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Trauma-Informed Practices and Their Positive Effects

Trauma-Informed Practices and Their Effects on Student Behaviors

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Abstract

There is a growing number of educators, schools, and parents that are looking to trauma-informed practices as beneficial to educating the whole child. This literature review aimed to explore if whether implementing these practices is worth the time and money needed to achieve the full benefits of these programs. Database websites were used to gather peer reviewed journal articles for the researched information in this literature review. When creating trauma-informed schools there are significant challenges that come into play such as the cost of implementation and taking away instructional time to implement said practices. However, the current findings of this literature review found that the benefits of these practices do out-weigh the drawbacks such as lower absenteeism, high academic achievement, and more engaged students.

Keywords: trauma-informed care, social emotional learning, restorative practices, and adverse childhood experiences.

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Introduction

Creating trauma-informed schools has gained vast amounts of exposure in the past years as an attempt to reduce the achievement gap and address the school to prison pipeline. The school to prison pipeline is defined as when exclusionary disciplinary measures in schools have resulted in students at-risk being placed into juvenile detention and prison systems (Dorado et al, 2016 and Hulvershorn & Mulholland, 2018). “Chronic stress and trauma combined with the effects of implicit and explicit bias contribute to inequity and disproportionality in suspensions, expulsions, and drop-out, and can be particularly toxic” (Dorado, et al., 2016, p. 165). Students who have been impacted with trauma are more likely to have adverse childhood experiences and the likelihood of negative outcomes such as mental health challenges, lower cognitive abilities, and a lack of academic achievement or difficulties in school (Chafouleas, et al., 2019). Previous research has shown that trauma-informed practices do contribute to lower suspension rates and a decreased amount of behavior referrals at school. However, research is slim on the positive effects of trauma-informed strategies and restorative practices as it translates to academics in the classroom.

Traditional approaches, such as suspensions and expulsions, do not have long-term results but are rather short-term solutions that do not get to the heart of the problem. Rather than addressing behavioral issues with a punitive and traditional consequences-based approach, trauma-informed practices look at utilizing restorative practices, creating safe and nurturing environments, and reducing retraumatizing students. This literature review is looking at whether taking the time to implement trauma-informed practices translates to higher academic achievement for students at-risk.

Research for this paper took place on three different database websites, which were ERIC (Education Resources Information Center), DeWitt Library with Northwestern College, and through Google Scholar. Peer reviewed journal articles dating between 2011 – 2021 were collected. Keywords searched included: trauma-informed care, effects of trauma-informed care, trauma-informed practices, social emotional learning, restorative practices, restorative approaches, restorative justice, school climate, school culture, and adverse childhood experiences.

One common pushback to implementing trauma-informed care and restorative practices is that implementation and sustainability takes time away from academics, which is seen as a radical approach to improve student successes in the classroom. However, this time needed to provide professional development for all school personnel as well as through coaching for the practices to be refined and sustainable is exactly what districts need to do to take the steps towards increasing academic achievement. Initial findings during research shows that replacing a small portion of academic time to incorporate trauma-informed care does pay off because the school and teachers are taking time for students to feel safe and cared for. In fact, research shows that students will be more academically successful after the implementation of trauma-informed practices than before.

This literature review will be structured into five main sections starting with background in trauma-informed practices, what they are, and how they differ from traditional practices. Next, there is a methodology section on the variety of interventions used within the studies researched. Results of the studies researched are next and how they affected academic achievement while using trauma-informed practices and recommendations for future research from the articles.

Recommendations from the articles and their researchers for future research is laid out prior to the last section. Lastly, the literature review will end with the conclusion from the articles.

Background of Trauma

Year after year, more students that come into school buildings are not only holding onto their backpacks, but they are also holding onto years of traumatic experiences. Chafouleas and her researchers (2019) found that childhood trauma is becoming recognized as an epidemic more and more each year. This is due to the adverse childhood experiences (ACE's) that our students are facing in their early childhood lives. Furthermore, research shows that students with higher ACE's have more negative outcomes in their adult lives (Herrenkohl, Hong, & Verbrugge, 2019 and Rishel, et al., 2019). When an adult has multiple ACE's, they suffer from toxic stress, higher rates of community violence, and economic hardship in their adult lives (Báez et al, 2019). Elementary school is a critical time for the development of students' academic, social, and behavior skills and some students start school without having the foundational skills necessary to succeed socially and emotionally (Nemer, et al., 2019). This literature review will answer the question of how schools can incorporate interventions and practices to mitigate the effects of ACE's.

