I think in 6th grade, or 5th grade, 5th grade, yeah, in elementary school we
did receive quite a lot of support that in a way that the special Ed teacher, the psychologist, the rest of the school staff and however was involved with our son, they used to really listen and they usually used to incorporate, but since he has gone to the middle school, and the extensions program, I don’t see much, I don’t see that type of support anymore. I think they are trying to make him more productive functionally outside the classroom.

Parent 6 stated:

For the IEP, it’s good. Like for some goals, I don’t know how they work on these goals so I think they need to explain more and I ask them for more explanation like how do they work on these goals. And I don’t have any idea about this and I asked her to show me an example.

**Parents’ concerns about BIP.** This theme explores how the school systems allowed the parents to share their ideas or present their opinions in BIP meetings. The vast majority of parents revealed that they were invited to be involved and discuss issues related to their children’s behavior and they felt the schools listened to them and took the parents’ feedback into consideration. Parent 1 stated: “I’m very open, I will discuss any issue because I believe that so many issue in the beginning will let it grow.” Parent 2 stated: “Oh, very, very.” Parent 3 stated: “I did last year, I did last year in the last IEP meeting, but I don’t think it made a difference.” Parent 5 stated: “Yes they listen to me and they help me in the plan and take our concerns seriously.” Parent 7 stated: “They encourage us to participate, to be at the IEP meetings, the behavior intervention plan…” Parent 8 stated: “Some of the things most of the things that we propose they use them and
they also help a lot with other things as well there’s not anything that we proposed that they haven’t used.” Parent 4 stated:

I feel very good because the teachers are always open to my feedback and open to my suggestions and they are always asking me if there are any suggestions or anything that would help or benefit him in the plan and they can add it to the plan if there is something working better than what they are doing so I get that support from the teachers as well they are always open to my suggestions.

Conversely, the following parent showed that her voice was not welcome by the school regarding her BIP and that it was not included in her child’s IEP. Parent 6 stated:

In the meetings when I told them that he needs a behavior plan, I think the teachers is not welcome the idea and I don’t know how because I think it will help her. But I think she didn’t like the idea but I didn’t ask why. But the supervisor said ok we can work on the behavior plan but it will be separate than the IEP.

The right contact person. The fourth theme refers to the parents knowing the right person to communicate with regarding their children’s challenging behaviors. Most parents knew that the homeroom teacher, special education teacher, or psychologist were the right contact for their child’s BIP. Some parents said that the school principal assigned them to the right contact person in the school. Parent 1 stated: “Yes, the principal and she is going to direct us to the uh, you know, counselor and the homeroom teacher and also, I can call the homeroom teacher directly” Parent 2 stated: “Yes, I would say his teacher first and then his principal.” Parent 3 stated: “Yeah, his homeroom
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teacher, yeah.” Parent 5 stated: “Yes the homeroom teacher and special education
teacher.” Parent 6 stated: “No I think just the teacher and supervisor. I don’t think they
allow us to communicate with them, they didn’t tell me if we have a problem or want to
have support we can call this department.” Parent 7 stated: “Yes, she has a case manager
… She's willing to work with you.” Parent 4 stated:

They tell me I can go through the teachers as far as if there are any
cconcerns or anything that need to be modified anytime I need a meeting
there isn't a problem with getting a meeting very quickly with them yes I
do.

Parent 8 stated:

Yes, normally the teacher the special educator she will contact depending
whatever you need because she is always at the meetings the psychologist
occupational therapist whatever she is going to make sure to get to that
person, but the main point is the special educator the teacher.

Schools’ communication with parents. This theme refers to how the school
communicates with parents regarding their children’s behavior. The parents stated that
the school communicated with them frequently regarding their children’s behavior and/or
other concerns. The schools communicated by phone if there was an urgent situation that
required a quick response or if their children were exhibiting challenging behavior.
Otherwise, the schools sent letters or wrote notices in the student’s notebook. Parent 5
stated: “Yes, they call me every time something happens and they will let me know.”
Parent 7 stated: “yes frequently because we get every day log on how I've read her
behavior is. So, yes it is frequent its everyday.” Parent 4 stated:
Yes they have usually if they want to get in touch as soon as possible it would be by phone if it’s not urgent then by text message by his actual teacher that he is with and I get a response back quickly yes they have verbally told me about my child’s assessments usually by observation.

Parent 6 stated:

Yes, the teacher used a notebook but we start this semester to use the app. Like today she texted me and said he had a hard time after lunch and she said we will work on this behavior. Like when he has a hard time she texts me.

Parent 8 stated:

Yes they do yes every time something happens some days with difficult behavior or something they will let me know and they tell what they tried if it worked or not sometimes they would call whenever the behavior is happening and let me know the background that something is happening or the reason why the bad behavior is occurring they always try to let me know.

