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Student teachers' perceptions of classroom management: Importance and preparedness

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STUDENT TEACHERS' PERCEPTIONS OF
CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT--IMPORTANCE AND PREPAREDNESS

An Abstract of a Thesis
Submitted
In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree
Master of Arts

Lisa Opheim Nelson
University of Northern Iowa
July 1993

ABSTRACT

In this study, student teachers who had completed 8 weeks of student teaching experience used a 5-point Likert scale to rate the importance of 30 specific classroom management skills. The student teachers' descriptions of their preparedness to utilize each of these skills in their classrooms were also measured using a similar Likert format. The student teachers also completed a demographic information page which gathered information such as age, gender, major, and number of semesters at the University of Northern Iowa.

A correlational analysis revealed modest similarity between the student teachers' ratings of importance and their feelings of preparedness, indicating that they considered themselves to be only somewhat prepared to implement those classroom management strategies and behaviors that they considered important. For all subsequent analyses, Major was used as the sole independent variable, and the subjects were divided into four Major groups: elementary majors, secondary majors, special education majors, and special area K-12 majors. One-way ANOVAs of importance and preparedness scores, and post-hoc Scheffé S tests of pairwise means were used to identify any significant differences in the mean scores of the four Major groups. Statistically significant differences were

found for both scales between the secondary majors and the elementary majors, and between the secondary majors and the special education majors, with the elementary and special education majors rating both preparedness and importance higher than did the secondary majors.

The differences that were found may have been due to the differences that existed among the course requirements for each of the majors. Special education majors received the most coursework in and experience with classroom management. Elementary majors were required to take one course, while no classroom management course requirements existed for secondary majors.

The differences may also have been due to philosophical differences between the four major groups. Elementary and special education teachers may generally tend to consider teaching methods more important than content area knowledge, while secondary educators may tend to consider content more important. The secondary majors may have had a certain naivete regarding classroom management. These students viewed management as less important than did elementary and special education majors, but they also considered themselves less prepared which may indicate that they found themselves having difficulty managing classrooms once they entered full time student teaching.

Another explanation for the differences found here may be that the skills listed on the scale were not appropriate classroom management techniques at the secondary level. All of these explanations have implications for the teacher education curriculum. University personnel need to evaluate course offerings in the area of classroom management in order to determine if a greater emphasis needs to be placed on classroom management in some programs in order to help students see the importance of classroom management and to provide them with the skills they need to manage classrooms effectively. Considering the strong relationship between effective classroom management and effective classroom teaching, it seems reasonable to deliberately and overtly teach effective management skills to all future teachers.

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This study by: Lisa Opheim Nelson

Entitled: Student Teachers' Perceptions of Classroom
Management--Importance and Preparedness

has been approved as meeting the thesis requirement for the
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Introduction

Classroom management has been defined as anything the teacher does "to organize students, space, time, and materials so that instruction in content and learning activities" (p. 343) can take place (Anderson, Evertson, & Emmer, 1980). This definition encompasses more than classroom discipline, which brings to mind rules, rewards, and punishments. It includes planning and pacing instruction, arranging the physical environment, assisting students through times of frustration, and more.

Nation-wide opinion polls, sponsored by both the National Education Association (1988) and Phi Delta Kappa (Elam, 1989; Elam & Gallup, 1989; Elam, Rose, & Gallup, 1992; Gallup, A. M., 1985; Gallup, G. H., 1983), have consistently indicated that both the general public and education professionals perceive classroom management and discipline to be a major problem for the nation's schools, one which many educators feel inadequately prepared to solve (Berliner, 1984; Froyen, 1988; Kagan, 1992; Perry & Taylor, 1982). A teacher's lack of mastery of classroom management skills is often a cause of dissatisfaction and disillusionment with teaching. Teachers who have difficulty

controlling their classes will have difficulty experiencing the intrinsic reward of seeing their students learn, and their personal and/or professional needs may not be met (Savage, 1991; Spillman, 1980). Many teachers who become frustrated with classroom management concerns experience stress and burnout (Raschke, Dedrick, Strathe, & Hawkes, 1985), many consider leaving the profession (Center for Education Statistics, 1987), and some teachers do leave the profession (Bobbitt, Faupel, & Burns, 1991).

Novice teachers have the most serious misgivings about this area of teaching (Berliner, 1984; Perry & Taylor, 1982). Many researchers report that classroom management is often the area with which student teachers have the most difficulty and experience the most stress (Abernathy, Manera, & Wright, 1985; Beyerbach & Smith, 1990; Rickman & Hollowell, 1981; Rubin, 1991).

While classroom management is seen as problematic and stressful, it is also considered to be the most important area of teaching (Bartos & Lotven, 1980). Many researchers have considered this aspect of teaching to be important enough to the success or failure of a teacher that they have studied teachers who are effective managers and found that they have certain specific management skills in common (Kounin, 1970; Anderson et al., 1980). If those who possess these skills do indeed have greater success

managing classrooms, it seems that undergraduate teacher education institutions should teach these skills to preservice teachers in order to more effectively prepare them for their later teaching experiences. Since this area causes many student teachers stress and failure, one might wonder if effective management skills are indeed being adequately taught to teacher education students. Thus, it may be of value to determine which effective management skills student teachers consider important, and how well prepared student teachers believe themselves to be in utilizing various management skills in their classrooms.

Statement of the Problem

The University of Northern Iowa has recently begun to require its undergraduate elementary education majors to take a course dealing specifically with classroom management, and elective courses on this topic are offered. However, no such course is required of secondary education majors. The question this research project was designed to investigate was, "Which classroom management skills do student teachers who have completed eight weeks of student teaching rate as important, and how well prepared do these student teachers feel in utilizing these management skills in their classrooms?" The data were analyzed to

discern any effects due to differences in major, namely, elementary, secondary, special education, and special content area majors that span the K-12 curriculum such as art, music and physical education. This study was also designed to provide future researchers with a reliable scale for evaluating student teachers' perceptions of the importance of various aspects of classroom management, and their feelings of preparedness as well.

Hypotheses

In this study, the following hypotheses were tested:

1. There is no relationship between what student teachers believe is important regarding classroom management and their feelings of preparedness.

2. No significant differences exist between elementary, secondary, special education, and special area majors' perceptions of the importance of classroom management.

3. No significant differences exist between elementary, secondary, special education, and content area majors' sense of preparedness regarding classroom management.

Importance of the Study

The investigation of these hypotheses is of some importance to the Department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Northern Iowa. If the results reveal discrepancies between what is perceived as important and the students' feelings of preparedness, this study may guide the instructors and developers of the education program in modifying its content to make it more relevant from the perspective of student teachers.

If students feel adequately prepared in the areas they consider important, the relevance of the program's content will be supported. That is, the program will have been shown to help student teachers feel prepared to manage classrooms using the skills they consider most important.

If differences exist between elementary, secondary, special education, and special area majors' ratings of the importance of classroom management, then courses in each of these programs may need to address these differences by adapting the content of courses to meet the needs of the students more fully. If differences are found to exist between elementary, secondary, special education, and special area majors' sense of preparedness, then the undergraduate curriculum for each major area may need to be examined, and the strengths of the program creating the

students who feel most prepared may need to be adopted in the other programs.

Assumptions

The assumptions underlying this study include:

1. That student teachers within each major experienced similar preparation, with relatively minor differences among professors and the content covered in different sections of the same course.
2. That the student teaching experiences of the subjects will have been long enough to permit the student teachers to have determined the importance of classroom management skills.
3. That the scales being used are reliable and valid.

Limitations

One of the primary limitations of this study is its scope. This study examined data drawn from the student teachers at one university. These students' previous experiences managing children and their experiences during student teaching may or may not be representative of those of teacher education students at other institutions. Thus, the results of this study may not be generalizable to other teacher education institutions.

A second limitation of this study may be the reliability and validity of the data-gathering instrument used. The instrument was a rating scale developed by the researcher based on current research on effective methods of classroom management and textbooks used in classroom management courses. Thus, the reliability and validity of these scales have not been empirically established.