When addressing challenging behaviors, traditional solutions only take care of the problem in the immediate future. This is because suspensions and detentions can be done immediately, which shows others that something was concretely done about a situation. These traditional approaches do not embody meaningful change for any stakeholder (Dorado, et al., 2016) additionally, there has been no reflection or repairing practices for the parties of the conflict. On the other hand, trauma-informed practices are longer-term solutions that take time and have research-based evidence to show the benefits. Assigning a suspension as a solution to a

problem behavior is a mere band-aid. Additionally, the suspended student is now out of the classroom and missing out on valuable learning and relationship building with their peers and teachers thus furthering the academic achievement gap. Day and their colleagues (2017) identified that individuals who have traumatic histories experience academic, behavioral, and emotional problems, which limit opportunities for a healthy, successful future. Furthermore, there is lower academic performance, lower graduation rates, and higher absenteeism tied to traumatic backgrounds (Hoover, et al., 2018). These conventional discipline practices are only creating larger gaps, not only while the student is in school but for long-term success in life.

Students are experiencing childhood traumas in many ways. For instance, when a child's parent experiences addiction, they too are more likely to suffer from addiction and other negative habits as an adult (Rishel, et al., 2019). Future generations are receiving a disservice by not providing trauma-informed care now. Another life-long side effect from being exposed to trauma in adolescent years is that they will have diminished educational employment opportunities (Larson et al., 2017). Furthermore, lower academic achievement, negative social outcomes, behavioral issues, and mental and medical health issues have been linked to students with ACE's (Báez, 2019 and Anderson, Blitz, & Saastamoinen, 2015). One of our best preventative strategies to traumatic experiences is by providing early intervention (Rishel, et al., 2019).

Researcher Azeem and her colleagues (2011) implemented six core strategies into all staff trainings at a facility over the course of two years and nine months, which served 458 children (276 female and 182 male) to help minimize the use of seclusion and restraints amongst hospitalized youth. These six core strategies include leadership towards organizational change, use of data to inform practice, workforce development, use of restraint and seclusion reduction tools, improve consumer's role in inpatient settings, and vigorous debriefing techniques. The

reason for this action research was due to not only the use of seclusion and restraints rising but these practices resulted in retraumatizing the youth (Azeem, et al., 2011). After this team implemented the six strategies on trauma informed care, there was a downward trend in seclusions and restraints. Furthermore, it was noted by the participants that the amount of re-traumatization also decreased due to the six core strategies being taught.

Rishel and her research team (2019) had similar results in their action research study of eleven elementary schools totaling fifty-one classrooms where they implemented the Trauma-Informed Elementary Schools (TIES) protocol over two school years. The TIES program is an early intervention for students who show signs of chronic stress or trauma where the teachers are trained, consultants of the program assist, and there are therapeutic interventions with both students and families (Rishel, et al. 2019). The justification for this study was due to other research stating that individuals who have multiple ACE's are more likely to have an opioid addiction or substance abuse as an adult. This study found that the TIES early intervention program helped decrease the use of drugs later in life as a coping mechanism to the trauma endured as a child. Additionally, classrooms that implemented the TIES interventions demonstrated significant improvement in the areas of emotional support, classroom organization, and instructional support whereas the control classroom saw a decline in these areas.

One key element from the Dorado research team is that they highlight creating healthy and safe school environments and responses to trauma in schools (Dorado, et al., 2016). The research team feels that by training all stakeholders in the school district will create a positive climate and culture and thus that safe school environment. All stakeholders include the lunchroom workers, bus drivers, and support staff as well as educators and administrators during the HEARTS implementation process (Dorado, et al., 2016). Simonsen and his research team

(2015) discovered that it is beneficial when educators use the same verbiage and responses when working with students with behavior problems. This allows for all teachers to have the same set of expectations and language to talk to students whereas before, if a student had seven classes, they would have to learn seven different types of teacher language, which can be confusing for neurotypical and neurodivergent individuals. Nemer and her research team (2019) found that by providing all adults with appropriate trauma-informed training and coaching, student teacher relationships increased as well as positive student outcomes.

Appropriate professional development for all staff members, from educators to paraprofessionals and to the cafeteria workers, is vital to the effective implementation of trauma-informed care and restorative practices. Training teachers will have a positive impact on students because they will be armed to meet the needs of the students (Baum, et al., 2013). Additionally, the research from Kendziora and Yoder (2016) discovered that there is a higher rate of teacher implementation when the professional development is high quality and when educators have the support of their administrator and district. In the qualitative research conducted by González (2015) over the span of six years in Denver Public Schools, he identified that investing in a continuous system of growth and professional development for all members of the school community is important for the success of restorative justice. As stated above, these practices are not quick fixes but rather they are long-term solutions. These long-term solutions take time to adequately implement.

An action research study completed by Blitz and her research team (2016) discovered the positive benefits of appropriate professional development that included teacher and classroom aides. The main goal of this training was for the participants to gain an understanding of trauma and toxic stress (TTS) and race, culturally responsive pedagogy, as well as self-reported stress

levels and teaching efficacy. This study used a mixed methods research study over the course of one school year in a school of 425 students in pre-kindergarten through 5th grade where over 90% of students were eligible for free and reduced lunch and over 50% of the students were of color. Blitz and her research team (2016) conducted this research because the demographics and socioeconomic status of the school was rapidly changing, however, the teaching practices were not adapting to the changes of the community they served. Due to the quality professional development, the results of the study showed that teachers and teachers' aides reported greater success in helping sad or withdrawn students reengage in learning (Blitz, et al., 2016). Another positive result was fewer students leaving the classroom due to behaviors and there was more follow through with teacher recommendations with parents, meaning a higher teacher efficacy in their teaching practices. Understanding of TTS went up for all individuals receiving the trainings as well as their efficacy around responding and mediating student disruptions and behaviors (Blitz, et al., 2016).

