THE PERCEPTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS REGARDING SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM TARDY POLICIES

A Thesis Presented to the Faculty of California State University, Stanislaus

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Master of Arts in Education

By Nineb Shahbaz December 2018
CERTIFICATION OF APPROVAL

THE PERCEPTIONS OF HIGH SCHOOL TEACHERS REGARDING SCHOOL AND CLASSROOM TARDY POLICIES

By
Nineb Shahbaz

Signed Certification of Approval page is on file with the University Library

Dr. John Borba
Professor of School Administration

Date

Dr. Dianne Vargas
Assistant Professor of Counselor Education

Date
DEDICATION

I dedicate this thesis to my amazing wife Katrin, who tirelessly reinforced my will to see this through. Thank you for taking care of everything, while I endlessly typed away in the office. Your love and support undoubtedly helped me get through this endeavor and I know it was not easy for you.

To my daughter Olivia, may you never stop learning and truly appreciate the value of education. You are the joy in my life and watching you grow is my greatest happiness.

To my parents, thank you for continuing to stand by my side throughout everything I do. Without your undying support and love, I would not have achieved this. To my father especially, thank you for planting the seed of education in me long ago. It has been my greatest strength throughout all my life.
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I thank Dr. Borba for his continuous guidance throughout this journey. I would not have been able to write this thesis without his support. Dr. Borba, thank you for all the time you spent reading and correcting my thesis and meeting with me week after week until the very end. You have shaped me into a better writer and I thank you for that.

I thank Dr. Dianne Vargas for taking the time to read my thesis and serve on my thesis committee.

I thank Dr. Steven Drouin for teaching me how to conduct proper research. Steven, thank you for everything you did for me, in and out of the classroom. You helped me achieve glorious victory.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dedication</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acknowledgments</td>
<td>v</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I. Introduction</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Background</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statement of the Problem</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Questions</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significance of the Study</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Limitations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II. Review of the Literature</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Review of the Literature</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Effective Programs</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Studies</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III. Methodology</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sample Population</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Instrumentation &amp; Data Collection</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Data Analysis</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV. Results</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 1</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 2</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Section</td>
<td>Page</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------------------------------------</td>
<td>------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interview 3</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Summary</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V. Summary, Themes, Implications, &amp; Recommendations</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Introduction</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Themes</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Implications</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommendations</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>References</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appendices</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A. Interview Question Matrix</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B. Letter of Consent</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ABSTRACT

The purpose of this qualitative study was to determine the perceptions of ninth through twelfth grade teachers regarding their school and classroom tardy policies. Three volunteer participants with one to fourteen years of experience were selected for this qualitative study. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants for this study. This researcher selected participants on purpose because they are considered to be most appropriate for this study. Each participant was interviewed individually. The interview questions attempted to address the following research questions:

1) What are the experiences of teachers regarding implementation of their school and classroom tardy policies?
2) What are the benefits of current school and classroom tardy policies?
3) What are the limitations of current school and classroom tardy policies and how can they be addressed?

The primary theme to emerge from this study is that at the school that was selected for this study, there are no benefits to the current tardy policy. All interviewees agreed that the current tardy policy does not improve punctuality, and probably does not contribute to the improvement of academic achievement.
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Background

Arriving to class on time for students is important and essential for learning. Tardiness not only causes disruption to class activities, but also missing instruction affects student learning. Thus, teachers and school administrators use a variety of measures to deal with student tardiness (Din, Isack, & Rietveld, 2003).

When many students are tardy at the secondary level, teachers must continually restart instruction or delay beginning instructional periods throughout the school day (Tyre, Feuerborn & Pierce, 2011). Student tardiness at the high school level is exacerbated by parental enabling, socializing during passing periods, morning traffic, physical layout of the school campus, after class teacher-student interaction, and lack of consistency among faculty when enforcing tardiness policies (Gile, Berg, Buckenmeyer, & Ledford, 2013).

Statement of the Problem

Chronic tardiness is one disciplinary problem that can significantly decrease instructional time at the secondary level. When tardiness consistently interferes with the start of instructional periods, the amount of instructional time wasted increases exponentially over the course of an academic year. Poor punctuality of several students in one class can significantly reduce the minutes of instructional time. Instructional time lost to widespread tardiness is likely to significantly affect the
capacity of the entire student population to meet rigorous academic standards (Tyre, Feuerborn, & Pierce, 2011).