Definition of Terms

For consistency of interpretation, the following terms are defined:

Student teacher. Any senior undergraduate who is receiving college credit for assisting a cooperating teacher full-time, in the cooperating teacher's classroom, in his or her major area, under the supervision of a faculty coordinator, and who is seeking state licensure to teach in this major area.

Elementary education major. Any subject who indicated a major in elementary education with no special education minor and is student teaching in a kindergarten through sixth-grade classroom.

Secondary education major. Any subject who indicated an academic content area major, such as mathematics, science, or business, which is not a special area major,

with no minor in special education, and is student teaching in a seventh- through twelfth-grade setting.

Special education major. Any subject who indicated either a major or minor in special education, or a major or minor in an area of special education such as mental disabilities or behavior disorders.

Special area major. Any subject who indicated a major in a special area, such as music, art or physical education, for which the state certifies one to teach in Kindergarten through twelfth-grade settings.

Preservice teacher. Any undergraduate college student enrolled in a teacher education program.

Cooperating teacher. A practicing teacher who is responsible for the day-to-day supervision and direction of a student teacher who is gaining experience in his or her classroom.

Student teaching coordinator. A university faculty member who periodically observes student teachers and provides feedback regarding performance, and facilitates weekly seminars to a group of student teachers. (Some researchers cited in the literature (Bond, 1952; Brett, 1979; Rickman & Hollowell, 1981) use the term "university faculty supervisor" or "university supervisor" to refer to these individuals.)

Stress. The body's nonspecific response to any demand, pleasant or unpleasant, that is placed on it (Selye, 1976).

Burnout. A pattern of emotional overload, overstimulation, and exhaustion (Hamann, Daugherty, & Mills, 1987).

CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

Classroom management involves planning and pacing instruction, making learning relevant to students' lives, assisting students through times of frustration, and more. It can be thought of as incorporating everything a teacher does to organize all aspects of the classroom so that instruction can take place. The term "classroom discipline" has a more narrow meaning, usually involving the establishment and enforcement of rules. Classroom discipline can be seen as a part of classroom management. Some authors (Bobbitt et al., 1991; Bond, 1952; Center for Education Statistics, 1987; Eaton, Weathers, & Phillips, 1957; Elam, 1989) use the term "classroom discipline," while others (Anderson et al., 1980; Bartos & Lotven, 1980; Ellis, Chase, Hutchison, Sacks, & Gibney, 1986; Evertson, Emmer, Sanford, & Clements, 1983; Reyes & Isele, 1990) refer to "classroom management." Other authors (Kagan, 1992; Perry & Taylor, 1982) tend to use these two terms interchangeably.

Concerns About Management and Discipline

The Public's Perspective

The general public seems to be concerned about the existence of classroom management and discipline problems in the schools. In a 1983 nation-wide Gallup poll of the public's attitudes towards public schools, 25% of the respondents cited lack of discipline as the biggest problem in their schools, while 42% indicated they felt improper training of teachers in the area of classroom management was a major cause of this problem (Gallup, 1983). In a 1985 national Gallup poll of the public's opinion, the most preferred solution to discipline problems in the school was, "Classes for teachers on how to deal with problem children," (p. 43) again indicating the public's view that inadequate training of teachers is a major cause of discipline problems (Gallup, 1985). In 1992, 17% of the respondents in Gallup's national poll of the public considered lack of discipline to be the biggest problem with which the public schools must deal, ranking it third among their concerns (Elam et al., 1992). The apparent gradual decline in the public's concern about lack of discipline may indicate a lessening of the public's concern over classroom management issues, or it may indicate the public's concern over other increasingly prevalent issues, such as the use of drugs in schools (which still has

implications for classroom management) or the lack of proper financial support for schools.

In a national poll conducted by Gallup for the National Education Association in 1988, a representative sample of 2,132 adults was surveyed. In this survey, in which those interviewed could give multiple responses, respondents were asked to identify the major reason for discipline problems in the schools. Of those responding, 52% viewed teachers' failure to establish and maintain control in the classroom as the major reason for the discipline problem in schools, ranking it ninth among 14 reasons. In addition, 43% considered the improper training of teachers to deal with such problems as the major reason for this problem, ranking it 12th (National Education Association, 1988).

There seems to be concern among the general public about the existence of classroom management and discipline problems in their schools. Responsibility for the existence of these problems is often placed on teachers and improper teacher training. Teachers seem to agree with the general public about the existence of discipline problems, but tend to place more responsibility for these problems on societal issues.

Professional Perspectives

Teacher opinion seems to somewhat parallel that of the general public concerning the existence of discipline

problems in the school. A mailed survey to a sample of 2,000 teachers, stratified proportionately by region and grade level taught, was conducted by Elam (1989). Of the 830 respondents, 25% considered lack of discipline one of the biggest problems which the public schools faced, ranking it fourth (tied with one other item) among 27 possible responses. (Respondents could select more than one item.) For purposes of comparison with public perception in this same year, 19% of the respondents to the Gallup/Phi Delta Kappa public opinion poll considered lack of discipline a problem, ranking it second (Elam & Gallup, 1989).

The previously mentioned Gallup/N.E.A. opinion poll was repeated using 2,107 teachers, who were members of the N.E.A., as subjects. When asked to identify the major reasons for discipline problems in the school, 24% cited teachers' failure to establish and maintain classroom control, while 23% viewed improper training as a main reason. These items ranked 10th and 11th, respectively (N.E.A., 1988). This indicates a difference of opinion between teachers and the general public as to the reasons behind the discipline problems in the school. Teachers tended to place more responsibility for the problem on societal issues, such as the breakup of traditional families and family values (87%), while the public tended to place more responsibility on teachers' inadequate training.

Augmenting these data is a study by The Center for Education Statistics (1987). In this study, a two-stage stratified national sample of elementary and secondary school teachers completed a survey concerning discipline problems in schools. This survey was designed to "replicate certain questions asked on previous surveys of teachers and administrators" (p. 1). Of the 1,547 teachers surveyed, 44% indicated that, compared to five years earlier, disruptive student behavior had increased, while 28% reported that it was about the same, and 27% indicated that it had declined. Of the total sample, 8% reported being threatened by students within the last 12 months, and 2% had been attacked physically by students within the last 12 months. While few teachers reported incidents of aggressive behavior, many still perceived an increase in disruptive behavior, which usually includes behaviors other than threats and physical attacks. The term "disruptive behavior" was not clearly defined in the study.

In this same study, teachers were asked to rate the extent to which certain factors limited their ability to maintain order and discipline at their schools. Only 15% considered "lack of or inadequate teacher training in discipline procedures and school law" (p. 17) to be "much" or "very much" limiting, while 31% of the teachers believed that they were a "little" or "somewhat" limited, and 54%

considered themselves to be "very little" or "not at all" limited by this factor. Therefore, while many of the teachers in this sample had experienced an increase in disruptive student behavior over the five year period, a majority did not consider themselves very limited by improper training in classroom discipline. This study was very large in scope and used a representative sample of teachers; however, no details concerning the procedures that were used or the development of the instrument were given.

Several professionals who have worked with teachers and written about classroom management consider this area one in which teachers are often inadequately trained (Berliner, 1984; Ellis et al., 1986; Froyen, 1988; Kagan, 1992; Perry & Taylor, 1982). There is research to indicate that others in the field of education share this view. In a survey of 8 principals and 62 teachers in rural Montana, nearly all of the respondents indicated that students preparing for careers in rural schools needed better training in discipline than they seemed to be getting. This survey used an open-ended format, asking teachers and principals about their perceptions of the need for the development of special programs for preservice teachers preparing for careers in rural schools, and for specific recommendations of areas of study to be included in such a program (Surwill, 1980). A list of the schools

in which the respondents taught was provided, but other demographic data related to grade level and teaching experience were not described. No statistical information regarding the data was provided in the article, calling into question the validity of the results.