Relationship building is one of the key components to trauma-informed care and restorative practices. Morning meetings and restorative circles are two highly effective ways in which relationships can be fostered within the classroom as well as in a school-wide setting. Focusing on restorative practices through building relationships and community within the school and classroom will assist at negating the effects of childhood trauma and ACE's (Kayeney & Drewery, 2011 and Beehler, Birman, & Campbell, 2011). One of the core guiding principles for creating trauma-informed schools from the Dorado research team (2016) in the HEARTS program is to foster compassionate and dependable relationships. The Dorado research team (2016) found that by fostering relationships that are compassionate and attuned, as well as

dependable and trustworthy, educators can reestablish trusting connections with others that foster healing and wellbeing.

Implementing trauma-informed methods into all aspects of the school is how educators can prevent re-traumatization of students and provide the vision to a safer and better positive school climate. Minimizing ongoing exposure while increasing student self-regulation strategies is one of the goals of implementing a school-based trauma-informed program (Herrenkohl, Hong, & Verbrugge, 2019). Archibold (2014) found in his research that educators should seek to invest less of their effort in reacting to discipline or behavior problems of students at school, and more of their time creating the conditions for a positive and motivating learning experiences for students. This is significant due to the fact that educators want all students to have academic successes and growth. When educators start focusing their energies on creating safe environments and ways to motivate their students they are also constructing a safe space conducive to learning.

Re-traumatization in students is unfortunately rampant in today's schools due to the practices they employ such as punishment and exclusion. Blitz and her colleagues (2016) identified that a trauma informed school realizes the prevalence of trauma and children and recognizes the physiological and relational impact of trauma and students in school personnel. The researchers go on to state that a trauma-informed schools' response is through translating this knowledge into practice as part schoolwide support and reducing re-traumatization by adopting practices that promote healing and growth rather than punishment and exclusion (Blitz, Anderson, Saastamoinen, 2016).

This research shows that there have not been negative outcomes to implementing trauma-informed strategies or restorative practices. There is a nationwide movement in creating and

implementing affective trauma-informed practices and systems wide changes to better meet the needs of our students (Overstreet & Chafouleas, 2016). Educators now know that in education providing trauma-informed practices in the classroom are beneficial for all students (Von Dohlen, et al., 2019). Creating trauma-informed teachers improves student outcomes for students demonstrating behaviors and social emotional stresses (Chafouleas, et al., 2019).

Interventions

Interventions across twenty-four articles in this literature review can be sorted into four main categories as to how they were implemented. Six of the articles researched were literature views or meta-analysis on trauma-informed care. Fifteen of the articles researched contained professional development and trainings geared towards teachers. In regards to the type of professional development provided, seven of the studies utilized restorative practices training for their staff members. Seven of the articles researched indicated student interventions as the main intervention for the study. There was a component of training the educators on these interventions but the data they were seeking resulted in the outcomes of the students' responses to the newly learned content. Out of all the articles, two focused equally on training educators and the outcomes from student interventions. Focusing on creating and structuring a multi-tiered system of supports was implemented by two of the research teams.

Dorado and his research team (2016) focused on creating a quality multi-tiered system of supports (MTSS) in place at the schools where they implemented their Healthy Environments and Response to Trauma in Schools (HEARTS) program. The HEARTS program was implemented into three elementary schools and one kindergarten through eighth grade building varying from two years of implementation up to five years of implementation. Through the HEARTS program, they tested the three-tiered approach by implementing trauma-informed

practices at the universal level (tier 1 or school-wide), selected supports (tier 2 or small group format), and targeted/intensive supports (tier 3). Before the MTSS system could be in place, they provided professional development for all stakeholders within the school system. This research team was seeking to answer if there is a correlation between having an increase in knowledge of how to address trauma in schools and their use of these practices. Secondly, they are wanting to know if student engagement increased and if behavioral problems decreased. Lastly, the Dorado research team (2016) wanted to discover if there was a decrease in trauma-related symptoms in students who received the HEARTS intervention.

While utilizing the HEARTS intervention, the Dorado research team (2016) was able to find preliminary results for all research questions. Pre and post survey results found that there was a 57% increase in the knowledge of trauma by adults, a 61% increase in the understanding of how to assist students who are showing signs of trauma, a 68% increase in the knowledge of trauma-sensitive practices, and a 49% increase in implementing trauma-sensitive practices. There was an increase of 28% in student engagement, student body attendance went up 34%, and in their time on task while learning in the classroom went up 27% (Dorado, et al., 2016). Overall, students were in their classrooms 36% more due to less behavioral disruptions. Additionally, there was a decrease of 87% of overall behavior incidents, an 86% decrease in behaviors that were categorized as physical aggression, and a decrease in out of school suspensions by 95% (Dorado, et al., 2016). According to the CANS (Child and Adolescent Needs and Strengths) tool, there was an improvement in all five areas in these students: life functioning, behavioral/emotional, risk behaviors, caregiver resources and needs, and diagnosis and prognosis. The Dorado research team (2016) recommends that they attempt to replicate this data in different and broader settings.