**Research Questions**

This study will attempt to answer the following questions:

I. What are the experiences of teachers regarding implementation of their school and classroom tardy policies?

II. What are the benefits of current school and classroom tardy policies?

III. What are the limitations of current school and classroom tardy policies and how can they be addressed?

**Significance of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of ninth through twelfth grade teachers regarding school and classroom tardy policies. This study may reveal new information regarding the benefits and challenges of implementing school and classroom tardy policies from the perspective of classroom teachers. Furthermore, the results of this study may provide useful information to administrators, teachers, parents, and policy makers who are involved in making decisions regarding the implementation and management of school and classroom tardy policies.

**Limitations**

This study will be limited to ninth through twelfth grade teachers employed by a K – 12 unified school district in Central California during the 2017 – 2018 school year. The results of this study may not be generalizable to other schools.
Definition of Terms

*Detention.* The action of detaining a student or the state of being detained by school administration.

*Instructional time.* The amount of time given to each class for instruction not including transition time between classes.

*Period.* One class among six periods (classes) per day at the school where data will be gathered.

*Tardiness.* The act or action of being late to class.

*Tardy policy.* A specific set of rules and consequences for students who have arrived late to class without a verified or appropriate excuse.

Summary

An effective school and classroom tardy policy is vital to a successful learning institution. It is part of a network of policies that establish and maintain a positive learning environment. When students are tardy or absent, or when they drop out of school, sequential learning cannot occur, subject matter and skills cannot be developed, and talent is wasted (Ediger, 1987). This study will investigate and determine the perceptions of ninth through twelfth grade classroom teachers regarding the implementation of school and classroom tardy policies. Chapter 2 will present a review of the literature as it relates to this study.
CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of high school teachers regarding school and classroom tardy policies. The following chapter will present a review of existing literature including effective programs and research studies.

Review of the Literature

Chronic tardiness is one disciplinary problem that can significantly decrease instructional time at the secondary level. Poor punctuality of several students can significantly reduce the minutes of instruction for all students enrolled in a class (Johnson, 1995; Gettinger & Ball, 2008; Sprick, 2003). Instructional time lost to widespread tardiness is likely to significantly affect the capacity of the entire student population to meet rigorous academic standards (Tyre, Feuerborn, & Pierce, 2011).

It is crucial to determine the underlying values, beliefs, and behaviors associated with student tardiness from a faculty perspective. Tardiness at the high school level is exacerbated by parental enabling, students socializing during passing periods, lack of caring on part of students and parents, morning traffic, school layout, going off campus for lunch, teachers holding students after class, and lack of consistency among faculty when enforcing tardiness policies (Gile, Berg, Buckenmeyer, & Ledford, 2013).
It is equally crucial to identify at-risk behaviors associated with student dropout and tardiness from a student perspective. At-risk students identified in the school setting include those exhibiting signs of alcohol consumption, drug abuse, or antisocial behavior. For some high school students, the immediate earnings from employment seem more significant than staying in school. Pregnant teenage girls, also at risk of dropping out, need counseling services to help them obtain their diplomas, learn job skills, and cope with their situations. Family situations, such as cultural differences between values taught at home and at school, separation, divorce, or a parent's loss of employment, can put students at risk of dropping out. School personnel need to determine causes of tardiness, absenteeism, and dropping out, in order to provide necessary remediation (Ediger, 1987).

The National Education for Statistics indicates that student tardiness occurs at a rate of 3.3% to 9.5% each day of all students in kindergarten through grade twelve (Harrman, 2007). It is clear from the literature that tardiness is a major problem. Not only do students lose valuable educational instruction when they arrive late, but they disrupt the educational environment and distract others who are in class. Excessive tardiness has a negative impact upon a student's future (Ried, 2000). Some of the implications are academic failure, emotional disorders, drug dependency, fighting and bullying (Chang & Romero, 2008).

