

THE INFLUENCE OF BEHAVIORAL COUNSELING COMPETENCY AND SCHOOL ADMINISTRATOR SUPPORT ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF STUDENT BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT AMONG TEACHERS: A CASE STUDY OF XIANGXIANG NO.1 MIDDLE SCHOOL IN XIANGXIANG CITY, HUNAN PROVINCE, CHINA

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the influence of behavioral counseling competency and school administrator support on the effectiveness of student behavior management among teachers at Xiangxiang No. 1 Middle School in Hunan Province, China. A quantitative research design was employed with a population of 350 teachers and educational personnel, from which 184 respondents were selected using simple random sampling based on Krejcie and Morgan's sampling table. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale, and the reliability of the instrument was confirmed using Cronbach's alpha. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used for data analysis, while Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was conducted to examine the combined and individual effects of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The findings revealed that all variables were perceived at a high level. Behavioral counseling competency and school administrator support jointly had a significant positive effect on the effectiveness of student behavior management. Relationship-building skills emerged as the strongest predictor of behavioral counseling competency, whereas informational and guidance support was the most influential dimension of school administrator support. The model demonstrated a moderate level of explanatory power in predicting student behavior management effectiveness. In conclusion, both factors play critical roles in enhancing student behavior management effectiveness. Educational institutions should prioritize strengthening teachers' counseling competencies and improving administrative support systems to promote positive student outcomes and foster an effective learning environment.

Keywords: Behavioral Counseling Competency, School Administrator Support, The Effectiveness of Student Behavior Management

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INTRODUCTION

Student behavioral management has become an increasingly critical issue in secondary education, particularly in contexts experiencing rapid socio-cultural, technological, and economic change. The emergence of undesirable student behaviors has been associated with multiple factors, including value conflicts, technological influences, family-related issues, and intensified social competition. In Xiangxiang City, Hunan Province, these challenges have been further exacerbated by increasing exposure to external cultural influences, social media, and changing socio-economic conditions, which have contributed to behavioral problems among adolescents. These issues have become a major concern for schools, families, and society, as they directly affect student development and educational outcomes.

Within this context, schools play a vital role in promoting holistic student development across physical, emotional, intellectual, moral, and social dimensions. Student affairs administration, including counseling and behavioral support services, is essential for fostering ethical values, positive behavior, and social adjustment (Curto, 2014). Effective schools are characterized by strong professional leadership, a supportive learning environment, high expectations, and systematic monitoring of student progress (Sammons et al., 1995), as well as effective discipline systems and instructional supervision (Hanson, 1996). Furthermore, school administrators contribute significantly to educational quality through policy formulation, strategic planning, and the establishment of a quality-oriented organizational culture (Fullan, 2014; Leithwood et al., 2020).

At the teacher level, behavioral counseling competency is a crucial factor in managing student behavior effectively. Teachers who possess strong interpersonal and counseling skills are better able to build relationships, provide emotional support, and guide students toward positive behavioral outcomes. Previous studies have emphasized the importance of continuous professional development in enhancing teachers' competencies and instructional effectiveness (Darling-Hammond, 2017). In addition, non-cognitive skills such as emotional stability, social interaction, and self-confidence are essential for student success and long-term development (Roberts & Martin, 2015), reinforcing the importance of effective behavioral management practices in schools. Research has also shown that students' emotional and social development is influenced by various factors, including physical and psychological activities (Bidzan-Bluma, 2018), which further highlights the need for comprehensive approaches to student development.

In addition to teacher competencies, parental and community involvement has been widely recognized as a key factor in supporting student learning and strengthening school capacity (Epstein, 2001). However, in many local contexts, schools must assume a greater responsibility in addressing behavioral challenges due to limited family support and increasing social pressures. In such situations, school administrator support becomes a critical mechanism for enabling teachers to effectively manage student behavior. Administrative support, including informational guidance, leadership, and resource provision, enhances teachers' performance and contributes to the overall effectiveness of behavior management strategies.

Despite the recognized importance of behavioral counseling competency, school administrator support, and broader educational factors, previous research has often examined these variables in isolation. There remains a lack of integrated analysis that simultaneously considers teacher competencies and organizational support in influencing the effectiveness of student behavior management. This gap is particularly relevant in the context of secondary education in Xiangxiang City, where complex socio-cultural dynamics necessitate coordinated efforts between teachers and school leadership.

Therefore, this study aims to examine the influence of behavioral counseling competency and school administrator support on the effectiveness of student behavior management among teachers at Xiangxiang No. 1 Middle School. Specifically, the study seeks to: (1) investigate

the relationship between behavioral counseling competency and the effectiveness of student behavior management, and (2) examine the relationship between school administrator support and the effectiveness of student behavior management.