Kaveney and Drewery (2011) implemented professional development on restorative practices and added morning meetings for all classrooms in their research. This research was completed over the course of three years at an urban high school in New Zealand with approximately 970 students where 40% were European, 27% Pasifika, 26% Maori, and 7% Asian or other. Out of seventy teachers receiving the professional development, sixty-six showed successes such as improved relationships, classroom management became easier, and the overall atmosphere in their classrooms were calmer (Kaveney & Drewery, 2011). At the end of the research, it was noted that student's showed academic achievement, which was contributed to these restorative practices and implementing the morning meeting (Kaneney & Drewer, 2011).

Similar to the Kaveney and Drewery (2011) study, Cumings Mansfield and her research team (2018) implemented restorative practices through professional development using the SaferSanerSchools Model. The SaferSanerSchools Model includes preventative elements into the trainings such as affective statements, fair process, restorative staff community, and proactive circles while the responsive elements include restorative questions, responsive circles, and reintegrative management of shame (Cumings Mansfield, Fowler & Rainbolt, 2018). Their study was over the course of five years at a large high school in central Virginia with approximately 1400 students in grades 9-12. The reason for implementing restorative practices into teacher trainings was due to the growing disproportionate rates of discipline referrals for race/ethnicity, gender, and special education students. Through the course of five years, they found that through their restorative practices trainings, in school suspension (ISS) dropped by 68% and out of school suspension (OSS) rates were reduced by 48% over the course of five years (Cumings Mansfield, Fowler & Rainbolt, 2018). The same OSS gaps continued by gender but overall, they decreased by over 50% whereas the gaps did begin to close in regards to the disproportionality

gaps in OSS by race (Cumings Mansfield, Fowler & Rainbolt, 2018). Lastly, there was a decrease in special education students who received OSS compared to their peers.

Hulvershorn and Mulholland's (2018) research sought to find connections between restorative practices and social emotional learning while creating a positive school climate through providing appropriate professional development to teachers and staff. Through their study, they focused on three main areas: 1. Building relationships, through morning meetings and other restorative practices, 2. SEL approaches in the classroom through increasing capacity in emotional regulation and understanding social interactions, and 3. Through structural interventions such as through Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) (Hulvershorn & Mulholland, 2018). This study found that when restorative practices were implemented alongside SEL, the restorative practices were what helped students grasp onto the SEL skills such as communication skills, kindness, empathy, and caring (Hulvershorn & Mulholland, 2018). PBIS played a role to the success of SEL and restorative practices due to its clear expectations being explicitly taught, students being consistently recognized for appropriate behaviors, and that all areas are highly predictable (Hulvershorn & Mulholland, 2018).

This We Believe is a trauma-informed program that was implemented at a low performing middle school with fifty-six students, twenty-two female and thirty-four male, in a rural median household income community by the Von Dohlen research team (2019). The goal of this research team was an attempt to turn around a low performing school both academically and social emotionally and turn it into a trauma-responsive school. Two of the characteristics of *This We Believe* are that teachers should value the students that they teach and be prepared to teach them and that the school environment should be welcoming and feel safe for all individuals to

enter (Von Dohlen, et al., 2019). The preliminary results of this research showed that the implemented practices are being discovered as beneficial for all students.

Unlike some of the previous professional development research teams, Anderson and her colleagues (2015) created trainings based off one school's needs after conducting a needs assessment. This school was in the Northeastern United States serving 425 pre-kindergarten through 5th grade students where over 90% of the student population qualified for free or reduced lunch (Anderson, Blitz, & Saastamoinen, 2015). These researchers found that classroom teachers and their practices have a direct link to the academic and social emotional success of the students they are serving in their classrooms (Anderson, Blitz, & Saastamoinen, 2015).

The Bounce Back trauma intervention was implemented by Santiago and her research team (2018), which consisted of ten sessions of content delivered by school mental health professionals. Over the course of three years and within eight schools in one urban Illinois school district, the research team found that the intervention was effective at reducing PTSD symptoms through the teaching of coping skills to the first through fourth graders (Santiago, et al., 2018). It was discovered that the Bounce Back intervention reduced depression and anxiety symptoms after the ten sessions of treatment (Santiago, et al., 2018). One interesting piece of information from this research was no change in classroom behavior for the students during or after treatment (Santiago, et al., 2018).