**Effective Programs**

**Behavior Modification**

A behavior modification program was developed and implemented in 1995 to decrease the tardy behavior of middle school students at Deerfield Beach Middle
School, located in Deerfield, Florida. Twenty students ages 13 to 15 in the dropout prevention (DOP) class were the focus of the program. The students in the class were tardy regularly. The dropout prevention class had no effective mechanism in place to discourage tardiness. Therefore, students were not motivated to attend promptly (Johnson, 1995).

Each student's current tardy record was summed and averaged to establish a baseline for the class. Each student was issued a time-card and was required to sign in upon arriving to class. The time card was initialed by the teacher and kept on the classroom wall by the door. This provided a visual inspection of progress. Next, data points were plotted on a graph to indicate the number of tardies across seven weeks. A behavior modification point system was implemented which allowed students to earn 20 points per day for prompt attendance. Five possible points were earned for morning arrival and three for class changes. Students were allowed to earn 100 points maximum per week. A minimum of 20 points were needed for a reward. Points were used to purchase video game time, items in the school store, and extended lunch time. Progress was documented by summing and averaging the number of points earned weekly for each student and plotting the data on a graph (Johnson, 1995).

The baseline data showed that prior to intervention, the DOP class was averaging 15 tardies per week. Post-implementation data indicated that tardies declined weekly, resulting in zero tardies for the last 3 weeks of the program (Johnson, 1995).
**START on Time**

A schoolwide intervention plan that showed positive results was introduced in 2011 at a diverse junior and senior high school located in western Washington State. The plan focused on explicit teaching of expectations and consistent implementation of consequences aimed at reducing chronic levels of student tardiness. The participating school was comprised of grades 7–12 where 355 students were enrolled. The administration and staff recognized student tardiness had become a widespread problem. With the start of the academic year, the assistant principal began documenting student tardiness. The school administrators determined a schoolwide intervention was necessary and selected a staff development tool, called Safe Transitions and Reduced Tardies (START) on Time, to guide the development of a schoolwide intervention plan to address the problem. START on Time is designed to guide school staff through the development of a preventative schoolwide plan to ensure safe and timely transitions in secondary schools by emphasizing the development of interventions. The interventions included the following: (a) active supervision of students in common areas during all transition periods, (b) clear definition and explicit teaching of expectations for behavior during transition periods, (c) immediate and consistent consequences for tardiness, and (d) data-based decision making with respect to intervention planning and monitoring of outcomes (Sprick, 2003).

Across 17 months of implementation, there was an average of 20 tardies per instructional day per month. When compared to the average prior to implementation, there was a 67% decrease in average daily tardy rates. During the intervention
implementation period, 100% of data points were substantially lower as compared with the months before full implementation (Tyre, Feuerborn, & Pierce, 2011).

**Lock Out Program**

Lock Out is a successful program for reducing tardiness in a rural junior high school originally introduced in 1990. The subject school housed approximately 1,500 seventh and eighth grade students. Under the Lock Out Program, first-time tardy students were given a one-day work detail in the cafeteria for 15 minutes of their lunch period. Two tardies resulted in a two-day work detail and the parents were informed. Three tardies required a parent conference before the student could return to school. For the fourth and each subsequent tardy, students could choose a day's suspension or an after-school work detail. Under this program, teachers kept statistics on tardiness, which were compared with pre-implementation data. Feedback was gathered from administrators and teachers. Results showed an 87% decrease in the number of tardies and a substantial decrease in the amount of time administrators spent processing tardy referrals. There was a 20% increase in out-of-school suspensions during the implementation period. A survey showed that 25 teachers who previously had reported tardiness to be a problem no longer thought it was a problem after implementation of the Lock Out program. The researcher concluded that the program should be continued at the school and that it should be given wider implementation (Scott, 1990).

**Research Studies**

Din, Isack, and Rietveld (2003) conducted a study on the effects of contingency contracting on student tardiness. The study was conducted at a high
school in suburban Chicago. The participants were 32 high school students. Of the 32 participants, 16 were randomly assigned to the experimental group and the other 16 to the control group. A contingency contract was signed individually by the students in the experimental group. The contract stated that the goal of the program was to decrease the number of tardy counts per week. The conditions of the contract stated that students who agreed to participate would receive one piece of candy when they came to class on time. If the student came to class on time for the entire week, he would receive a bigger piece of candy.