A study conducted by Reyes and Isele (1990) provides some interesting insight into the degree of importance placed on classroom management during student teaching. Student teaching summative evaluation forms were solicited from all elementary teacher education programs throughout the United States that were accredited with the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE). From the 507 listed colleges and universities, 368 evaluation forms were received. A total of 11,248 items from these forms were analyzed, and only 522 (4.6%) were judged as objectively measuring classroom management skills. The items related to classroom management also tended to be isolated rather than encompassing specific models of effective classroom management. While these summative student teacher evaluation forms may be seen as reflective of the content of the programs offered by many institutions, the authors contended that "it is unreasonable to assume that major knowledge bases found absent on these forms, are neglected in the academic classroom" (p. 12). It may be that these rating forms are not in alignment with the

academic content and pedagogy taught in teacher education programs, or that classroom management skills may indeed be absent from many teacher education programs. It is also possible that these skills may have been seen as difficult to evaluate by those who developed the forms and thus were excluded from these forms.

A number of people in the general public and in the field of education believe that classroom management problems exist in schools, although opinions about the causes of these problems differ. Some teachers may consider themselves adequately prepared to face the challenge of classroom management, while other teachers, professionals, and researchers believe that teachers are inadequately prepared to manage classrooms effectively. When teachers feel they are not prepared to effectively manage classrooms, they often become frustrated, experience feelings of stress and burnout, and may leave the profession.

Teacher Responses to Classroom Management Difficulties

In writing about the topic of classroom management, various authors have indicated that their experiences with classroom teachers have led them to believe that the lack of effective classroom management skills is a major cause of teacher stress and burnout (Savage, 1991; Spillman, 1980). Eaton et al. (1957) would have agreed with these

authors. Nearly four decades ago, they studied the reactions of teachers to problem behavior and found a high proportion of beginning teachers "indicated that they would quit teaching if problem behavior gets any worse, that teachers have to spend too much time on discipline, that teachers should not be expected to keep real trouble-makers in class, and that parents should be more responsible for the behavior of their children" (p. 133). During that same year, Kolson (1957) published an article based on a survey in which he had participated several years earlier. This survey found discipline to be the major problem for teachers who had taught for less than six years. The presence of these studies in the literature indicates that the problem of classroom management is one that has troubled teachers for quite some time.

More recent studies also point to a connection between classroom management concerns and teacher stress and burnout. Gold, Roth, Wright, and Michael (1991) studied 139 beginning teachers in a large metropolitan school district, in part to examine the relationship between several teacher-related variables--including perceived adequacy of training, workload, and repeating the choice of teaching as a career--to each of three measures of burnout as determined by the Maslach Burnout Inventory. These measures of burnout include emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and

personal accomplishment. The sample included 102 elementary, 9 secondary, and 27 junior high school teachers who had one to three years of teaching experience. The subjects completed a 3-point Likert scale measuring the three teacher-related variables (workload, perceived adequacy of training, and likelihood of repeating the choice of teaching as a career), and the Maslach Burnout Inventory. For each of the three dependent burnout measures, a stepwise multiple regression analysis was carried out, using the three teaching-related variables as predictors. This analysis revealed statistically significant relationships between several of the variables. The strongest significant relationships were between perceived adequacy of teacher training in preparing the teacher for the first years of teaching and both Depersonalization ($r = -.33$) and Emotional Exhaustion ($r = -.30$), both $p \leq .001$. Teachers who reported lower levels of perceived adequacy in preparedness more frequently reported experiences consistent with those of depersonalization and emotional exhaustion. These results suggest a link between perceived adequacy in general teacher preparedness and the depersonalization and emotional exhaustion which often lead to teacher burnout. However, due to the correlational nature of the data, it cannot be said definitively that perceived lack of training leads to depersonalization and emotional exhaustion in teachers.

Raschke et al. (1985) surveyed 230 elementary public school teachers to identify those factors that contributed to their job satisfaction and dissatisfaction, and to elicit their suggestions for improving the overall environment of their schools. A five-part questionnaire addressing specific issues related to teacher stress was used. The second portion of this instrument, which relates most directly to this review, asked subjects to rank order 11 items that had been found in the literature to be sources of job stress. Of the items ranked in the top five, "disruptive students" (#2), "student apathy" (#4), and "dealing with multiability students" (#5) could all be considered classroom management issues, as defined by the current study. A limitation may exist in the scope of this study as it used subjects from only one geographic region. It also used a mailed survey and there appeared to be no follow-up of the 70 (23.3%) recipients who did not respond to discover if their opinions differed significantly from those of the respondents.

Bobbitt et al. (1991) examined teachers who stayed in and left the profession in order to determine the characteristics of both groups, to follow their career patterns, and to attain data on job satisfaction. This study was developed by the U. S. Department of Education's National Center for Education Statistics and was conducted

by the U. S. Bureau of the Census as a follow-up to an earlier study. Public and private school teachers who responded to the Center's Schools and Staffing Survey were sorted by a variety of traits, including teacher's subject, school enrollment, and urbanicity, and were then selected using a probability-proportional-to-size sampling procedure. The resultant sample consisted of 7,172 subjects, 2,987 of whom had left the profession of teaching, and 4,185 of whom had remained in teaching. School administrators were contacted and asked about the career status of each individual in the sample. Separate questionnaires were mailed to those whom the administrators had reported were still in the profession and those who had reportedly left the profession. A second mailing was conducted for those who had not responded within 5 weeks, and a telephone follow-up was performed with those not responding to the second mailing. A field follow-up was also conducted, yielding a total weighted response rate of 97.2. Of the 2,222 subjects who reported dissatisfaction with teaching as one of the three main reasons for leaving the profession, 7.5% of the public school teachers and 16.5 % of private school teachers indicated their main area of dissatisfaction was student discipline problems, ranking it 6th and 2nd, respectively, of 12 areas of dissatisfaction. In the Center's previously reviewed study, 17% of the teachers

sampled indicated they had seriously considered leaving the profession within the last 12 months because of student discipline problems (Center for Education Statistics, 1987).

Not surprisingly, classroom management has been found to be a cause of stress and failure for student teachers, as well. In a survey of 254 cooperating teachers and 17 university faculty supervisors, the major cause of student teacher failure at the secondary level was believed to be problems with classroom management. The survey in this study consisted of a list of ten possible causes of student teacher failure, including poor teaching methods, lack of motivation, and problems with classroom management and discipline. Using a five point scale ranging from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree," subjects were asked to indicate the degree to which they agreed that each identified cause of failure was indeed a significant factor in the failure of student teachers at the secondary level. Results indicated that "problems with classroom management and discipline" received the highest percentage of "strongly agree" and "agree" responses, with 90% of the cooperating teachers and 82% of the faculty supervisors responding positively (Rickman & Hollowell, 1981). The scope of this study was limited to Arizona, with all of the subjects' student teachers being from one institution. The number of faculty supervisors who participated was also small. The

total number of student teachers involved as well as the number of student teaching failures was not disclosed. When interpreting the results, these limitations must be noted.

One university supervisor of student teachers found her student teachers' lack of classroom management skills to be so great that she developed a training module for student teachers. Rubin (1991) analyzed her evaluations of student teachers and found that, during the first three weeks of their student teaching experience, 15 of the 18 student teachers received from her a rating, on a scale of 1 to 5, of either "2" (needs improvement) or "1" (poor) on those competencies that related to classroom management. Post-observation conferences were held, at which time the student teachers also expressed "their feelings of inadequacy and frustration" (p. 7) in the area of classroom management. Rubin then administered a questionnaire to a new group of 18 previously unrated student teachers early in their student teaching experience, asking them about their prior training and perceived skill in the area of classroom management. All of the 18 student teachers reported a perceived lack of adequate skills in managing classroom behavior.