Like the Bounce Back trauma intervention, CATS (Cultural Adjustment and Trauma Services) has the goal of reducing PTSD and improving mental health. The objective of the CATS study, conducted by researchers Beehler, Birman, and Campbell (2011), was to reduce the symptoms of PTSD and improve mental health of immigrants and refugees. The research was conducted across two districts in New Jersey totaling 149 high school students, ninety-four

female, and fifty-five male, where the students were from twenty-nine different countries (Beehler, Birman, & Campbell, 2011). The three service components of CATS are relationship building, outreach services, and comprehensive clinical and case management services (Beehler, Birman, & Campbell, 2011). The researchers found that implementing CATS was effective at reducing PTSD and improving mental health of the students. However, it is important to note that the individuals who implemented the study feared that not all students were forthcoming with their traumatic experience (Beehler, Birman, & Campbell, 2011).

Similar to the CATS and the Bounce Back trauma intervention, Hoover and her research team (2018) had the goal to reduce the signs of PTSD and behavior problems. The intervention implemented was Cognitive Behavioral Intervention for Trauma in Schools (CBITS) where they trained staff members in Connecticut schools. A total of 316 students were impacted due to the trainings that took place of two years. Results of this study found that CBITS did improve symptoms of PTSD, reduced behavior problems, and showed an improvement of functioning in the students who received this intervention (Hoover, et al., 2018).

The social skills improvement system with SEL combined with CASEL (Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning) competencies study was conducted by Panayioutou and her researchers (2019). The researchers studied the relationship between social-emotional competence, school connectedness, mental health difficulties, and academic attainment (Panayoitou, Humphrey, & Wigelsworth, 2019). Forty-five elementary schools in England with 1626 students, 51% boys and 49% females, were in this study. For this study, the researchers implemented the PATHS curriculum, which focuses on SEL instruction through teaching “self-control, emotional understanding, positive self-esteem, relationships, and interpersonal problem-solving skills (Panayoitou, Humphrey, & Wigelsworth, 2019, p. 198).”

Panayoitou and her researchers (2019) found significant improvements in all areas using the PATHS SEL curriculum.

Results

The results from this literature review can be categorized into seven categories with the largest number of articles stating that they decreased negative behaviors and increased positive behaviors with ten articles mentioning these results. There were eight articles that mentioned improved academic achievement as a result of implementing their interventions. Four articles mentioned that trauma-informed care and restorative practices were good for all students as well as four articles stated that relationships made the impact in their research. Practice-based evidence was a result of two articles, it is noted that both articles also stated that future research should be done creating a broader and more generalized case study. The two areas that were mentioned by one article's research team each are that achievement gaps were narrowed and teacher efficacy around trauma-informed care increased.

It is no surprise that ten articles focused on the positive results of their studies. Brunzell and his team (2016) implemented the trauma-informed positive education (TIPE) intervention through professional development to increase regulatory abilities. Their research showed an increase in regulatory abilities in both students and for teachers. Nine teachers were in this study and they noted that they were better equipped to de-escalate behavior situations in their own classrooms (Brunzell, Stokes, & Waters, 2016). The Acosta research team (2016) also noted an increase in social skills amongst the youth in their research as well as positive outcomes in regards to problem behaviors. Restorative practices interventions were carried out over the course of two years in fourteen middle schools in Maine. At the conclusion of this study, they

found that there were positive developmental outcomes in the middle school students (Acosta, et al., 2016).

The Baum research (2013) team saw a decrease in PTSD and anxiety symptoms amongst students and teachers who participated in their building resilience intervention. Another study that reduced the number of behaviors was the Gregory and Fergus (2017) study on implementing SEL through an equitable lens. Not only were disciplinary numbers reduced, they also saw a decrease in discipline disparities amongst the student population. Both studies saw an increase in the teacher's capacity in regards to social emotional learning and how they approach their students through that lens.

One of the results of the Chafouleas research team (2019) showed that one way to improve student outcomes for appropriate behaviors was to create trauma-informed teachers. Additionally, this meta-analysis on researching prevention and trauma-informed interventions proved that trauma-specific interventions are beneficial when implemented to the appropriate individuals who have experienced trauma (Chafouleas, et al., 2019). The Thomas research (2019) team conducted a literature review and discovered similar results. School-based interventions showed success when there was an identification process in place. Furthermore, enrolling the students in services and providing those services to the identified individuals showed promise in the efficacy of school-based trauma-informed programs (Thomas, Crosby, & Vanderhaar, 2019).

Academic achievement and successes were attributed to the SEL instruction in the study conducted by Kendziora and Yoder (2016). This research took place over 213 schools in urban, suburban, and rural areas over the course of five years. Not only was academic achievement present during this time but they also saw short and long-term benefits in student outcomes from

kindergarten through high school students. The reason for this study was to show that students in the 21st century needed more than just academic knowledge (Kendziora & Yoder, 2016). Not only did they show that SEL instruction and practices are important, they also were able to show that by taking the time to do the SEL instruction they were also increasing academic achievement across the board.