The treatment lasted for 12 weeks. Students' tardiness records from the treatment stage were compared via ANCOVA with those in the control group. Results from data analyses indicated that participants in the experimental group showed significantly fewer tardiness counts than those in the control group ($p < 0.005$). The results suggest that this behavior modification technique can reduce tardiness among high school students (Din, Isack, & Rietveld, 2003).

Quarles (2011) conducted a study on tardiness, absenteeism, and academic achievement. The study was conducted at three high schools in Southeast Georgia. There were 704 urban high school students involved in this study. The purpose of the study was to examine the impact tardies and absenteeism have on academic achievement of ninth grade students.

This study examined the relationship between tardiness and absenteeism and the relationship between tardiness and English test scores. Data were analyzed using Pearson Correlations. The analysis showed a relationship between tardiness and absenteeism and a relationship between tardiness and achievement in English ($p <$
Students who were tardy tended to be absent and earned lower scores on achievement tests in English (Quarles, 2011).

Raivard (2013) conducted a study on the effects of an intervention program on tardiness, absenteeism, and academic achievement of at-risk students in a large comprehensive high school in California’s Central Valley. The students chosen for this study attended high school and were enrolled in the Students for Success Intervention program. The intervention program was comprised of 34 sophomores, juniors, and seniors. Students who participated in the program met with the intervention teacher weekly for 20 minutes. Attendance, tardy, and GPA data were collected for comparison from the 2011-2012 school year (prior to implementation) and the 2012-2013 school year (after implementation). Data were entered into the Statistics Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). A paired samples t-test was completed to determine if there was a significant change between pre- and post-intervention GPA, attendance, and tardy rates. The results suggest that the intervention program had a positive effect ($p < 0.05$) on improving student tardy rates and academic achievement. However, the data analysis showed that absenteeism was not significantly reduced by this program and continues to be a complex problem for this school.

Caldarella, Christensen, Young, and Densley (2011) conducted a study on decreasing tardiness among elementary school students. The elementary school was located in the Provo City School District, Utah.

Two types of data were collected and tracked to evaluate the effects of a praise note intervention: (a) the number of minutes students were late each day and
(b) the number of praise notes written by teachers. The office secretaries recorded the number of minutes students were late as part of the school’s normal attendance tracking system, thus allowing the intervention to be implemented without requiring significant extra staff time for data entry (Caldarella, Christensen, Young, & Densley, 2011).

A multiple baseline design across students was used to evaluate the effects of the intervention. Data were collected for a minimum of two weeks. Praise note implementation was then staggered, and changes in student tardiness were tracked. Treatment fidelity was calculated by dividing the number of praise notes written by the number of times the students arrived at school on time, resulting in a percentage (Caldarella, Christensen, Young, & Densley, 2011).

The results of the study were reported descriptively. For moderately tardy students, the average number of teacher-written praise notes received each week was 1.09. Praise notes were written 23% of the days these students arrived at school on time. Total minutes late per week decreased by 78% from baseline to treatment phases. Within 3 weeks of the intervention, all students showed zero tardiness. Also, improvement was shown by the decreased variability in the minutes late each week (Caldarella, Christensen, Young, & Densley, 2011).

For the severely tardy students, the average number of teacher-written praise notes received each week was 0.89. Praise notes were written 35% of the days these students arrived at school on time. Total minutes late per week decreased by 84% from baseline to treatment phases. Improvement was also shown by the decreased
variability in the minutes late each week (Caldarella, Christensen, Young, & Densley, 2011).

The intervention appeared to improve the students’ on-time behavior. Results suggested a functional relationship, with an average of just one praise note per week improving students’ tardiness. The principal reported that teachers felt the personalized written comments to students were powerful. In addition, the school principal reported that the praise note intervention was well received by students and their parents. The use of teacher-written praise notes appears to be a positive, simple approach for addressing student tardiness in elementary school (Caldarella, Christensen, Young, & Densley, 2011).

Johnson-Gros, Lyons, and Griffin (2008) assessed the effects of active supervision on rates of tardiness in a rural high school in southern Mississippi. The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of active supervision on hallway behavior of students. Specifically, the investigation assessed the effects of active supervision during problematic transition times on the number of discipline referrals for tardiness.