LITERATURE REVIEWS

Relationship between Behavioral Counseling Competency and Effectiveness of Student Behavior Management

The relationship between behavioral counseling competency and the effectiveness of student behavior management can be explained through behavioral counseling theory, behavioral analysis theory, and counselor-client relationship theory, all of which emphasize systematic, data-driven, and relationship-based approaches to managing student behavior. Behavioral counseling competency enables teachers to identify, analyze, and address behavioral problems through structured processes, including problem identification, analysis, intervention implementation, and outcome evaluation, thereby enhancing the effectiveness and sustainability of behavior management practices (Kratochwill & Bergan, 1990). In addition, behavioral analysis theory highlights that teachers who possess skills in applying behavior modification techniques, such as reinforcement and conditioning, are better able to promote desirable behaviors and reduce inappropriate behaviors through evidence-based interventions (Skinner, 1953). Furthermore, counselor-client relationship theory emphasizes the importance of positive teacher-student relationships in fostering trust, openness, and willingness to change behavior (Rogers, 1957). When teachers demonstrate high levels of behavioral counseling competency, they are more capable of integrating these theoretical principles into practice, resulting in more effective student behavior management outcomes. Therefore, it can be expected that higher levels of behavioral counseling competency are associated with greater effectiveness in managing student behavior. Accordingly, the following three hypotheses derived for this study:

H1: Behavioral Counseling Competency is positively correlated with the Effectiveness of Student Behavior Management.

Relationship between School Administrator Support and Effectiveness of Student Behavior Management

The relationship between school administrator support and the effectiveness of student behavior management can be explained through supportive leadership theory, school support systems theory, and teacher motivation theory, which collectively highlight the role of organizational support in enhancing teachers' professional performance. Supportive leadership theory suggests that administrators who provide resources, emotional support, problem-solving assistance, and opportunities for professional development enable teachers to perform their roles more effectively and confidently (House, 1971). Similarly, school support systems theory, grounded in general systems theory, emphasizes that effective student behavior management is not solely an individual responsibility but a school-wide process that requires coordinated support structures, such as clear policies, collaborative practices, and data-driven decision-making (Bertalanffy, 1968; Sugai, 2020). In addition, teacher motivation theory explains that administrative support enhances teachers' self-efficacy, motivation, and perceived success, which in turn strengthens their capacity to manage student behavior systematically and persistently (Schunk, 2020). When teachers receive adequate support from school administrators, they are more likely to implement consistent, evidence-based behavior management strategies and maintain high levels of professional commitment. Therefore, school administrator support is expected to positively influence the effectiveness of student behavior management. Accordingly, the following three hypotheses derived for this study:

H2: School Administrator Support is positively correlated with the Effectiveness of Student Behavior Management.

From the literature review, the conceptual framework can be drawn as shown in Figure 1.