Improving academic and social emotional outcomes is also evident in the work of Howard (2019). Researcher Howard's (2019) study took place through incorporating workforce training with 182 school leaders and 169 teachers on educating them about trauma-informed practices. The main part of this research was to create a state-wide approach to teaching SEL but through this research it has been shown that increasing academic achievement is a positive side effect to SEL instruction (Howard, 2019). Rishel and her research team (2019) found similar results in their study on creating trauma-informed elementary schools (TIES) in that they discovered significant improvements in self-regulation, academic engagement, reduced behaviors for the TIES classrooms verses the control classrooms.

Larson and her research team (2017) came to the result that poor academic achievement and mental health disorders were linked to experiencing and being exposed to trauma as a child. This article has confirmed that many of the mental health situations today stem from childhood and adolescent trauma. (Larson, et al., 2017) This team was attempting to discover ways to prevent said trauma through implementing school-based mental health services. Through this literature review, the team did find that by implementing these mental health services in schools would reduce the amount of mental health disorders and increase academic achievement but it would not eliminate all aspects of the prior trauma (Larson, et al., 2017).

Nemer and her research team (2019) discovered that teacher attributions and how they respond to challenging behaviors can have an impact on not only student to teacher relationships and the student's emotional wellbeing but also student outcomes. When teachers understand their attributions in the classroom play a large role in the long-term success of students, particularly those with emotional behavior disorders, they are more likely to improve their practices (Nemer, et al., 2019). Like Nemer's and her colleagues (2019) research, Day and her colleagues (2017) studied that the actions of adults at school do have a direct correlation to student outcomes. Furthermore, school personnel's responses have the ability to promote or hinder student academic achievement (Day, et al., 2017). For this study in a large midwestern city of forty-five female students, a Monarch Room was created as an alternative detention and suspension practices. The results are promising that both research studies demonstrate that teachers' actions and responses are tied to the student's academic performance. It is interesting to note that Panayiotou and her research team (2019) found that academic performance was indeed increased after implementing the PATHS SEL curriculum. However, no matter the quantity and exposure of intervention provided, the current state of the student's mental health was the only factor that contributed to increased academics scores (Panayoitou, Humphrey, & Wigelsworth (2019).

Four of the articles in this literature review state that trauma-informed care is good for all students. Herrenkohl and his colleagues (2019) conducted research on individual and small group interventions, whole group interventions, and school-wide systems. This study discovered that individual and group-based approaches are shown to be more favorable than classroom-based and school-wide programs, even though all three approaches demonstrated to be beneficial to students (Herrenkohl, Hong, & Verbrugge, 2019). However, the research team notes that the ladder is better positioned for integration, access to services, and sustainability. Blitz and her

research team (2016) had similar results in that their implementation of culturally responsive trauma-informed schools was shown to show achievement in all students.

One compelling piece of evidence from the Cumings Mansfield research team (2018) is that they saw a reduction in referrals to special education and closed discipline referral gaps for race/ethnicity and gender upon implementing restorative practices. This evidence came from a five-year long research study in a large district in Virginia and their results showed a decline in suspensions and discipline referrals. The Von Dohlen research team (2019) note that teachers must continue to work on embracing practices through a trauma-informed lens.

Building and sustaining relationships is a key component of SEL interventions and peer socialization. DeLay and her research team's (2016) findings show that relationship building interventions do have a positive influence in the classroom through improved writing and math performance. Their initial research questions were to determine the benefits of SEL and how it pertains to academic achievement. Through their research, they were able to determine that improved peer relationships and student relationships with more diverse groups did indeed raise academic achievement in the students receiving SEL.

Unlike the DeLay research team (2016), which focused on relationships in regard to students, Kaverney and Drewery (2011) focused on improving teacher relationships with their students. Through their research over the course of three years at a high school in New Zealand, they administered professional development, which showed success in sixty-six out of seventy educators. Upon receiving the professional development, educators implemented morning meetings for relationship building, they found that classroom management was easier, and overall, the classroom environments felt more positive and calmer.

Recommendations and Implications for Future Research

Recommendations and implications for future research are broad when looking at all thirty research articles. The most common theme amongst nine articles is to conduct more research from a systems-wide approach and to create a framework for trauma-informed care. Looking at a broader sample pool of participants is recommended by eight research teams as their sample sizes were smaller or pinpointed to a region and/or demographic. Five of the articles mentioned creating more equitable practices whereas five studies recommended looking at teachers and how their practices and philosophies directly impact their students. The need to look at classroom-based interventions and practices was discussed by two articles as was the sustainability of trauma-informed care. Lastly, there were four topics where one research team each recommended further research: creating in-depth research on the neuroscience behind trauma, creating an advocacy group to determine the effects on implementing trauma-informed care, continue looking into the improved academics as a positive outcome to trauma-informed care, and one article on advancing restorative practices and its effects on youth.