The six components of active supervision were: (a) arriving at designated post on-time, (b) remaining in post area throughout the entire transition period, (c) moving towards groups of congregating students in post area, (d) physically escorting students throughout the entire transition area, (e) scanning the transition area by moving head side to side to look over the designated transition area to be supervised, and (f) interacting with students using brief nonverbal gestures (i.e., smiling, prompting) throughout the transition period (Johnson-Gros, Lyons, & Griffin, 2008).
All 36 teachers participated. The three instructional periods of the day with the highest rate of tardiness were targeted. Office discipline referrals for tardiness served as the dependent measure. Prior to the study, office referrals for tardiness were assessed and deemed either to be stable or to have an increasing trend in baseline (Johnson-Gros, Lyons, & Griffin, 2008).

Referrals have been widely used by schools to evaluate students' behaviors and were found not only to be sensitive measures of the effects of intervention, but to be valid indicators of intervention effectiveness (Irvin, Tobin, Sprague, Sugai, & Vincent, 2004). Students received tardy discipline referrals upon three instances of arriving to class late.

Active supervision was implemented during the transitions following third and fifth periods. The transition following fourth period served as the control. During the 3rd period transition, the baseline was somewhat variable (M = 9, range: 2 to 16) with a slight decreasing trend. Following active supervision implemented in the fifth week, the number of referrals for tardiness (M = 2, range: 0 to 4) decreased and showed more stability than baseline. During the 5th period transition, the baseline ended with an increasing trend (M 7, range: 3 to 11). After implementation of active supervision in the ninth week, a decrease in the number of referrals for tardiness across weeks (M = 1, range: 0 to 3) were observed. The 4th period, which served as a control throughout the study showed no change (M = 8, range: 3 to 18) (Johnson-Gros, Lyons, & Griffin, 2008).

Office referrals for tardiness were graphed and visually analyzed. Results from this study provide evidence to suggest that active supervision may be an
effective intervention to reduce tardiness to class following hallway transitions. Both third and fifth periods showed decreases in tardiness when active supervision was implemented. These results further suggest that implementing a simple intervention like active supervision may effectively reduce the frequency of low intensity behavior like tardiness within a rural high school setting (Johnson-Gros, Lyons, & Griffin, 2008).

Summary

Chapter 2 presented a review of existing literature that includes effective programs and research studies. Chapter 3 will provide a summary of the methodology including the sample population, instrumentation and data collection, and data analysis.
CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of high school teachers regarding school and classroom tardy policies. The following chapter will present the sample population, research questions, instrumentation and data collection, and data analysis.

Sample Population

The volunteer participants in this qualitative study were high school teachers employed by the same school located in the Central Valley of California. Three participants were selected. Their teaching experiences range between one and fourteen years. All three of the participants, their grade levels, and years of experience are listed in Table 1. The names of these teachers and their school of employment will remain anonymous throughout this study. Purposive sampling was used to select the participants for this study. This researcher selected participants on purpose because they are considered to be most appropriate for this study. The three participants were selected because of their teaching assignment at the school that was selected for this study.
Table 1

Participants

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Years of Experience</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 1</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 2</td>
<td>9th</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviewee 3</td>
<td>Special Education</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Instrumentation & Data Collection

The thesis chair approved the research questions (see Appendix A) developed by this researcher. This study attempted to address the following research questions:

R1. What are the experiences of teachers regarding implementation of their school and classroom tardy policies?

R2. What are the benefits of current school and classroom tardy policies?

R3. What are the limitations of current school and classroom tardy policies and how can they be addressed?

Each participant was interviewed individually in order to maintain confidentiality and support an environment where each responded without the presence of outside influences. Letters of consent (see Appendix B) were distributed and signed in advance by all three teachers who participated in this study. Each participant was interviewed for approximately 45 minutes and digitally recorded to secure and represent each response accurately. Notes were taken and recorded by the researcher during the interviews in order to document teacher reactions and
observations. Individual teacher interview responses were transcribed upon the completion of the interview.

**Data Analysis**

After the transcription of the digitally recorded responses, the participants received copies to verify accuracy. All of the data collected were analyzed through coding. The evidence provided from the interviews, notes, reactions, and observations were used to identify themes that addressed the three guiding research questions. The results of this study were assembled and reported in the findings of this study. The Institutional Review Board (IRB) of California State University, Stanislaus, approved the methodology for this study. Written and electronic documents will be destroyed three years after the study is concluded to ensure the confidentiality of the participants.