Summary

In summary, the results presented in this chapter gave the parents an opportunity to express their experiences regarding the implementation of the PBIS in their children’s schools. The chapter started describing the demographics and background of the parents and their children’s challenging behavior. After analyzing the interviews, five major themes emerged and included, (a) parental motivation to be involved in PBIS with the school systems, (b) parents’ roles and support to schools in implementing PBIS,
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school collaboration for successful implementation of PBIS, (d) school collaboration for successful implementation, and (e) parents’ motivation for collaborating with schools. Discussion and interpretation of these results as well as the implications for future research and practice are presented in chapter five.
Chapter V

DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to explore parents’ understanding of the concepts of PBIS and to explore parental interest and involvement in the implementation of PBIS in their children’s school systems. The overarching research question was, what are the lived (perceived) experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in the PBIS process? Under this main question, there were five sub-questions:

1. How do parents of children with challenging behavior involved in the PBIS process describe their lived experiences?
2. In what ways do parents make meaning out of their experience of participation in the PBIS intervention of their children with challenging behavior at school?
3. What do parents consider to have been the risk and protective factors in their experiences in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process?
4. How have the parents’ personal characteristics influenced their perceptions of the support they get from school systems in their collaboration on PBIS?
5. How do parents evaluate the support they get from the school system during their involvement?

The researcher conducted semi-structured interviews with parents of children with challenging behavior who had experience in the implementation of PBIS with their children’s school systems. Eight parents participated in this study and shared their experiences in PBIS implementation. The parents were identified via purposive sampling
techniques and were interviewed via face-to-face or telephone meetings. Of the eight parents who participated in the study, three were interviewed in face-to-face meetings, and five were interviewed via telephone. Each of the eight parents’ interviews were transcribed, coded, and analyzed. The coding and analysis processes of the interviews were informed and guided by Merriam and Tisdell (2015) who explained the constructivism paradigm of qualitative inquiry and constructivist grounded theory and related methods, which explained the ways that people construct their own understanding of the world by experiencing issues and reflecting on these experiences.

The five major clusters from the results were: (1) parental knowledge and expectations (2) parental efforts in the PBIS process, (3) risk and protective factors for parents who participate in PBIS, (4) extra therapeutic factors to motivate parents, and (5) parents’ engagement with PBIS. Each cluster included common themes that emerged from the analysis of the eight interviews. Overall, the outcomes of this study were consistent with previous research in terms of parental roles, which promote positive behavioral and educational outcomes (Blair, Lee, Cho, & Dunlap, 2011). In the current study, the parents expressed that they had different viewpoints and diverse cultural backgrounds, which school systems and policy makers could put into consideration when they create any BIPs for their children with challenging behavior. Each of the major themes are described in detail to clarify their importance in the implementation of PBIS. Based on the themes that emerged from this study, I discuss the findings of the study, the limitations of the study, the implications for practice, and directions for future research.
Discussion of Research Findings

Parental Knowledge of PBIS

The participants’ responses showed that their knowledge about PBIS was limited even though most of them reported that the school systems explained the concept of PBIS to them. Although the parents were able to explain the fundamentals of PBIS, most of them did not show a clear understanding of the PBIS processes, such as Functional Behavior Assessment (FBA). This finding is important because the parents’ lack of understanding of the PBIS processes may interfere with the nature of their contribution to the processes. In order to contribute in a meaningful way, parents should have a good understanding and knowledge of the concepts of behavioral support practices, which will help them be more proactive, promote their stability, and create an atmosphere where their children thrive as well as enhance the families’ well-being (Hieneman & Fefer, 2017). On the other hand, when parents struggle with the children’s challenging behaviors, without having the necessary skills to support their children, they tend to use punitive approaches to addressing the challenging behavior (Hieneman & Fefer, 2017). It is clear that empowering families to determine desired outcomes will be beneficial to their overall lifestyle. The parents’ capacity to implement PBIS practices in the home settings can complement the teachers’ efforts and promote more successful and sustainable outcomes for their children (Hieneman & Fefer, 2017). On the contrary, misunderstanding or lack of understanding of PBIS, may undermine desirable outcomes for the children (Minke & Anderson, 2005).

The researcher believes that colleges and universities in the local areas could collaborate with school systems to help educate parents in implementing PBIS. The
school systems in partnership with colleges or universities could facilitate training programs and invite parents, families, and schoolteachers to participate. Such programs could increase parental knowledge about PBIS and may encourage parents to be more meaningfully involved with schools in implementing PBIS. Parents could also gain behavior management skills to use when they face challenging behavior in the home environment, which would create consistency in the child’s most important environments. These efforts from the school systems would build positive networks and establish sustainable partnerships between parents and school personnel.