Elementary and secondary student teachers responding to a survey by Abernathy et al. (1985) ranked classroom discipline and unmotivated students, which both could be

seen as classroom management concerns, as the two primary causes of stress during their student teaching experience. This survey listed 13 stress factors gained from interviews of student teachers and regular classroom teachers, and the survey had been previously tested in a pilot study to determine its validity for use with both elementary and secondary student teachers. The 175 student teachers were asked to rank the 13 items by placing only one in each of the "most stressful" and "least stressful" categories, and dividing the remaining factors between the "more stressful" (5 items) and "less stressful" (6 items) categories. Of the respondents, 100% placed "classroom discipline" in the "most stressful" category. Categories were weighted (1 = most stressful and 4 = least stressful) and factors were ranked. "Unmotivated students" was ranked as the second most stressful factor.

Beyerbach and Smith (1990) studied preservice teachers' thinking about effective teaching using concept mapping. Participating in the study were 17 early childhood education majors in their senior year. These students were asked to first brainstorm categories and subcategories related to effective teaching, and then to construct a concept map by organizing these into concept hierarchies around the topic. Students constructed these maps individually during the first class of the year, and in pairs using a computer

program in the first class of the second semester. The students updated this second map throughout the semester, and also reflected on their experiences in using the computer program to construct and revise the second map. Maps were analyzed to discern changes in several aspects including hierarchical organization, use of technical vocabulary, and total number of items on the maps. Discipline and classroom management were seen "frequently" in the students' first maps, and, in the students' final maps, the topic of classroom management was more developed than any other topic, which may indicate that not only was classroom management of concern to them initially, it became more of a concern as the school year progressed. Since the students were enrolled in courses and field experiences during the span of the study, these results may also be due to the students being taught more about classroom management during this time.

In a review of learning-to-teach studies, Kagan (1992) indicated that acquiring management routines was one of the primary developmental tasks of novice teachers. Kagan also noted the novice teachers' "obsession with class control" (p. 163), which usually lasts until they have "established standard routines and resolved their images of self as teacher," (p. 163) and indicated that preservice teacher

education programs should address the area of classroom management more fully.

In a study of student teachers and practicing teachers, Bartos and Lotven (1980) administered a questionnaire to 50 teachers (mean years of teaching experience = 5.7 years) and 20 student teachers. The questionnaire listed 15 areas of teacher competency and asked respondents to rate on a scale of one to five the extent to which they needed each competency in their classrooms, as well as their level of proficiency in each competency. The student teachers were administered the questionnaire both before and after an eleven-week student teaching experience. When the mean scores for each of the 15 areas were ranked for each sample group, the "ability to maintain order in a classroom and to assist students in the development of self-discipline" (p. 3) was ranked first by experienced teachers and experienced student teachers, with all groups rating this need as "extensive" (5) to "moderate" (4). While the sample size, especially that of the student teachers, was quite small, the sample did represent elementary, middle school/junior high, and secondary school teachers across rural, urban, and suburban settings.

In a study involving experienced teachers and supervisors of first and second year teachers and/or student teachers, Ellis et al. (1986) examined 46 specific classroom

management skills in terms of importance, implementation, and preservice preparation. Two separate surveys were used. Each listed the same 46 teacher competencies and asked respondents to rate, on a scale of one to five, the importance of each skill to establishing effective classroom management. The teachers were asked to judge the degree of preservice preparation they had received for each listed skill by marking "extensive," "considerable," "minimal," or "not at all." The supervisors were asked to identify those skills they considered to be difficult for first and second year teachers or student teachers to implement. A preliminary analysis was conducted to determine which skills were considered important by both groups. Further analysis focused on the preservice preparation and implementation data for those items which were considered important by both groups. While the authors do not provide detail on how these analyses were conducted, they do conclude from a "general interpretation" of the analyses that "a more comprehensive preservice approach must be adopted if student and new teachers are to be proficient in classroom management" (p. 18).

Effective Classroom Management Techniques

Many professionals in the field of education have addressed the problem of classroom management. Some experts

have researched this area and found that effective classroom managers share some common traits, while others have theorized about the best approaches to classroom management.

Kounin (1970) studied 50 first- and second-grade classrooms by video-taping each classroom for one day. These tapes were viewed and students were selected from each class, and their work involvement and deviant behaviors were coded at twelve-second intervals during student recitation and seatwork. Teacher behavior was then scored on several variables related to teaching style, such as the "correctness" of the "target" (student to whom an attempt to stop misbehavior was directed), the "timing" of an attempt to stop misbehavior, and the amount of overlapping (simultaneously attending to more than one aspect of the classroom) evidenced by the teacher. Kounin then attempted to find correlations between each of the teacher variables and each of the two measures of student behavior.

Several specific categories of teacher behavior were found to correlate with the teachers' managerial success, as measured by work involvement and rate of deviancy, in both recitation and seatwork settings. These categories were termed "withitness" (showing that the teacher knows what is going on), "overlapping," "transition smoothness" (giving warnings before transitions, bringing closure to

each activity, and focusing upon the next activity), and utilizing a variety of learning tasks in seatwork (p. 74). In recitation settings, positive correlations were found between withitness and work involvement ($\underline{r} = .62, \underline{p} \leq .05$), and between withitness and freedom from deviancy rate ($\underline{r} = .53, \underline{p} \leq .05$). In seatwork settings, a correlation of .51 ($\underline{p} \leq .05$) was found between withitness and freedom from deviancy. Overlapping was found to correlate with freedom from deviancy in both recitation ($\underline{r} = .36, \underline{p} \leq .05$) and seatwork ($\underline{r} = .38, \underline{p} \leq .05$) settings. A positive correlation was also found between overlapping and work involvement in recitation settings ($\underline{r} = .46, \underline{p} \leq .05$). Transition smoothness was found to correlate highly with both work involvement ($\underline{r} = .60, \underline{p} \leq .05$) and freedom from deviancy ($\underline{r} = .49, \underline{p} \leq .05$) in recitation settings. In seatwork settings, a positive correlation was found between smoothness and freedom from deviancy ($\underline{r} = .42, \underline{p} \leq .05$), and seatwork variety and challenge was found to correlate with work involvement ($\underline{r} = .52, \underline{p} \leq .05$). Although Kounin's study only showed a relationship between these teacher behaviors and the managerial success of teachers and could not, due to its design, indicate cause and effect, discussions about these teacher behaviors have been included in several classroom management textbooks (Evertson, Emmer,

Clements, Sanford, & Worsham, 1989; Froyen, 1993; Levin, & Nolan, 1991; McQueen 1992; Savage, 1991; Stefanich, 1987).

Some of the teacher behaviors that were found by Kounin (1970) to be important for effective classroom management were also considered by teachers to be important. In the previously described study by Ellis et al. (1986), several classroom management skills were considered important by both the experienced teachers and the supervisors of first and second year teachers and/or student teachers, and were considered difficult for first and second year teachers and/or student teachers to implement. These skills included "dealing with an individual student while at the same time observing the entire classroom," (p. 18) which seems to fit under Kounin's definition of "overlapping." "Monitoring the classroom regularly so that potential disruptive behavior can be dealt with quickly," (p. 18), was also included in the list and seems to fit under Kounin's definition of "withitness." "Enforcing firmly, fairly, and consistently established rules," and "using a variety of instructional strategies," (p. 19) were also included on the list and mentioned by Kounin. "Promoting active student involvement rather than passive, nonparticipatory learning," and "pacing lessons to coincide with student understanding" (p. 19) were also considered important to classroom management, but difficult for first and second

year teachers and student teachers to implement. These techniques have been included in a variety of classroom management textbooks, as well (Evertson et al., 1989; Froyen, 1993; Levin & Nolan, 1991; McQueen, 1992; Savage, 1991; Stefanich, 1987).

Anderson et al. (1980) conducted a study of third-grade teachers' classroom management behaviors. In this study, 27 teachers were observed at various times throughout the year, and narrative records were completed during each observation. In order to provide additional information, teachers were also interviewed twice during the school year. The narratives and interviews were analyzed by the researchers, and each teacher was given a score on managerial effectiveness. Student engagement ratings were also made by trained observers, and the observers rated each teacher on managerial effectiveness. Students' math and reading achievement scores were also used in the analysis. These data were compiled and when there was "agreement among the four data sources" (p. 344)--the researchers' summary score, observer ratings, student engagement ratings, and students' math and reading achievement scores--those teachers were identified as either high or low in managerial effectiveness.