**Summary**

Chapter 3 presented the methodology that includes the sample population, research questions, instrumentation and data collection, and data analysis. Chapter 4 will provide a summary of the data collected regarding each research question.
CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of high school teachers regarding school and classroom tardy policies. The following chapter provides a summary of the participants’ perceptions as they relate to each research question.

Interview 1

Interviewee 1 is a mathematics teacher with 14 years of teaching experience. She primarily teaches sophomores and juniors as well as some honors classes.

What Are the Experiences of Teachers Regarding Implementation of Their School and classroom Tardy Policies (R1)?

Interviewee 1 described the school’s tardy policy by listing the consequences; she stated students who are tardy first period are immediately assigned detention by the administration. Detention occurs in a classroom designated solely for this purpose. Students sit in silence for one period, either during lunch or after school. She continued that additional tardies incur more detentions and subsequently, a phone call to parents from the administration. She further stated that if tardies continue after this point, the administration schedules a meeting with parents and the student to discuss ways to be punctual to class. She finished by saying that beyond this point, repeaters receive more detentions and the administration continues communicating with the parents and teachers. Interviewee 1 stated that she does not have any additional
classroom policies regarding tardiness. Also, she stated that the overwhelming majority of the tardies occur during first period involving the same students most days of the week. Although she must take time during class to record and address these tardies, she claimed it is not a burden. Recording tardies is built into her classroom routines and does not require any additional time.

**What Are the Benefits of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies (R2)?**

Interviewee 1 does not believe there are any benefits to the current school tardy policy. She stated that the current tardy policy does not improve punctuality, nor does it improve student academic performance in her classes. She clarified that students who are chronically tardy often have the lowest grades in her classes and the current school tardy policy does not help them be on time nor does it help them raise their grades.

**What Are the Limitations of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies and How Can They Be Addressed (R3)?**

Interviewee 1 believes that some tardiness is the result of transportation beyond the students’ control. At times, parents or other family members who drive the student to school are late. Then the student receives a tardy followed by a detention. This interviewee believes that it is unfortunate that students receive negative consequences due to something they have no control. She mentioned that in most cases, it is the parents who do not manage their time well in the mornings and it results in a first period tardy for their children. She added that more communication between school administration and parents needs to happen to help avoid future tardies.
Students who are tardy during first period receive a lunch detention.

Interviewee 1 said that she does not lose any instructional time when campus security comes to escort the student(s) to lunch detention.

This interviewee believes that more consequences should be added to the policy. One such consequence could be taking away privileges like student activities. This would include student clubs, events like prom and homecoming. Another privilege that can be taken away is athletics. This penalty would prevent sports participation and game attendance. She also thinks that administration should communicate with parents more than they already do to address chronically tardy students. She believes that chronically tardy students are hard to change and will be tardy regardless of any policy.

**Interview 2**

Interviewee 2 is a mathematics teacher with 14 years of teaching experience at this school. He exclusively teaches freshman classes.

What Are the Experiences of Teachers Regarding Implementation of Their School and classroom Tardy Policies (R1)?

Interviewee 2 knew and cited the tardy policy. He stated that any student who is late to first period receives a lunch detention. He said that further tardies result in additional detentions, followed by a phone call to parents from the administration, and ultimately a meeting with the parents and administration including the student. Interviewee 2 added that he does not have any additional classroom tardy policies. Also, he stated that most of the tardies occur during first period involving the same
students. Similarly, interviewee 2 does not feel that recording and addressing tardies impacts his instructional time. This process is built into his daily classroom routines.

**What Are the Benefits of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies (R2)?**

Interviewee 2 does not believe the tardy policy offers benefits. He has not seen any improvement in punctuality nor academic performance in any of his classes because of the tardy policy.

**What Are the Limitations of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies and How Can They Be Addressed (R3)?**

Interviewee 2 believes that very few first-period tardies are the result of transportation. He believes that chronically tardy students simply do not manage their time correctly. He also does not feel his instructional time is impacted during fourth period when students are pulled out for detention because of first period tardies. He simply carries on with his instruction as campus security quietly escorts students out.