**Parental Role in PBIS**

The results of this study showed that parental roles in supporting PBIS implementation were very limited. The parents mentioned that they tried to support implementation of their children’s BIPs at home in concert with schoolteachers’ efforts at school, but lack of knowledge of the intervention prevented them from doing it properly. Generally, the participants indicated that their involvement was limited to specific roles such as informing the school systems of any changes in their children’s behaviors at home. The most likely reason for this limited role, according to the parents, is that the school systems did not share the responsibilities with the parents and there was miscommunication regarding the implementation of PBIS. According to Dunlap and Fox (2007), “For a partnership to be formed, a family’s commitment must be matched by the availability of a professional, or professional team, with values of reciprocity that are consistent with a family-centered and partnership approach” (p. 278). By establishing a partnership, the school can begin to share the responsibilities with parents regarding their children’s positive behavior support process (Dunlap, & Fox (2007).
Furthermore, parents can contribute more in the planning process and implementation of the interventions along with the school systems, which will promote self-determination for families (Hieneman & Fefer, 2017). According to Hart (2011), parental involvement can help improve their children’s academic outcomes, help teachers to avoid inaccurate assumptions, define problems and develop effective interventions, and enhance adaptive dispositions towards education through indirect learning.

Moreover, Chu (2015) pointed out that families who were involved in the PBIS process with their children’s schools found positive learning outcomes for their children since they were key to the planning, designing, and evaluation of the educational process. Therefore, parents can play significant roles in terms of the implementation of PBIS in their children’s schools. Because of this, Garbacz et al. (2018) suggested that schools should support families to help their children follow school expectations at home in order to obtain the best results from BIPs. According to Hieneman and Fefer (2017), it is important that parents can gain access to evidence-based practices, such as PBIS in order to address and prevent behavioral challenges in the family unit. Previous research showed that parents who were involved in proposing solutions for their children’s challenging behavior had high rates of satisfaction, self-efficacy, and social support (Hieneman & Fefer, 2017). Hieneman and Fefer also stated that there was a correlation between parental involvement in the intervention plan and the improvement of the quality of their lifestyles, as well as the positive change in the children’s behavior.

From the researcher’s perspective, parents or families must have a chance to work closely together with special education teachers or homeroom teachers to create the conditions and practices that allow continuing collaboration and consistent coordination
and partnerships. Moreover, schoolteachers and parents should discuss the positive and negative experiences in implementing PBIS and their current and future concerns about the challenging behavior that children exhibit in the classroom, along with the targeted support their children should receive. In addition, the conversation should include BIP and parental roles. For example, school personnel could invite and ask parents how they can contribute to the implementation of PBIS. This multiple communication and distribution of responsibilities in making educational decisions regarding educational and behavioral issues would increase student outcomes and improve their quality of life.

Parents’ Motivation to Be Involved in PBIS with School Systems

Results of this study showed that the parents were highly motivated to be involved in PBIS within their children’s school systems. The parents were also interested to know more about PBIS in order to participate more in the implementation of interventions at home. As previous research states (e.g., Blair, Lee, Cho, & Dunlap, 2011; Dunlap et al., 2001), parents are one of the important factors to the successful implementation of PBIS, and they should be equal partners with the school systems. Bailey and Blair (2015) as well as Blair, Lee, Cho, and Dunlap (2011) state that parents can play a critical role in enhancing their children’s positive behavior and educational outcomes by helping practitioners to identify challenging behaviors and a child’s strengths and needs both in the immediate and long term. Besides, parental partnership with school personnel also improves the learning environment (Hart, 2011), which can complement teachers efforts in implementing PBIS.

According to Garbacz et al. (2018) an effective way for school systems to engage parents regarding PBIS is through effective communication, working cooperatively in
terms of school activities, implementing PBIS practices at home and school, and sharing ownership or decision making in the process. Also, Chitiyo and Wheeler (2009) indicated that the most important challenge that educators faced in implementing PBIS was lack of parental support and collaboration, which affected the successful implementation of PBIS in classroom environments. Thus, it is noteworthy that the parents in this current study were highly motivated to be involved in the PBIS process with their children’s schools. According to Hart (2011), parental motivation to be involved with school systems can in turn enhance a teacher’s motivation, resulting in the teacher attending to the child more.

**Parental Communication with School Systems**

Parent 5 and Parent 6 stated that they did not receive enough support from the school system to apply the BIP strategy in the home environment with her child, resulting in their lack of involvement in the PBIS process. This outcome stresses the need for more specific parental involvement and communication with the school systems. It is necessary that parents receive full support from the school systems to achieve the best outcomes of their children’s BIPs. Parental communication with school systems is a critical element in promoting the successful implementation of PBIS (Garbacz et al., 2018). Garbacz et al. (2018) suggested that effective communication helps to ensure that families stay informed about the academic or behavioral concerns of their children while supporting children to follow school expectations. However, even though the parents in this current study communicated daily with school personnel regarding their children’s behavior, they pointed out that it was only routine communication, not specific to PBIS implementation. This is concerning because it indicates that there was limited interaction, between the parents and the school systems, specific to the implementation of PBIS, which signals the
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need to improve the level of communication between schools and parents about PBIS. Improved communication could in turn help to ensure the school systems develop appropriate BIPs for their children. According to Lewis et al. (2017) and Lucyshyn et al. (2007), frequent communication between parents and schools promotes development of strong partnerships that ultimately benefit children with challenging behaviors. Such partnerships could also help parents better understand their roles in the implementation of PBIS so that they can contribute more effectively to the process.