After comparing these two extreme groups, three types of teacher behaviors were found to "have implications for

the quality and quantity of information provided to students" (p. 345). The categories of teacher behaviors that were demonstrated by more effective managers were:

(a) Teacher behaviours that may convey purposefulness and meaningfulness of academic activities (i.e., the students are informed about why on-task behaviours are important).

(b) Teacher behaviours that instruct students in the skills of good behaviour (i.e., the students are informed how to behave).

(c) Teacher behaviours that indicate a sense of the students' level of understanding and need for information and teacher selection of activities that reflect this. (p. 345-346)

Specific behaviors reflective of these broader behavioral categories included:

1. Circulating through the room during seat-work to check student progress frequently, and requiring all students to participate during group activities.

2. Describing rules clearly and in behavioral terms, deliberately teaching the rules to students, and providing specific positive as well as negative feedback.

3. Clearly starting and stopping activities, providing warnings before transitions, and consistently requiring that all students pay attention when important information is being given.

Evertson et al. (1983) used the findings of the above study to develop a management manual for teachers. The manual included specific, concrete recommendations and suggestions for management with related examples,

illustrations, and case studies to help further illustrate the recommendations. This manual was then used as part of the treatment conditions in the Classroom Management Improvement Study (C.M.I.S.) The subjects who participated in this study were volunteers from one large urban school district and one small suburban school district, who had taught for 2 years or less, or were teaching for the first time in a new school or community, at a different grade level, or with a new student population. The 41 subjects were blocked into matched pairs by teaching experience, grade level, and school in order to prevent imbalance, and members of each pair were randomly assigned to either the treatment or control conditions, with 23 being assigned to the experimental group, and 18 being assigned to the control group (the uneven nature of the two groups was not explained by the researchers, and may be cause for question). The teachers in the experimental group were given the manual at a workshop held 4 days prior to the beginning of the school year. A second workshop, held during the 5th week of school, was used to refocus teachers' attention on the manual and to allow for discussion among the teachers in this group. The control group was not given the manual or allowed to participate in the workshops.

The classrooms of the teachers in the treatment and control groups were then observed between August and

February, with emphasis given to the first 8 weeks of school, and narrative records were kept. Student task engagement and inappropriate behaviors were rated during the observations. After each observation, the observers rated teacher behaviors on several variables including managing pupil behavior and presenting information, and student behaviors, such as disruptive and inappropriate behavior. Further information was gathered from the teachers through the use of questionnaires and interviews.

Several of the above sources of data, including fourth-week observer ratings and narrative reader ratings, were analyzed using a repeated-measures analysis of variance. The results indicated that the teachers involved in the treatment had better-managed classrooms than did the control teachers. Significantly lower proportions ($p \leq .05$) of students were off-task without permission in the classes taught by the treatment teachers, and there was significantly less ($p \leq .05$) inappropriate behavior in the treatment teachers' classes than in the control teachers' classes. These results support the findings of the study described above. Teachers in the treatment group also displayed more of the behaviors listed as those used by effective managers, and tended to be better managers than teachers in the control group. The results also imply that effective classroom management skills can be taught

through systematic training. This finding has obvious implications for preservice teacher training. If behaviors common to effective managers could be taught to the teachers in this study, it might also be possible to teach these behaviors to preservice teachers in a similar way.

Over 30 years ago, Bond (1952) compared the characteristics of student teachers in the area of classroom management in order to identify differences in these characteristics that may have accounted for the differences in their effectiveness as managers. A 5-point Likert scale was used to rate student teachers on 32 characteristics. These ratings were completed by the cooperating teachers and supervisors of 589 secondary and 266 elementary student teachers. In analyzing the data, the rating scales of those rated "superior" in discipline were compared with the whole group of scales. For each of the 32 characteristics, mean scores were calculated for both groups. Based on these means, the characteristics were ranked, and lists of characteristics were compared between groups. The highly rated student teachers were found to be relatively outstanding in three qualities: "1) understanding pupils, 2) maintaining effective pupil-teacher relationships, and 3) leading pupils to attain desirable goals" (p. 514). However, the article did not mention

any tests of statistical significance, so the validity of the results may be questionable.

Brett (1979) more recently found similar results. Fifty-five student teachers were given general ratings by their cooperating teachers, university supervisors, and principals using four categories from "outstanding" to "poor." Student teachers were then asked to list the classroom management techniques that had been effective for them in their student teaching experiences. The student teachers who were rated as "outstanding" listed aspects of management that indicated a concern for building relationships with students and developing a sense of trust and caring, while less highly rated student teachers were more likely to mention practices related to punishment. Given the strong link that seems to exist between effective classroom management and successful teaching, the student teachers who were generally rated as "outstanding" student teachers were probably more effective managers than the student teachers who were rated as "poor" student teachers. Therefore, the more effective classroom managers in this study indicated that the approaches to management that were most effective for them were those related to building trusting, caring relationships with students, while the less effective managers relied more on approaches related to punishment.

Summary

Much research exists that supports the view held by professionals in the field of education, as well as the general public, that classroom management problems exist in schools. These problems often interfere with student learning and teacher satisfaction. In fact, many teachers and student teachers view themselves as inadequately prepared to manage classrooms. Teachers who have difficulty managing classrooms often experience stress and burnout, and consider leaving or do leave the profession. In order to improve the teaching and learning environment in schools, preservice teachers should be provided with instruction in effective management skills.

Research indicates that effective classroom managers share some common skills and behaviors that can be taught to teachers. Kounin (1970) found that effective managers made smooth transitions between activities, simultaneously attended to more than one aspect of the classroom, used nonverbal techniques to show that they knew what was going on throughout the classroom, and used a variety of learning tasks in seatwork. Other researchers (Ellis et al., 1986) found similar results and determined that effective managers also paced lessons to coincide with student understanding and were firm, fair, and consistent in enforcing and establishing rules. Still others (Anderson et al., 1980)

have concluded that effective managers circulate throughout the room to monitor student progress, clearly describe rules and deliberately teach rules to students, and make smooth transitions between activities. All of these studies tend to point towards similar types of teacher behaviors that have been related to effective classroom management. Some evidence also exists to indicate that these behaviors may be taught to inservice teachers (Evertson et al., 1983). If these behaviors can be taught to practicing teachers, it may also be possible for teacher education institutions to teach them to preservice teachers. At those institutions where courses in classroom management skills are being offered, an investigation of the perceptions of those who have completed such a course, as compared to those who have not, may be beneficial to evaluating the effectiveness of such courses.

CHAPTER 3
DESIGN OF THE STUDY

Subjects

The subjects for this study were drawn from student teachers attending the University of Northern Iowa (U.N.I.), which is a mid-sized university with a population comprised primarily of students from Iowa. An attempt was made to solicit data from all elementary, secondary, special education, and special area student teachers who were student teaching in the Spring 1993 semester. Of the approximately 270 student teachers, 178 valid questionnaires were returned for analysis. The data were gathered when these student teachers had completed their first 8-week student teaching assignment and were 2 weeks or less into their second placement assignment. Data were gathered after the students were exposed to teaching because, at this time, student teachers were probably more aware of the importance of and their preparedness to handle aspects of classroom management than they had been prior to student teaching. Since the students were asked to base their feelings of preparedness on their recollections of the content presented in their programs, data were gathered after the initial 8-week experience as opposed to after 16 full weeks of student teaching. Recollections after

8 weeks may have been more accurate than recollections after a 16-week period of time.

The mean age of subjects was 24 years with a standard deviation of 4.2 years. The subjects had completed an average of 7.6 semesters at U.N.I. (SD = 2.43). Within the sample, 81 students were elementary education majors, 54 were majors in secondary education, 25 were in the field of special education, and 18 were special area majors.