Interviewee 2 understands that there is only so much the school can do. It is the student who must change, and in his experience, he does not believe that chronically tardy students will change regardless of any policy.

**Interview 3**

Interviewee 3 is a special education teacher who primarily facilitates mathematics support classes and assists students one-on-one in various mathematics classes. This is his first year as a certificated teacher at this site. Prior to this assignment, he was a substitute teacher for various special education teachers at this same site.
What Are the Experiences of Teachers Regarding Implementation of Their School and classroom Tardy Policies (R1)?

Unlike the first two interviewees, this interviewee was not aware of the school’s tardy policy in its entirety. He was able to cite the first part of the tardy policy, that a student who is late to first period, receives an automatic lunch detention. However, Interviewee 3 failed to mention the rest of the policy. He was not aware that the parents of repeaters receive a phone call from the administration. Also, he was not aware that a meeting is scheduled between parents and administration with the student present. Interviewee 3 admitted that he has not read the entire policy. He did not have any additional classroom tardy policies.

Interviewee 3 indicated that tardies typically occur during first period. Recording and addressing the numerous tardies does impact his instructional time. He explained that his classrooms are made up of special education students. Each time one of his students is tardy to class, he must spend individual time with that student during the period to help with missed instruction. Interviewee 3 said the students’ abilities in the classroom are limited and if he does not get them caught up right away, they are in danger of falling behind.

What Are the Benefits of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies (R2)?

Interviewee 3 does not see any benefits to the tardy policy. He did not observe any improvement in punctuality nor in academic performance because of the tardy policy. He stated that the tardy policy does not teach students better time management and therefore students continue being tardy. This interviewee believes that academic performance in his classes is limited because he has special education students.
What Are the Limitations of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies and How Can They Be Addressed (R3)?

A large majority of students who arrive to the class of Interviewee 3 are bussed by the district. Therefore, Interviewee 3 does not think that transportation is a cause for tardies that occur in his first period. He said students do not manage their time. Interviewee 3 has a prep period during fourth period and therefore does not have students pulled out by campus security.

Summary

Chapter 4 provided an analysis of the data collected by this researcher in relation to each research question. Chapter 5 will provide a summary, common themes, implications, and recommendations for future research.
CHAPTER V
SUMMARY, THEMES, IMPLICATIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The purpose of this study is to determine the perceptions of high school teachers regarding school and classroom tardy policies. This chapter provides a summary of the participants’ perceptions, common themes as they relate to each research question, implications, and recommendations for future research.

This researcher prepared three research questions: What are the experiences of teachers regarding implementation of their school and classroom tardy policies (R1); What are the benefits of current school and classroom tardy policies (R2); What are the limitations of current school and classroom tardy policies and how can they be addressed (R3). The following paragraphs summarize the findings of the three interviews constructed from each research question.

What Are the Experiences of Teachers Regarding Implementation of Their School and classroom Tardy Policies (R1)?

The first two interviewees with 14 years of experience know the school’s tardy policy well. The third interviewee, with just less than one year of experience, was not aware of all the aspects of the policy. His instructional time is impacted by marking and addressing tardies; whereas, the veteran teachers have this process built into their routines. The veteran teachers have regular education students and this new teacher has special education students. All three interviewees have more tardies during first period than any other period.
What Are the Benefits of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies (R2)?

There are no benefits. All three interviewees agreed that the tardy policy does not improve punctuality and consequently does not improve academic performance.

What Are the Limitations of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies and How Can They Be Addressed (R3)?

The interviewees believe that the tardy policy will not help to change the behavior of chronically tardy students.

Themes

What Are the Experiences of Teachers Regarding Implementation of Their School and classroom Tardy Policies (R1)?

The majority of tardies happen first period rather than equally dispensed throughout the day. Each interviewee said that far more tardies are recorded during first period than any other.

What Are the Benefits of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies (R2)?

There are no benefits to the current tardy policy. All interviewees agreed that the current tardy policy does not improve punctuality and as a result, probably does not contribute to improved academic performance.

What Are the Limitations of Current School and classroom Tardy Policies and How Can They Be Addressed (R3)?