The lack of communication between the parents and the school systems revealed an increased need for greater parental involvement with the school systems regarding their children’s challenging behaviors. As part of sustained and effective communication between the parents and school personnel, essential information about the PBIS system should be provided to parents in order to help them participate more meaningfully in implementing PBIS. Frequent communication with parents helps schools to identify the parents’ needs and the challenges they may face in implementing PBIS. Throughout the communication with parents, the school personnel can evaluate their efforts and measure parental satisfaction about the current implementation of PBIS.

Collaboration between Schools and Parents

In this current study, the parents stated the importance of their collaboration with their children’s school systems. The findings also indicated that there was limited collaboration between the parents and their children’s school systems regarding the implementation of PBIS possibly because of the low level of school support to parents. Regarding the collaboration, the parents stated that they were seeking: (1) to be informed by school personnel regarding the implementation of PBIS; (2) to be supported when
they needed it; (3) frequent communication from the schools when any behavioral issues would arise; and (4) professional interaction from the schools. According to Benson, Karlof, and Siperstein (2008), it is critical that schools give parents ownership to effectively collaborate in their children’s education and behavior modification. This collaboration can be enhanced through the schools inviting parents to participate more in the school programs and helping them acquire important skills to work successfully with the school systems.

Benson, Karlof, and Siperstein (2008), suggested ongoing educational activities that become part of the daily routine of the children and their families as a way to increase the collaboration between parents and schools.

By better understanding these ‘educational accommodations’ by parents and the factors that facilitate and hinder them, we believe that educators will be better equipped to plan and implement effective interventions that can be sustained by those most consistently central to the lives of children with ASD – their families. (Benson, Karlof, & Siperstein, 2008, p. 61)

Bailey, Raspa, and Fox (2012) stated that the Council on Quality Leadership (CQL) developed guidelines for programs serving the families of children with disabilities in order to ensure the families’ concerns are addressed. The CQL took parents’ perspectives into consideration when they were reviewing, evaluating, and determining the best services. It is critical that school systems seek parents’ collaboration and use a family-centered approach when providing services because children with special needs should be treated according to a holistic view of the family (Bailey, Raspa, & Fox, 2012). The core principles of family collaboration include, making decisions regarding their children’s
goals and activities, empowering parental involvement, and respecting the diversity and values of families. Additionally, Bailey, Raspa, and Fox stated that “communicating with families in an open and collaborative fashion, adopting a flexible approach to service provision, and recognizing the value of informal support systems (2012, p. 217)”, are tools schools can implement to foster collaboration with families that will lead to sustainable and successful implementation of PBIS.

From the researcher’s perspective, more collaboration between parents and schools needs to be established, which empowers the parents and families to participate in decision making related to their children’s BIPs. Also, building a positive and trusting relationship between schoolteachers and parents, which seems to be a concern of the parents in this study, is a sign of effective collaboration. This collaboration helps educators to recognize parents’ needs and their cultural experiences, which promotes greater understanding and respect for all involved in the PBIS processes.

**Parental Involvement in the PBIS Process**

Results of the current study indicated that the parents were involved in the IEP processes of their children. Most parents reported that they regularly attended IEP meetings, but only three of them were involved directly with the PBIS process. This finding means that the parents were partially involved within the school systems regarding decision making about the services included in BIPs. One important core principle of IDEA is parental participation regarding their children’s behavioral and educational needs. Garbacz et al. (2018) found that family support in PBIS across both home and school environments contributes to the consistent implementation of PBIS for the child. In order to promote more successful implementation of BIPs, school systems
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should seek parental involvement by activating family–school partnerships, where families can contribute more with the schools regarding their children’s behavioral and academic needs (Garbacz et al., 2018). Parental involvement with the BIP teams helps with sharing of responsibilities between the parents and the school systems and enhances the multidirectional communication between schools and families (Garbacz et al., 2018). Multidirectional communication allows parents to express their opinions about BIPs or any other concerns they would like to include in their children’s BIPs during their regular meetings with the school personnel (Garbacz et al., 2018). Thus, parental involvement must be a top priority for schoolteachers in order to achieve a collaborative effort toward successful implementation of PBIS processes.

From the researcher’s perspective, the schools need to open the door to parental participation and involvement, without restrictions, that prevents them from helping their children with challenging behaviors. For this purpose, the school systems could amend their policies and redesign them to welcome and encourage the parents’ active involvement in school settings. However, this has to be done while still taking the safety of the school children into consideration.