Scaling up the building-based model to a district-wide or systems-wide framework of implementation is recommended by Hoover (2018) and her colleagues. Having a systems-wide approach will allow other districts and states to make this work applicable to their needs. Implementing trauma-informed care in this manner on a larger scale will enable for more screening and assessments to happen due to a more streamlined MTSS process (Hoover, et al., 2018). The research from Panayoitou, Humphrey, and Wigelsworth (2019) found similar recommendations as they are looking to explore a more comprehensive SEL model in different groups and development stages.

During the research of Anderson and her colleagues (2015), they focused on a small sample of teachers for professional development and training. However, for the work to be utilized more broadly, they recommend schoolwide plans, training, and implementation of trauma-informed practices on a larger scale (Anderson, Blitz, & Saastamoinen, 2015). One limitation of this research is that they sighted it is an exploratory view as there were no observations of practices after the trainings took place (Anderson, Blitz, & Saastamoinen, 2015).

Coming to a common definition of trauma-informed care, its essential components, and how it should be implemented is one of the recommendations for future research from Herrenkohl, Hong, and Verbrugge (2019). From there, they suggest that research has a standard protocol that can be tested and validated through replication (Herrenkohl, Hong, & Verbrugge, 2019). This is a common theme amongst the researchers who are advocating for a systems-wide framework. Howard's (2019) own research also indicated that collaboration and planning for implementation will be effective if it is done through a state-wide trauma-informed framework. Overstreet and Chafouleas (2016) agree that there needs to be not only objective knowledge of implementation processes but also rigorous evidence of student outcomes. Overstreet and Chafouleas (2016) have three items stated in their recommendations for researchers to continue, clear-cut elements of trauma-informed schools, short-term outcomes, and long-term outcomes.

Lastly, Chafouleas and her colleagues (2019) endorse moving from trauma-specific interventions and move towards trauma-informed approaches as one potential way to make an impact on an entire school district. Their vision looks at how to best integrate trauma-informed interventions as well as how to best document the impact of these outcomes (Chafouleas, et al., 2019). Similarly, Nemer and her colleagues (2019) discovered the need for creating standardized measures for trauma-informed interventions.

Báez and her research team (2019) indicated that not only is a systems-wide approach necessary but so is generalizability for their study to truly understand the necessity of trauma-informed care in schools. Their participants were solely located in New York City with a sample size of two schools totaling five hundred students in low-income communities. Branching out to other settings with varying demographics and socioeconomic status would be a start in generalization.

As noted by Brunzell and his research team (2016), they too are recommending replication and broader participants in their study of utilizing the TIPE method. This research had a small sample size of only implementing the practices with nine teachers within a large metropolitan area and saw success. Even so, the researchers would recommend implementing TIPE into a larger scale research project to see if similar results can be replicated. In addition to this study, the Dorado research team (2016) also noted the need for a broader sample size in hopes of replication the research results for validation. For their five-year study, they were only in four schools across 175 staff members. However, with a larger size study, the HEARTS protocol can be a district wide approach for scalable purposes. At the time Dorado's research team (2016) wrote their article, they were already expanding to other school districts.

Von Dohlen and her colleagues (2019) have a comparable response to their recommendations of future research. Their research was originally conducted in one middle school with a total of fifty-six students in a small rural community. Their recommendation is to implement further research in hopes of validating the positive results elsewhere. One astounding result of their research is that trauma-informed pedagogy is good for all students (Von Dohlen, et al., 2019). Because of this result, they do want to ensure that the research can be generalized and used elsewhere.

Researcher Baum and her colleagues (2013) suggest broadening their study but theirs is unique in that they suggest future research to be scalable through community-based services in a hope to better capture the impact of the outcomes of their study. The reason for their initial research on building resilience interventions was due to the war in Israel. Baum and her colleagues (2013) provided this research and facilitated the implementation, which resulted in decreased PTSD and anxiety symptoms not only in students but in teachers as well. By bringing the building resilience intervention to a larger audience, they are hoping to reduce PTSD throughout school districts and communities.

Blitz and her research colleagues (2016) suggest that their research in restorative practices can be used to assist in developing a model for culturally responsive trauma-informed schools. Their research on the Sanctuary Model was conducted with 425 participants over the course of one school year. However, the Sanctuary Model would be recommended for use in a larger scale study to provide a larger body of evidence because it would be more representative of students and staff with hopes to be validated. Beechler and her colleagues (2011) want to scale-up their CATS model to provide for an entire district. Additionally, one major criticism stated by the Beechler research team (2011) is that other research studies are often too specific, complex, and do not go into detail on how to implement on your own. They want to change this by creating a school-based model that states other than Connecticut can use.

González (2015) noted a future recommendation would be to find a way for greater equity in educational and disciplinary practices. His research was conducted in Denver Public Schools over the course of six years through professional development on restorative practices and restorative justice. Due to the needs for trainings to keep these practices continuing, sustainability is another area for future research needed (González, 2015). Likewise, researchers

Gregory and Fergus (2017) noted a need for equity-oriented SEL. They are advocating for the SEL work to be culturally responsive while understanding power dynamics that become apparent during traditional disciplinary actions.