The current tardy policy does not help to change the behavior of chronically tardy students. The interviewees did not think that the current tardy policy helps students arrive to class on time. None of the interviewees knew how to address this.
Implications

Students who are often tardy continue to be tardy regardless of any policy. Detentions, tardy rooms, and additional assignments prove ineffective at changing behavior. Although the participants in this study were not optimistic about the effects of school tardy policies, successful needs-based strategies may have the capacity to produce positive results. These strategies include (1) identifying chronic offenders, assessing them individually, and referring them to appropriate services, including support groups; (2) working with parents to find solutions; (3) switching to Block scheduling; (4) implementing an interdisciplinary and integrated curriculum; (5) and providing opportunities for students to express their opinions that contribute to the operation of the school. Needs – based approaches have the added benefit of not only improving punctuality, but often academic achievement and attitude toward school, as well (Muir, 2005).

Although the participants in this study were not involved in the enforcement of their school’s tardy policy, teachers must participate in identifying the extent of the problem and possible solutions, along with both students' and parents' voices. Students must be part of the solution and their recommendations merit consideration. In this way, teachers move from being reactive to being proactive. To do this effectively, students and parents should be informed of school policies and procedures. No single consequence will decrease or eliminate tardiness altogether. There is no one easy answer or solution to student tardiness. However, getting to school on time is important; it is the first step toward learning (Kerrins & Hayes, 1996).
Recommendations

Replicate this study with administrators, parents, and students to gain a better insight into school tardy policies.
REFERENCES
REFERENCES


Gile, C., Berg, M., Buckenmeyer, J., & Ledford, A. (2013). An action science research approach to reducing student tardiness at the high school level. ProQuest Dissertations and Theses. (ED561786)


Raivard, J. (2013). The effects of an intervention program on tardiness, absenteeism, and academic achievement of at-risk high school students. Stanislaus Scholar Works


APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW QUESTION MATRIX

Research Questions:

R1: What are the experiences of teachers regarding implementation of their school and classroom tardy policies?

R2: What are the benefits of current school and classroom tardy policies?

R3: What are the limitations of current school and classroom tardy policies and how can they be addressed?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interview Questions</th>
<th>R1</th>
<th>R2</th>
<th>R3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Describe the school’s current tardy policy. Please elaborate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you see a consistent number of student tardies throughout the day or is it typically during first period? Please elaborate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does marking/reporting tardies impact your instructional time? Please elaborate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does the current tardy policy improve student punctuality in your classroom? Please elaborate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Has the current tardy policy improved student academic performance in your classroom? Please elaborate.</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Are there any additional benefits as a result of the current tardy policy?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Do you believe that the current tardy policy penalizes students (first period) who depend on transportation to school by parents or others? Please elaborate.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does lunch detention impact your instructional time? If yes, how do you believe this issue can be corrected?</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identify and describe proactive actions that can be taken by administrators and teachers to reduce student tardiness to class.</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX B

LETTER OF CONSENT

I am asking for your volunteer participation in a study that I am conducting as part of the fulfillment of a Master of Arts in Education degree at California State University, Stanislaus. The purpose of this qualitative study is to determine the perceptions of high school teachers regarding their school and classroom tardy policies.

As part of the data collection, I will ask questions regarding your experience with your school and classroom tardy policies. Interviews will be done individually in order to maintain confidentiality and support a comfortable environment. The interview will take approximately 45 minutes of your time and you may withdraw or refuse to answer any question at any time without consequence. The interview will be audiotaped and transcribed to secure and represent your responses accurately. There are no foreseeable risks to participating in this study. The information you provide will be protected from all inappropriate disclosure under the law. Your name and all other forms of identifiable information will not appear in this study.

The information that is gained will be used for educational purposes. Only this researcher will have access to the information collected that will be destroyed three years after the study. If you agree to participate, please sign below, if you have any questions about this research, please contact me, Nineb Shahbaz at (209) 214-1572 or my supervising professor, Dr. John Borba at (209) 667-3260. If you have any question about your rights as a research participant, you may contact CSU Stanislaus Institutional Review Board at (209) 667-3493 and/or the Compliance Office at (209) 667-3351. By signing below, you agree that you have read the information described above and agree to participate in this study.

______________________ _____________________ __________________
Name of Participant  Signature of Participant Date