Confidentiality as a Protective Factors

In collaborating with school systems on the PBIS process, parents expressed the lack of confidentiality as a risk for their children. Establishing protective factors should be a top priority for the school systems in order to protect the families and children’s information. Certainly, one requirement of the BIP or IEP process is maintaining confidentiality of the child’s information (Cook, et al., 2007). In addition, successful implementation of BIP needs confidence and trust between parents and teachers or other
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school personnel (Minke & Anderson, 2005; Lemons, Sinclair, Gesel, Danielson, & Gandhi, 2019). Thus, teachers, practitioners, and school administrators must adhere to the confidentiality mandate of the special education legislation (Jones & VanScoy, 2019) when implementing PBIS. According to Dunlap, and Fox (2007), the successful partnership between the professionals and families is reliant on the establishment of trust between the two. In the researcher’s opinion, a positive relationship between the schoolteachers and parents or families builds trust and confidence among them.

**Barriers Parents Faced in Working with Schools**

The Parents mentioned that the most important challenge they faced was the limited capacity that the educators had to perform the intervention. Also, the parents pointed out that the school system only focused mostly on the academic goals in the IEP, and not so much on the behavioral goals. Additionally, the parents indicated that they did not understand the rules of the public school system due to the lack of experience of their children’s teachers. According to Garbacz et al. (2016) teachers are responsible for explaining the PBIS and BIP processes to the parents of the children they are working with. In addition, because of the policy of the school systems limiting parental visitation, findings showed that it was challenging for parents to visit their children’s schools. Because of these challenges, the parents were not able to fully participate with the school system in implementing PBIS for their children or to get the substantial support from the school systems in order to apply PBIS in the home environment.

It is important to engage parents and families to learn more about PBIS by providing information during each step of the implementation process. For example, knowledge of universal PBIS systems or primary interventions would help parents and
families to understand proactive or preventive practices while knowledge of secondary level interventions would assist them to control the frequency of incidents of challenging behavior of their children. Finally, training the parents on the tertiary level supports would help them to reduce the intensity and complexity of challenging behavior by creating and implementing effective interventions (Garbacz et al., 2018). Schools can provide assistance to the parents to implement these interventions at home and facilitate their implementation, which would promote sustainable behavioral outcomes for the children.

**The Implementation of BIPs in the Home Environment**

In the current study, parents mentioned many ways to make their participation in the PBIS intervention at school meaningful. Even though the parents were satisfied with the school systems’ implementation of BIPs, the parents wished they could apply their children’s BIPs in the home environment. Because parents play complementary roles with their children’s educators, training them on the use of PBIS could help parents gain knowledge and skills to implement PBIS interventions in the home environment. Such training could improve collaboration between parents and school systems in the implementation of PBIS (Garbacz et al., 2018). Garbacz et al. (2018) proposed a PBIS framework that is embedded in the home environment whereby the PBIS team will train parents to implement PBIS effectively. The framework includes, organizing and coordinating “(a) family engagement in PBIS at school, (b) family use of PBIS at home, and (c) PBIS across school and home through multidirectional communication” (p.128).

Also, considering parents’ knowledge and expertise in decision making about their children is vital in the selection of goals and in designing the most beneficial
behavioral support plans for their children (Minke & Anderson, 2005). This can be accomplished by establishing a symbiotic relationship between families and the schools in order to achieve the best results for the children with challenging behavior (Minke & Anderson, 2005). Närhi, Kiiski, and Savolainen (2017) stated that the enhancement of cooperation will improve communication between parents and classroom teachers, improve the teachers’ classroom management, and help to achieve children’s behavioral expectations. This suggests the need for training programs designed to educate parents of children with challenging behavior about the implementation of PBIS at home. Additionally, the school systems can deliver the PBIS service to those parents who have children with challenging behavior by helping them set and establish rules and expectations in the home environment. This way, the parents can emulate the school settings and partner with the schools to contribute more to the PBIS process.

**Schools’ Receptivity to Parental Involvement and Feedback about BIPs**

The parents stated that they were encouraged by the school systems to become involved in PBIS because it helped the school systems achieve their children’s behavioral objectives successfully. The parents also stated that they communicated daily with their children’s teachers by email or handwritten notes and that the schools welcomed their feedback about BIPs and took their concerns seriously. However, the parents also indicated that there were some restrictions to visiting the school and observing their children in their classrooms because of the schools’ privacy and security policies. This issue may restrict the parents from being involved with the school systems, but it can be resolved by parents’ offering authorized volunteering services at the schools, such as being classroom aids or adult supervisors during recess and lunch times (Benson, Karlof,
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& Siperstein, 2008). Parents of children with challenging behavior know their children’s behavior problems well and this makes them an invaluable partner with schools in terms of implementing PBIS. It is important that families be involved with schools regarding every aspect of their children’s education since the children spend most of the time with their parents (Dunlap, Newton, Fox, Benito & Vaughn, 2001; Scott & Cooper, 2013; Yell, Katsiyannis & Losinski, 2015).