Informed consent was obtained from the subjects prior to the completion of the instrument. The informed consent form (see Appendix A) was attached to the measurement instrument, and each participant was asked to read and sign the form, and return it to the researcher with the instrument. When the completed forms and instruments were returned, the informed consent forms were removed before the data were coded for analysis.

Sources of Data

The instrument that was used was developed by the researcher (see Appendix B). The instrument consisted of a listing of specific classroom management strategies and behaviors. These strategies and behaviors were derived from the literature cited in the review above, and classroom management textbooks (Froyen, 1993; Levin & Nolan, 1991; McQueen, 1992; Savage, 1991; Stefanich 1987).

The instrument contained two scales, both of which used a Likert format. On one scale, subjects were asked to rate how important they believed each skill or behavior was to effective classroom management. Possible ratings ranged from "1" (not important) to "5" (extremely important). A "U" rating was also available and indicated that the subject was uncertain as to the item's importance. This scale allowed the researcher to quantify the importance that students placed on each skill or behavior, as well as to determine the students' perceptions of the overall importance of these skills and behaviors to effective classroom management. Subject's overall importance scores were computed by summing the ratings for each skill or behavior on the importance scale. The range of possible summative scores for the importance scale was 30 to 150.

On the second scale, respondents were asked to rate how prepared they felt to utilize these same skills and behaviors. Ratings ranged from "1" (not prepared) to "5" (extremely prepared), again with a "U" for "uncertain." In this way, the students' feelings of preparedness in regard to each skill or behavior were quantified, and overall preparedness scores were found by totaling the ratings for each skill or behavior on the preparedness scale. The range of possible summative scores on the preparedness scale was 30 to 150.

The instrument also included a demographic information page (see Appendix C), for gathering information such as age, number of semesters at U.N.I., and major. Other information that may have affected the students' perceptions of importance and feelings of preparedness was also gathered. This information included the number of students taught in one class, the courses dealing with classroom management or discipline that had been taken, and the frequency of discipline problems encountered during student teaching.

Procedures

The researcher met with the university student teaching coordinators when they gathered on campus on February 23, 1993. The researcher explained the relevant details of the study and asked for the coordinators' cooperation in administering the instrument at one of their large group meetings with the student teachers. The coordinators were asked to allow the student teachers time to voluntarily complete the instrument during a student teaching seminar meeting, and were also asked to note any questions or concerns the students had in relation to the study. Once cooperation was gained, the questionnaires were distributed to the coordinators along with addressed, postage-paid envelopes for returning the completed instruments to the

researcher. Of the 10 coordinators supervising student teachers in Iowa, 8 complied with the administration guidelines and returned usable data.

Of the demographic information gathered, Major was chosen as the sole independent variable to be examined. Subjects who indicated that their major was elementary education, elementary/early childhood education, or elementary/middle school education and did not indicate a minor in the field of special education were grouped together as elementary majors, since similarities existed among the required programs for each of these majors in the area of classroom management.

Those who listed a major in an academic content area and did not indicate a minor in special education were grouped together as secondary majors. A variety of content areas were represented including social science, biology, English, and math.

Several subjects indicated a major or a minor in the field of special education, including specific areas such as mental disabilities or behavior disorders. Since majors and minors in special education complete similar requirements in the area of classroom management, these subjects were grouped together as special education majors.

The fourth category contained special area majors which includes those majoring in physical education, art

education, music education, or other areas for which the state certifies one to teach in kindergarten through 12th grade settings. These programs were believed to have similar requirements in the area of classroom management.

Data Analysis

Initially, means and standard deviations were computed for the descriptive variables, age and number of semesters at U.N.I. Subjects ratings on each item were used to compute item means and standard deviations. Then, subjects' ratings were summed across items on each scale to yield total importance and preparedness scores. Summative scores of questionnaires containing blank and/or "uncertain" responses were not used in the analyses.

Reliability coefficients for internal consistency were calculated using Cronbach's Alpha for each scale (importance and preparedness). A correlational test between the two scales was also conducted.

The data were then analyzed to determine the relationship between summative scale scores and subject Major (i.e., elementary, secondary, special education, and content area majors). Means and standard deviations were calculated by Major for each scale. A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to determine the effect of the variable Major on the summative scale scores for

importance. A one-way ANOVA was also performed to determine the effect of the variable Major on the summative scale scores for preparedness. When significant F values were found, Scheffé S tests were conducted as a post hoc procedure in order to identify specific differences between the means of the four Major groups. The Scheffé S test was used in order to control the Type I experiment-wise error rate within this study, and because the sample sizes of the four Major groups were unequal. Alpha was set at .05 for these procedures.

CHAPTER 4
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Description of Participants

Approximately 270 U.N.I. students participated in student teaching during the Spring 1993 semester. Most of these students were placed primarily in schools throughout Iowa or in Omaha, Nebraska on the Iowa-Nebraska border. Twenty-eight students were placed at a site in San Antonio, Texas. Of the 10 faculty coordinators supervising student teachers in the Midwest, 8 returned usable data yielding a total sample size of 178 subjects. The average age of the subjects was 24 years ($SD = 4.2$ years), and the students reported completing an average of 7.6 semesters at U.N.I. ($SD = 2.43$ semesters). The participants were divided into groups by Major. There were 81 elementary education majors, 54 secondary education majors, 25 special education majors, and 18 special area K-12 majors.

Scale Reliability

The reliability for each scale was calculated using Cronbach's alpha. The importance scale was found to be a reliable instrument, with a Cronbach alpha reliability coefficient of .90 for internal consistency. The

preparedness scale was also found to be reliable, with a Cronbach alpha reliability of .96 for internal consistency.

Importance

The group means and standard deviations for the importance scale scores have been presented by Major in Table 1. (These means have also been presented pictorially with the means for the preparedness scale in Figure 1 on page 57.) The means in this table were calculated using the sums of the 30 items on the importance scale, which were rated on a scale of 1 ("not important") to 5 ("extremely important"). Thus, possible scores on this scale ranged from 30 to 150. Actual obtained scores ranged from 110 to 150, indicating that these items were considered at least somewhat important by all of the students.

A total of 31 (17.4%) of the subjects either did not respond or responded "uncertain" to one or more items on the importance scale. These blank and uncertain responses tended to occur most frequently on certain items on the scale. These items may have been ambiguous, causing some subjects to not respond or to indicate "uncertain." The total scores from scales containing such responses were not included in this analysis.

Table 1

Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) Values for Total Importance Scale

| <u>Group</u> | <u>Mean</u> | <u>SD</u> | <u>N</u> |
|---------------------|-------------|-----------|----------|
| Total | 135.78 | 9.31 | 147 |
| Elementary | 137.85 | 8.44 | 66 |
| Secondary | 131.89 | 9.47 | 46 |
| Special Education | 139.29 | 8.87 | 21 |
| Special Area Majors | 133.57 | 9.30 | 14 |

Note. Questionnaires containing blank and/or "uncertain" responses on the importance scale (N = 31 or 17.4%) were not included in this analysis.

The results of the one-way analysis of variance have been presented in Table 2. This analysis yielded an $F_{3,143}$ value of 5.47 ($p < .05$). Post-hoc Scheffé S tests of pairwise means revealed that elementary and special education majors rated the importance of the elements of classroom management listed on the scale significantly higher than did the secondary majors ($p < .05$). The

Table 2

ANOVA Results for Importance Scale Scores by Major

| Sources of Variation | Sum of Squares | <u>df</u> ^a | Mean Square | $\frac{F}{\text{Ratio}}$ | $\frac{F}{\text{Probability}}$ ^b |
|----------------------|----------------|------------------------|-------------|--------------------------|---|
| Major | 1304.38 | 3 | 434.79 | 5.4738 | .0014 |
| Error Term | 11358.66 | 143 | 79.43 | | |
| Total | 12663.03 | 146 | | | |

^adf = degrees of freedom. ^bExact probability.

results of these Scheffé S tests have been presented in Table 3.