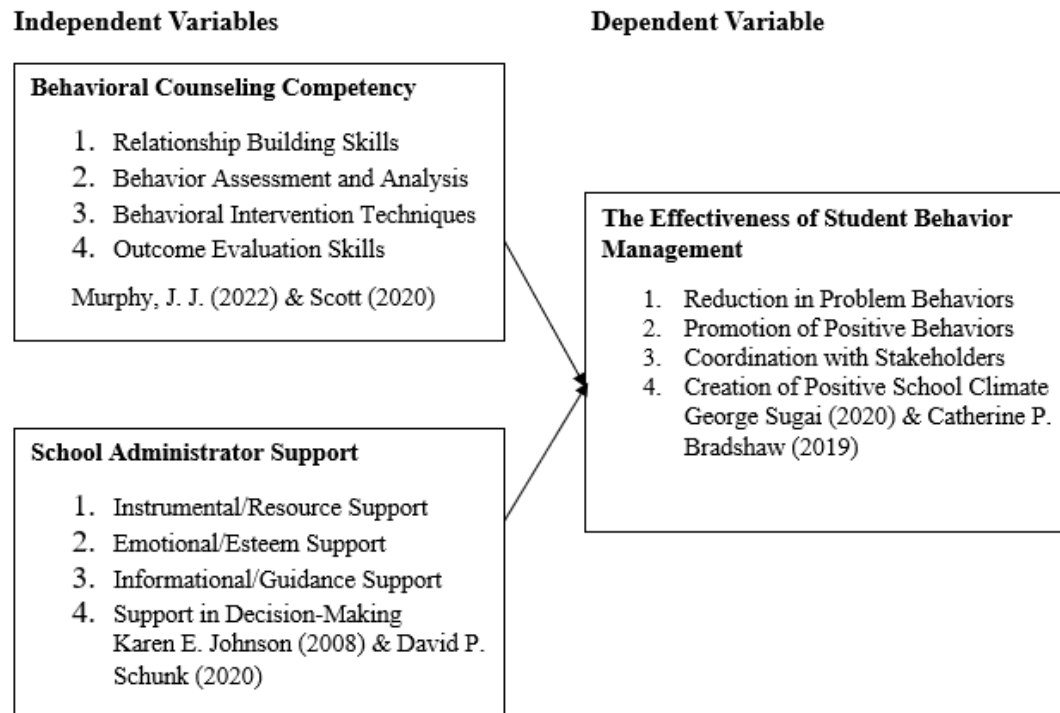


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

In response to examining the effects of behavioral counseling competency and school administrator support on the effectiveness of student behavior management, this study was designed using a quantitative survey research approach. The population consisted of 350 teachers and educational personnel from Xiangxiang No. 1 Middle School in Xiangxiang City, Hunan Province, the People's Republic of China, including classroom teachers, administrators, homeroom teachers, and counseling staff. Based on the sample size determination using Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) formula at a 95% confidence level and a 5% margin of error, a total of 184 respondents were selected. A simple random sampling technique was employed to ensure that the sample adequately represented the population.

The research instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire developed based on a comprehensive review of relevant theories and previous empirical studies. The questionnaire consisted of four sections. The first section collected demographic information, including gender, age, educational level, average monthly income, and work experience. The second to the fourth sections were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 ("strongly disagree") to 5 ("strongly agree") to assess behavioral counseling competency, school administrator support, and the effectiveness of student behavior management. Behavioral counseling competency was measured through four dimensions: relationship-building skills, behavior assessment and analysis, behavioral intervention techniques, and outcome evaluation skills. School administrator support included instrumental/resource support, emotional/esteem support, informational/guidance support, and decision-making support. The effectiveness of student behavior management consisted of reduction of problem behaviors, promotion of positive behaviors, coordination with stakeholders, and the creation of a positive school climate.

Prior to the data collection process, the questionnaire was evaluated for content validity by experts, and its reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha to ensure internal consistency. Data collection was conducted by distributing questionnaires directly to the selected

respondents within the school. All returned questionnaires were checked for completeness and accuracy, and a total of 184 valid responses were used for analysis. Additionally, secondary data from academic publications, previous studies, and related documents were reviewed to support and strengthen the findings.

Regarding data analysis, both descriptive and inferential statistics were employed using statistical software packages. Descriptive statistics, including frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation, were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents and the overall levels of each research variable. For inferential statistics, Multiple Regression Analysis (MRA) was applied as the primary technique to examine the influence of behavioral counseling competency and school administrator support on the effectiveness of student behavior management. This analysis enabled the identification of the predictive power of each independent variable, as well as the proportion of variance explained in the dependent variable (R^2). All statistical analyses were conducted at a significance level of 0.05 to ensure the robustness and reliability of the research findings.

RESEARCH RESULTS

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The majority of respondents were male, totaling 210 individuals (60%), while 140 respondents were female (40.0%). Most respondents were aged between 31-40 years, accounting for 210 individuals (60.0%). In terms of educational attainment, the majority held a master's degree, with 232 respondents (66.3%). Regarding average monthly income, 180 respondents (51.4%) earned between 3,001 and 4,000 yuan. Additionally, most respondents had 1-5 years of work experience, totaling 195 individuals (55.7%). Overall, respondents expressed a high level of agreement toward the studied variables. Among them, Behavioral Counseling Competency recorded the highest mean score ($\bar{X} = 3.88$, $SD = 0.19$), followed by the Effectiveness of Student Behavior Management ($\bar{X} = 3.86$, $SD = 0.18$), while School Administrator Support had the lowest mean score ($\bar{X} = 3.85$, $SD = 0.19$).