There is a push today for school teachers to implement Culturally Responsive Practices (CRP) and as such parental involvement becomes imperative (Bottiani, Larson, Debnam, Bischoff, & Bradshaw, 2018). Gay (2013) defines CRP as “the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them” (p. 49-50). School systems can successfully accomplish CRP if they work more closely with parents getting their perspective and input. Utilizing CRP is a good way to gain understanding of various family cultures enabling a focus on how culture shapes students’ behavior as well as parental involvement. Consideration of students' cultural backgrounds is therefore, essential when planning lessons, preparing interactive learning and providing exercises (Bottiani et al., 2018). In other words, it helps educators teach students with diverse backgrounds effectively. This is particularly essential for students from minority cultural and linguistic groups.

Banks and Obiakor (2015) developed a strategy that combines PBIS and CRP in order to help Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CLD) students by reducing office discipline referrals, decreasing their challenging behaviors, and improving desirable behaviors. As a result, using this strategy showed that CRP enhanced PBIS of CLD
students in schools and classrooms. Thus, it is important to consider students’ cultural backgrounds as a vital factor when implementing PBIS (Banks & Obiakor, 2015). Garbacz et al. (2016), emphasized the use of multidirectional communication mechanisms approaches regarding family engagement. The multidirectional communication mechanisms focus on activities and plans, rather than the problems, taking into account the families’ diverse cultural and linguistic backgrounds. Also, the use of multidirectional communication mechanisms approaches encourages consistency across these two important settings in a child’s life (Garbacz et al., 2016).

Limitations of the Study

As a qualitative research, the lack of generalizability is a limitation of the study. Generalization in a qualitative study is more controversial because it is a deductive action that makes broad conclusions from particular instances. The aim of most qualitative studies is therefore, to provide a rich contextualized understanding of a specific part of human experience through the intensive research on a particular situation (Polit & Beck, 2010). Qualitative researchers are tasked with producing enough data to describe the phenomenon under study. This is usually done with small samples. Another limitation of the study is that it only addressed a specific issues with a specific group. The specific issue is parental involvement in SWPBIS. Including schoolteachers and administrators would help obtain a full perspective of the nature of parental involvement in the implementation of PBIS. Another possible limitation is that the researcher used only the qualitative method, whereas it might have been better if they had used mixed methods to investigate the extent of parental involvement and interest in participating in the PBIS process within the school systems. Future research should consider using
mixed methods and a larger sample size.

**Consideration for Future Research**

**Building Positive Parenting Plans**

Schools need to create and establish strong partnerships with parents and families (Weist, Garbacz, Lane & Kincaid, 2017) in order to implement PBIS more successfully. These partnership will promote knowledge of PBIS for the parents and build confidence between parents and school personnel (Garbacz et al., 2016; Garbacz, Witte & Houck, 2017). Also, it will give the parents more opportunities to be involved with the school systems in implementing PBIS. The present study suggests the need for schools to welcome authorized parental participation and involvement.

One of the most important factors that influence parental involvement in the implementation of PBIS is the parents’ knowledge and understanding of PBIS (Dunlap et al., 2001). This suggests that the need for school to find ways to educate parents about PBIS. These efforts could help to establish sustainable meaningful participation of parents in the PBIS process. Since the parents were motivated to be involved with the school systems in PBIS, it is important that the school systems engage them in the implementation of PBIS in order to achieve the ultimate goals of behavioral and academic success for their children.

**Supporting Families to Establish Consistent Expectations**

For future research, it is highly suggested that researchers conduct studies that focus on the school systems’ support of families and parents in implementing PBIS at home. This will help the schools to share the responsibilities of addressing the children’s challenging behavior with the children’s parents. Another way to support parents and
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families in implementing PBIS at home, is to synchronize the behavioral expectations between the school and home environments for those who need individual support. With additional training on how to support their children’s behavior, parents can implement PBIS in the home environment. When the families need additional support, schools could assign one member from the PBIS team to assist the families with any concerns that might arise, and to work closely in conducting PBIS (Garbacz et al., 2018).

Summary

This study revealed that school systems need to engage parents more in implementing PBIS. Parents are a vital factor to support schools in the implementation of PBIS (Chu, 2015). They are also considered to be a critical component of successful academic achievement and social improvement (Garbacz et al., 2018). Given the results of this study, parental involvement has salient implications, not only for the families of children with challenging behavior, but also for the school systems since the families have a shared responsibility in the implementation of PBIS. Thus, engaging parents can lead to identification and understanding of the children’s needs regarding the implementation of PBIS in the home environment. School systems can identify the needs of children with challenging behaviors by informing and including parents in the whole PBIS process.

The findings of this current research highlight the need for more collaboration between parents and school systems in implementing PBIS. This collaboration empowers the parents and families to be more involved in their children’s BIPs (Minke & Anderson, 2005). The study has implications for parental implementation of PBIS in the home settings for sustainable outcomes. Through this collaboration, schools can promote
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consistency in both the school and home settings by supporting parents to implement in PBIS interventions at home.