The differences between the secondary majors, and both the elementary and special education majors may be due to the differences that existed between the required programs for each of these majors. Those majoring in elementary education were required to take one course focusing on classroom management, and those majoring in areas of special education were required to take two or more courses focusing on classroom management. Thus, these students may place more importance on classroom management skills because they have received more exposure to them in their programs and have been convinced of the

Table 3

Scheffé S Test Results of Pairwise Means for Importance

| Major | | | | |
|--------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| | Spec. Ed. | Elementary | Spec. Area | Secondary |
| Means | 139.29 | 137.85 | 133.57 | 131.89 |
| 139.29 | -- | 1.44 | 5.72 | 7.40* |
| 137.85 | | -- | 4.28 | 5.96* |
| 133.57 | | | -- | 1.68 |
| 131.89 | | | | -- |

* $p \leq .05$.

importance of these skills. Special education majors rated classroom management skills more important than did any other group, which may have been because they were required to take the most coursework on classroom management. Alternatively, the secondary majors, having not been required to take such courses, may not have received the same exposure and, therefore, considered these skills less important. Statistically significant differences between the special area majors and all other majors were not found.

However, the means of the special area majors on the importance scale did fall in between the means of the elementary majors and those of the secondary majors. Since special area majors teach in both elementary and secondary settings, it seems reasonable that their opinions about the importance of classroom management skills would fall somewhere in between those of the elementary and secondary majors.

A similar possible explanation for the differences that were found between the secondary majors' ratings of importance and those of the elementary and special education majors has to do with a certain naiveté in regard to classroom management that may exist among secondary education majors. Secondary education programs have traditionally focused more on content and less on teaching methodology than elementary programs have. Thus, secondary majors may leave the university setting believing that, if they know their content area well, they will have no difficulties in teaching this content to their students. Therefore, classroom management may be seen as less important due to differences in the underlying philosophies of elementary and secondary educators.

Some secondary majors may have had experiences in which classroom management challenges were few. In such cases, classroom management skills may be judged to be

less important because they seemed unimportant in these less challenging settings. Since the secondary education preparation program did not emphasize classroom management, the secondary majors may only have their student teaching on which to base their judgments.

A fourth explanation for these differences may be that the evaluation instrument listed only those items that are important to effective management in elementary classrooms, and a different set of classroom management skills may be more important to effective management in secondary classrooms. If this were true, one would expect that secondary majors would rate the scale items as less important than did the elementary majors.

Preparedness

The mean scores and standard deviations for each major on the preparedness scale have been presented in Table 4. (These mean scores have also been presented pictorially with the importance means in Figure 1 on page 57.) These values were calculated using the sums of the 30 items on the preparedness scale, which were rated on a scale from 1 ("not prepared") to 5 ("extremely prepared"). Thus, possible scores on this scale ranged from 30 to 150. Actual obtained scores ranged from 59 to 140. A total of 49 (27.5%) of the subjects did not respond or responded

Table 4

Mean and Standard Deviation (SD) Values for Total Preparedness Scale

| Group | Mean | <u>SD</u> | <u>N</u> |
|---------------------|--------|-----------|----------|
| Total | 103.75 | 19.05 | 129 |
| Elementary | 106.60 | 18.33 | 60 |
| Secondary | 92.54 | 16.49 | 37 |
| Special Education | 115.78 | 14.83 | 18 |
| Special Area Majors | 105.71 | 20.23 | 14 |

Note. Questionnaires containing blank and/or "uncertain" responses on the preparedness scale (N = 49 or 27.5%) were not included in this analysis.

"uncertain" to at least one item on the preparedness scale. These responses tended to occur on certain specific items, which may indicate that these particular items were ambiguous. The total scores from scales containing blank and/or uncertain responses were not included in this analysis.

An examination of these data shows lower means than those for the importance scale, with considerable

variability in responses within each group. This variability may have been due to differences in the subjects' prior experiences working with children, or differences in the classroom management situations encountered by subjects during student teaching. Differences in the subjects' degree of assimilation of the classroom management content included within each major program may also account for this variability.

A one-way analysis of variance of the preparedness scales by major yielded an $F_{3,125}$ value of 8.4 ($p \leq .05$). The results of this test can be found in Table 5. Post-hoc Scheffé S tests of pairwise means indicated that elementary and special education majors rated themselves significantly higher in their preparedness to utilize the classroom management skills than did the secondary education majors ($p \leq .05$). These Scheffé S test results have been presented in Table 6.

The means for all four groups on both scales have been presented pictorially in Figure 1, allowing for comparison across scales and between groups. The variation among all major groups in their reported feelings of preparedness may be due to the differences in the required coursework among majors, as discussed previously in the case of similar differences in mean importance scores. In addition to a classroom management course, most special

Table 5

ANOVA Results for Preparedness Scale Scores by Major

| Sources of Variation | Sum of Squares | df ^a | Mean Square | F Ratio | F Probability ^b |
|----------------------|----------------|-----------------|-------------|---------|----------------------------|
| Major | 7794.50 | 3 | 2598.17 | 8.3978 | .0000 |
| Error Term | 38673.56 | 125 | 309.39 | | |
| Total | 46468.06 | 128 | | | |

^adf = degrees of freedom. ^bExact probability.

education majors were required to take an additional course that had a strong behavior modification emphasis. The special education program at U.N.I. also incorporated very extensive, supervised field-based experiences totaling approximately 150 contact hours into the special education curriculum. This stronger emphasis on required coursework related to classroom management may explain the higher ratings in preparedness by the special education majors, and their increased experience may have helped them to feel more prepared, as well. In regard to special area majors, the required programs for these majors included more courses focusing on teaching methodology than are found in most secondary programs. These courses may include some

Table 6

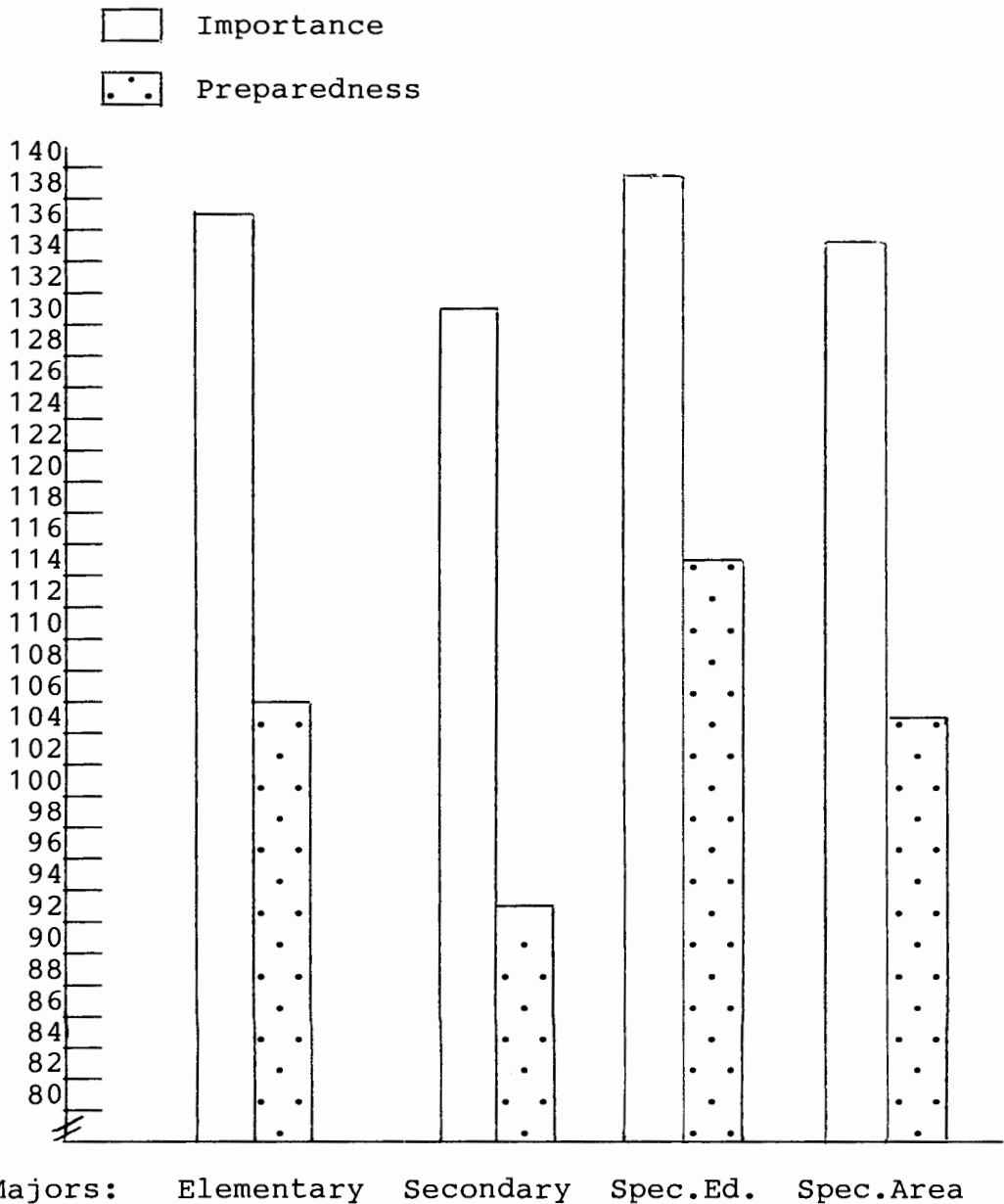
Scheffé S Test Results of Pairwise Means for Preparedness