Results of Hypothesis Testing 1

Table 1 Results of the Regression Analysis of Behavioral Counseling Competency and School Administrator Support on the Effectiveness of Student Behavior Management

Factors	b	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	1.730	.212		8.146***	.000		
- Relationship Building Skills	.125	.024	.257	5.126***	.000	.875	1.142
- Behavior Assessment and Analysis	.087	.024	.180	3.606***	.000	.887	1.128
- Behavioral Intervention Techniques	.077	.024	.153	3.136**	.002	.920	1.086
- Outcome Evaluation Skills	.046	.024	.092	1.916	.056	.951	1.051
- Instrumental/Resource Support	.040	.026	.074	1.531	.127	.936	1.068
- Emotional/Esteem Support	.054	.024	.110	2.221*	.027	.904	1.107
- Informational/ Guidance Support	.071	.026	.135	2.705**	.007	.877	1.140
- Support in Decision-Making	.049	.026	.092	1.906	.057	.945	1.058

$R = .499$, $R^2 = .249$, $\text{Adj. } R^2 = .232$, $\text{SEE}_{\text{EST}} = .161$, $F = 14.148$, $\text{Sig.} = .000^{***}$

*** Statistically significant at the .001 level

** Statistically significant at the .01 level

* Statistically significant at the .05 level

From the table 1, it was found that behavioral counseling competency and school administrator support jointly have a statistically significant positive effect on the effectiveness of student behavior management. The overall regression model was statistically significant ($F = 14.148$, $p < .001$), with a moderate correlation coefficient ($R = .499$). The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = .249$) indicates that approximately 24.9% of the variance in the effectiveness of student behavior management can be explained by the combined independent variables, with an adjusted R^2 of .232.

Among the predictors, relationship-building skills had the strongest positive influence ($\beta = .257$, $p < .001$), followed by behavior assessment and analysis ($\beta = .180$, $p < .001$), behavioral intervention techniques ($\beta = .153$, $p < .01$), and informational/guidance support ($\beta = .135$, $p < .01$), all of which were statistically significant. In addition, emotional/esteem support also showed a statistically significant positive effect ($\beta = .110$, $p < .05$). However, outcome evaluation skills ($\beta = .092$, $p = .056$), instrumental/resource support ($\beta = .074$, $p = .127$), and support in decision-making ($\beta = .092$, $p = .057$) were not statistically significant at the .05 level. Furthermore, the tolerance values ranged from .875 to .951, and the variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranged from 1.051 to 1.142, indicating no multicollinearity issues among the independent variables. This confirms that the regression model is appropriate, stable, and reliable for explaining the effectiveness of student behavior management.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The findings of this study provide robust empirical evidence that behavioral counseling competency and school administrator support jointly and significantly influence the effectiveness of student behavior management. By integrating both factors within a unified analytical model, the study extends prior research by demonstrating that individual teacher competencies and organizational support mechanisms function in a complementary manner to enhance behavioral outcomes in educational settings.

In terms of behavioral counseling competency, all dimensions were found to have a positive and statistically significant effect, with relationship-building skills emerging as the strongest predictor. This finding highlights the fundamental role of teacher-student relationships in promoting positive behavior and reducing disciplinary problems. It is consistent with prior research indicating that supportive and responsive teacher-student interactions foster behavioral engagement and classroom stability (Pianta et al., 2012; Hamre & Pianta, 2006). In addition, competencies in behavior assessment, intervention techniques, and outcome evaluation contribute to systematic and evidence-based practices, aligning with established frameworks of effective classroom management and school-wide behavioral interventions (Sugai & Horner, 2002; Lane et al., 2007). These results suggest that behavioral counseling competency encompasses both interpersonal and professional dimensions that are essential for effective behavior management.

Regarding school administrator support, the findings reveal a significant positive effect on the effectiveness of student behavior management, with informational and guidance support identified as the most influential dimension. This indicates that clear communication, professional direction, and instructional leadership are critical in enabling teachers to implement effective behavior management strategies. The result is consistent with Hallinger (2011), who emphasized the importance of instructional leadership in improving school performance. Furthermore, emotional support, decision-making support, and resource support

were also found to be significant, supporting the argument of Leithwood et al. (2004) that leadership practices fostering supportive organizational environments enhance teacher motivation, commitment, and effectiveness in managing classrooms.

Importantly, the combined effects observed in this study indicate that neither behavioral counseling competency nor school administrator support alone is sufficient to maximize effectiveness. Instead, their interaction creates a synergistic effect, whereby strong teacher competencies are more effectively translated into practice when supported by appropriate leadership, guidance, and organizational resources. This finding addresses a gap in previous research that has often examined these variables independently.

In conclusion, this study confirms that both behavioral counseling competency and school administrator support are essential determinants of successful student behavior management. Behavioral counseling competency reflects the internal capabilities of teachers, while school administrator support represents the external enabling conditions within the school environment. Therefore, educational institutions should prioritize continuous professional development programs that enhance teachers' counseling competencies, particularly in relationship-building, behavioral assessment, and intervention strategies. Simultaneously, school administrators should strengthen instructional leadership by providing clear guidance, structured communication, and adequate resources. Integrating these elements will improve behavior management outcomes, foster a positive school climate, and enhance overall educational effectiveness.

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