The findings of the current study indicated that the parents had limited knowledge and understanding of PBIS concepts due to the lack of training and limited involvement with the school systems. However, the parents wished to be more involved in order to help the school systems conduct effective FBAs and write proper BIPs. More meaningful, purposeful, and carefully planned parental involvement will enhance the quality of outcomes (Närhi, Kiiski, & Savolainen, 2017).
References


PARENTAL EXPERIENCES PARTICIPATING IN PBIS


Cohrs, C. M., Shriver, M. D., Burke, R. V. and Allen, K. D. (2016), Evaluation of increasing antecedent specificity in goal statements on adherence to positive
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PARENT CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY

[Must be written at an appropriate reading/health literacy level]

TITLE:
The Experiences of Parents’ of Children with Challenging Behavior Regarding Their Involvement in The Positive Behavior Intervention and Supports Process in The School System

INVESTIGATOR:
[Siddiq Ahmed, Ph.D candidate, School of education, siddiqahmeds@duq.edu]

ADVISOR:
[Morgan Chitiyo, Professor, school of education, chitiyom@duq.edu or 412.396.4036]

SOURCE OF SUPPORT:
This study is being performed as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Special Education at Duquesne University.

PURPOSE:
In an effort to promote collaboration between parents of children with challenging behaviors and school personnel in the implementation of schoolwide PBIS, this study seeks to explore the experiences of parents of children with challenging behaviors regarding their current involvement and interest in the PBIS process with school systems.

PARTICIPANT PROCEDURES:
To participate in this study, you will be asked to provide your perspectives and opinions regarding your involvement and interests in participating in the PBIS process within your child’s school system. You will not be asked to provide any personal or sensitive information. Participation should take about 45-60 minutes. In order to participate in this research, you should meet the following criteria: (a) be a parent, of a child with challenging behavior, who has had experience collaborating with schools in terms of PBIS for at least two years, (b) willingness to be audio-recorded in the interview, (c) have a child who receives special education services and exhibits challenging behavior at school, (d) the child should have had a behavior intervention plan, (e) the school where your child attends should have been implementing SWPBIS for at least three years, (e) your child should be in grades kindergarten through 8th grade. The interview will be tape recorded.
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RISKS AND BENEFITS:
Your participation will directly and/or indirectly inform service providers and/or educational professionals in relation to your needs, which may result in a better understanding of the implementation of PBIS for students with challenging behaviors. There are minimal risks associated with this participation; your participation in this study does not involve any physical or emotional risk to you beyond that of everyday life. As with all research, there is a chance that confidentiality of the information we collect about you could be breached. However, we will take necessary steps to minimize this risk, as discussed in more detail below in this form.

COMPENSATION:
If you choose to participate in the study, your name will be entered into a contest/drawing where three names will be drawn to win a $50 dollar gift card each.

CONFIDENTIALITY:
Your participation in this study and any personal information that you provide will be kept confidential at all times and to every extent possible. Your child’s name will never appear on any survey or research instruments. All written and electronic forms and study materials will be kept secure. Any study materials with personal identifying information will be maintained for Five years after the completion of the research and then destroyed.

RIGHT TO WITHDRAW:
You are under no obligation to participate in this study. Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may withdraw from this study at any time—you will not be penalized in any way or lose any sort of benefits for deciding to stop participation. This research is being done through Duquesne University. You have the option, should you withdraw your participation from this study, to allow researchers to keep the materials already gathered or discard the materials related to your child.

SUMMARY OF RESULTS:
A summary of the results of this research will be supplied to you, at no cost, upon request.

VOLUNTARY CONSENT:
I have read the above statements and understand what is being requested of me. I also understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw my consent at any time, for any reason. On these terms, I certify that I am willing to participate in this research project.
I understand that should I have any further questions about my participation in this study, I may call [Siddiq Ahmed and Dr. Morgan Chitiyo 412.396. 4036]. Should I have any questions regarding protection of human subject issues, I may contact Dr. David Delmonico, Chair of the Duquesne University Institutional Review Board, at 412.396.1886.

___________________________________ ________________________________________
Participant’s Signature Date

___________________________________ ________________________________________
Researcher’s Signature Date
Good Afternoon,

My name is Siddiq Ahmed and I am a doctorate candidate in the School of Education at Duquesne University. I am conducting a research study that aims to explore the experiences of parents’ of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) process with school systems in this area. I am contacting you because I would like to invite parents of children with challenging behaviors from your school to participate in my study. This research will promote parents’ knowledge about PBIS to enable them to have better capacity to be involved in the school systems and to address the needs of their children. Also, I will investigate the parents’ interest to work cooperatively with school system in the PBIS process.

Your encouragement for eligible parents to participate in this research study is appreciated. If parents decide to participate, they will be asked to be interviewed by the researcher. Participation in this study is confidential. Study information will be kept in a locked filed cabinet in Duquesne University storage, which is in a secure location at Duquesne University. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings; but neither parents’ identities, nor your school or district will be revealed.

In order to participate, I ask that you identify parents that fit these criteria, and provide them with the letter attached to this email. I will be happy to answer any questions you have about this research study or your rights as a research participant. You may contact me via email at siddiqahmeds@duq.edu. Additionally, you may contact Dr. Morgan Chitiyo, my dissertation committee chair if you should have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

This study has been approved by Duquesne University Institutional Review Board. Thank you in advance and I am looking forward to the possibility to working with your school.