Two of the research studies mention that further training for teachers should take place. Brunzell and her research team (2016) investigated if utilizing the TIPE intervention to assist teachers would benefit the students that they serve whereas the Thomas research team (2019) recommended further research on how teacher practices can be changed and shaped to incorporate more trauma-informed strategies. One interesting suggestion for further research but applicable to real life teaching is to discover why some educators resist restorative practices or new initiatives such as trauma-informed care. Cumings Mansfield and her research team (2018) are interested in knowing if it is due to the efficacy of those programs, the implementation process, or something else.

Once action research studies can discovery more systems-wide approaches to trauma-informed schools, then researchers can hone in on classroom-based strategies. There is a need for effective strategies for students who have emotional behavior disorders and other behavior issues in the classroom (Blitz, Anderson, & Saastamoinen, 2016). Rischel and her research team (2019) are wanting further research on the instructional supports and whether that makes a difference in the findings of their study. They too want to branch out to a more generalized setting because their current research took place in a rural Appalachian community amongst eleven elementary schools. With branching out to different and broader demographics while honing in on the instructional aspect of their research, they are hoping to find the answer to their questions.

One of the biggest questions is whether trauma-informed practices and restorative practices are sustainable due to employee attrition, change in leadership, and changes in district's

mission and vision statements. The sustainability aspect is largely rooted in professional development and ongoing coaching supports. Kendrziora and Yoder (2017) indicate from their research that educators are more likely to implement programming when they have quality professional learning experiences and administrative support at both the school and district level. Additionally, Kaveney and Drewery (2011) express the need for further research on training more teachers and have teachers to start facilitating the work for sustainability.

Cost is a large driving force of whether a district takes on and implements a task force and for the duration of the project. Implementing trauma-informed practices does cost money but more importantly it takes time. Districts that serve high poverty students are hyper focused on not only cost saving measures but as to what is the best spending for each fiscal year (Herrenkohl, Hong, & Verbrugge, 2019). Further research should include how to make implementation efficient and sustainable, thus making it more attainable for districts to carry out.

Most research on trauma-informed care and restorative practices focus on negative ramifications, such as reducing suspensions, decreasing behavior episodes, and eliminating expulsions (Cumings Mansfield, Fowler, & Rainbolt, 2018). Instead, flip the research to focus on the positive outcomes, such as increased social skills, students and staff being able to self-regulate their emotions, and for increased trauma-informed practices implemented into the classroom for change. Acosta and her research team (2016) are wanting to fix the problem of focusing on negative behaviors and deficits by exploring the natural strength and resiliency in youth.

Conclusion

The key discovery of this literature review shows that trauma-informed practices create positive student outcomes, particularly when it comes to academic achievements, improved peer

relationships, and enhanced social skills. Additionally, restorative practices have been shown to be beneficial and that the time needed is well spent when implementing into the school systems and classrooms. Student engagement increased as well as time on task in classrooms where trauma-informed strategies were implemented (Dorado, et al., 2016 & Chafouleas, et al., 2016). Furthermore, schools that implemented professional development around social and emotional learning also showed signs of increased student achievement in academics (Simonsen, et al., 2015). The number of behavior referrals and behavior instances have gone down, which leads to more instructional time within the classroom (Blitz, Anderson, & Saastamoinen, 2016).

The purpose of this literature review was to discover if taking the time to implement trauma-informed practices and restorative practices pay off in the long run. Due to these practices taking up valuable instructional time, education leaders would need to be ensured that a result of these practices were not only fewer discipline problems but they would also need to know that it improved academic scores. The findings from this literature review answer those statements with a yes, trauma-informed practices and restorative practices do inherently raise academic achievement and reduce behavior instances. However, this is dependent on the teachers implementing the work with fidelity.

Academic achievement and showing data to prove an initiative is not new in the education field. However, the research on trauma-informed practices and restorative practices have typically been on looking at behaviors decreasing and suspensions declining instead of looking at the positives. Finding articles that mentioned academic achievement along with these practices did prove to be difficult but they were able to be located with the appropriate keywords and search terms. The findings from this literature review fit in with other articles published

because it highlights the positives of trauma-informed practices and restorative practices while also informing the reader of the benefits of decreased behaviors in schools.

Research that still needs to be discovered includes looking at what the specific elements of a trauma-informed school from a systems-wide lens looks like and researching how the systems-wide framework can be replicated in other studies to ensure validation. Additionally, researchers need to hone in on the specifics of what teachers need to know and how they can succinctly implement that knowledge appropriately into their classrooms. Likewise, principals and district leaders need to have more explicit instructions on how these practices are implemented and how they can be scalable and sustainable.

The findings from this literature review can best be used by districts and individuals that are unsure about taking the time to create a trauma-informed school district and trauma-informed teachers. Being armed with this knowledge from thirty peer reviewed journal articles will give any advocate a stronger voice when supporting these practices in our schools. One of the limitations of this research is that it does not give specifics on how to implement within your classroom, school, or district. Instead, it demonstrates that these practices are vastly beneficial to all stakeholders.

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