With kind regards,
Siddiq Ahmed
Doctorate Candidate in Special Education
Duquesne University
600 Forbes Avenue
Pittsburgh, PA 15282
To Whom It May Concern:

My name is Siddiq Ahmed and I am a doctorate candidate in the School of Education at Duquesne University. I am conducting a research study that aims to explore the experiences of parents’ of children with challenging behavior regarding their involvement in PBIS process with school systems in the Pittsburgh area. I am contacting you because I would like to invite you to be involved in my dissertation research focusing on the experiences of parents of children with challenging behavior in relation to their involvement in the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support process in their child’s school system. This research will promote parents’ knowledge about PBIS to enable them to have better capacity to be involved in the school systems and to address the needs of their children. Also, I will investigate the parents’ interest to work cooperatively with school system in the PBIS process.

If you decide to participate, you will be asked to be interviewed by the researcher. Participation in this study is confidential. Study information will be kept in a locked file cabinet in Duquesne University storage, which is in a secure location at Duquesne University. The results of the study may be published or presented at professional meetings; but neither your identity, nor your school or district will be revealed. Taking part in the study is your decision. You do not have to be in this study if you do not want to. You may also withdraw participation or decide not to answer any question you are not comfortable answering. You will not receive benefits as it relates to your employment for participating in this study, nor are there any consequences for declining participation. This study has been approved by Duquesne University Institutional Review Board.

I will be happy to answer any questions you have about this research study or your rights as a research participant. You may contact me via email at siddiqahmeds@duq.edu. Additionally, you may contact Dr. Morgan Chitiyo, my dissertation committee chair if you should have any questions about your rights as a research participant.

Thank you in advance and I am looking forward to the possibility to working with you.

With kind regards,

Siddiq Ahmed
Doctorate Candidate in Special Education
Duquesne University
600 Forbes Avenue

Pittsburgh, PA 15282
Conversational Interview Protocol

✓ Tell me briefly about yourself, your education, ethnicity, and profession.

✓ Tell me briefly about your child’s challenging behavior and if s/he was diagnosed with developmental disabilities.

What are the lived (perceived) experiences of parents of children with challenging behaviors regarding their involvement in the PBIS process?

The following five subsidiary questions that will be addressed:

Q1: How do parents of children with challenging behaviors involved in the PBIS process describe their lived experience?

In order to answer the first research question, the parents will be asked the following questions:

✓ What do you know about positive behavior intervention and support? And to what extent does the school system where your child attends use this approach?

✓ Tell me, what do you understand about your child’s school regarding the positive behavior intervention and support? Was that explained to you by the school?

✓ When you hear the phrase ‘positive behavior intervention and support’, what comes to mind?

✓ How and where did you learn about positive behavior intervention and support?

✓ What has been your experience with your child’s school’s implementation of positive behavior intervention and support?
Q2: In what ways have parents made meaning out of their experience of participation in the PBIS intervention of their children with challenging behavior at school?

In order to answer the second research question, the parents will be asked the following questions:

✓ Tell me, how have you been involved in the behavior intervention plan for your child?

✓ How have you contributed to the development of your child’s behavior intervention plan?

✓ How have you contributed to the implementation to your child’s behavior intervention plan?

✓ How often do you communicate with schools regarding your child’s behavior?

✓ How do you support the school systems regarding the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support process at home?

✓ How have you been involved in the functional behavior assessment process for your child?

Q3: What do parents consider to have been the risk and protective factors in their experience in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process?

In order to answer the third research question, the parents will be asked the following questions:

✓ What are the risk factors in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process?

✓ What are the protective factors in collaborating with schools on the PBIS process?
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✓ How do the risk and protective factors lead to success in your involvement with school systems?
✓ Do you feel satisfied with the risk and protective factors that your child’s school has utilized? Why or why not?

Q4: How have the parents’ personal characteristics influenced their perceptions of the support they get from school systems in their collaboration on PBIS?
In order to answer the fourth research question, the parents will be asked the following questions:
✓ Tell me, to what extent are you interested in participating in your child’s behavior intervention plan with teachers?
✓ Do you think you should participate more with school systems? And if you believe you should, in what ways would you be interested in participating more?
✓ Do you communicate regularly with school systems in the Positive Behavior Intervention and Support process? How do you communicate?
✓ What challenges do you face when you are participating with teachers in the school?

Q5: How do parents evaluate the support they get from the school system during their involvement?
✓ Have you been invited to school meetings regarding your child’s behaviors intervention plan? What were your roles and responsibilities in the meetings?
✓ Tell me how you evaluate the level of support you have received from school systems to be involved in your child intervention plan?
✓ How open do feel about your voicing a concern about your child’s BIP?
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✔ Do you know who you can contact at the school if you have a concern about your child behavior?

✔ Has the school communicated with you frequently regarding your child’s challenging behaviors?