| Majors | | | | |
|--------|-----------|------------|------------|-----------|
| | Spec. Ed. | Elementary | Spec. Area | Secondary |
| Means | 115.78 | 106.60 | 105.71 | 92.54 |
| 115.78 | -- | 9.18 | 10.07 | 23.24* |
| 106.60 | | -- | .89 | 14.06* |
| 105.71 | | | -- | 13.17 |
| 92.54 | | | | -- |

* $p \leq .05$.

classroom management content and, although statistically significant differences were not found between the special area majors and the other major groups, this may account for the variation in preparedness means that did exist between special area majors and the other major groups.

Elementary education majors were required to complete only one classroom management course, and many had fewer experiences in classrooms prior to student teaching than did special education majors. Thus, one may expect that



Majors: Elementary Secondary Spec.Ed. Spec.Area
Figure 1. Mean scores for total importance scale and total preparedness scale, by Major group.

these students would feel less prepared to utilize effective classroom management skills than those in the special education program. However, the variation between elementary and special education majors' preparedness scores was not found to be statistically significant. As may also be expected, secondary majors, having the fewest course requirements in classroom management, also considered themselves least prepared.

A second explanation for the differences between the secondary student teachers' feelings of preparedness and those of the elementary and special education majors may be that the skills presented on the scale are not addressed in the secondary education curriculum, while other skills that are more relevant to classroom management at the secondary level are taught. In this case, one would expect the secondary majors to consider themselves less prepared to utilize the classroom management skills listed on the scale than did the elementary and special education majors.

A third explanation for the differences between secondary majors' feelings of preparedness and those of the elementary and special education majors may relate to the naiveté that was discussed previously. If secondary majors do leave the university setting with the naive belief that content area knowledge is all they will need in order to teach, then the classroom experience they receive during

student teaching may cause them to realize that they are not well prepared to manage classrooms. They may have encountered more management problems than they expected. This may account for their lower ratings on the preparedness scale.

Correlation Between Scales

A correlational analysis was run between the importance and preparedness scales in order to determine the degree of similarity between the students' scores. A correlation of .33 ($p \leq .01$) was found, revealing modest similarity between student teachers' ratings of importance and their feelings of preparedness. Such modest similarity may indicate that those who considered themselves less prepared may not have considered classroom management skills important when they were taking coursework, and therefore, they may not have attended fully when classroom management content was presented. They may now perceive classroom management skills to be more important, but feel unprepared to utilize these skills. This correlation may also be somewhat low because of the relatively low variability in the importance scale scores as compared to the variability in the preparedness scale scores.

CHAPTER 5

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

Summary

In this study, student teachers' ratings of the importance of 30 specific classroom management skills to effective management, and their related feelings of preparedness to utilize each of these skills in their classrooms were investigated. Student teachers who had completed eight weeks of student teaching were asked to complete a demographic information page and two 5-point Likert scales listing management skills that had been linked in research to effective classroom management. A correlational analysis revealed modest similarity between student teachers' ratings of importance and their feelings of preparedness, indicating that they felt only somewhat prepared to utilize the skills they considered important to effective management. For all subsequent analysis, the subjects were divided into elementary, secondary, special education, and special area major groups. One-way ANOVAs of importance and preparedness scores, and post-hoc Scheffé \underline{S} tests of pairwise means were used to identify any significant differences in the mean scores of the four Major groups. For both importance and preparedness, statistically significant differences were found between

the secondary majors and the elementary majors, and between the secondary majors and the special education majors, with the elementary and special education majors rating both importance and preparedness higher than did the secondary majors.

Conclusions

The differences that were found to exist between the secondary majors and both the elementary and special education majors on both scales may have been due to differences in the undergraduate curriculum for these groups. The elementary and special education programs appear to place greater emphasis on classroom management than the secondary education program does, perhaps causing secondary majors to consider management less important and themselves as less prepared. These results may reflect a continuum. At one end of the spectrum would be the teacher education program that contained the strongest emphasis on classroom management, inculcating the students within that program about the importance of classroom management skills, and also helping these students to feel more prepared. The program with the least focus on classroom management would be at the other end of the spectrum, and the other programs would fall in between.

Philosophically, secondary educators may have considered content area knowledge more important, and pedagogy less important, than elementary and special educators. This philosophical difference may help explain the differences found between these groups on the importance scale. After having some experience managing classrooms, secondary majors may come to realize that they are relatively unprepared, accounting for the secondary majors' lower feelings of preparedness.

Since the secondary majors considered the items on the scale less important than did the elementary and special education majors, it is possible that the items do not represent those that are important at the secondary level. If this were the case, it would seem reasonable that secondary majors' feelings of preparedness to utilize these skills would be lower than those of elementary and special education majors.

In the case of the special area majors, who are certified to teach in both elementary and secondary settings, it seems reasonable that their ratings of the importance of classroom management skills would fall somewhere in between those of the elementary and secondary majors. Special area majors did consider themselves considerably more prepared than did the secondary majors,

which may be due to the greater emphasis on teaching methodology that seems to exist in these programs.

Recommendations for Further Research

This study has pointed out some interesting differences between the perceptions of elementary, secondary, and special education majors in the area of classroom management. However, further research into the possible causes of these differences would be helpful. Such research could examine preservice teachers' perceptions early in their undergraduate coursework and again when courses are completed to determine the effects of the coursework on perceptions of importance and preparedness. The effects of other variables, such as age, gender, student teaching setting, and amount of prior preparation in classroom management, on the perceptions of student teachers, should also be investigated.

This study could be replicated at other institutions in order to determine whether or not the perceptions of the student teachers at U.N.I. are similar to those of student teachers at other institutions. Another possibility would be to replicate this study using student teachers and experienced teachers in order to examine the relationship between those skills that the student teachers

considered important, and those judged important by the experienced teachers.

It may also be helpful to administer the same 30-item scale to cooperating teachers or faculty coordinators, asking them to rate the competency of the student teachers on each classroom management skill. These ratings could be compared to the student teachers' ratings of preparedness in order to determine the relationship between their feelings and their actual performance, as judged by their supervisors.

Another possible extension of this study would be to readminister the scales both before student teaching, and at the completion of the second eight-week student teaching experience. These scores could then be compared to determine the degree to which beginning student teachers see themselves as prepared to be effective managers of classrooms, and the effects of an additional eight weeks of student teaching on the student teachers' perceptions.

Implications

The implications of this study relate primarily to the content of the curricula offered to education majors in all areas at U.N.I. While it would be imprudent to advocate major changes in the content of these curricula based solely on this study, it seems reasonable to recommend

further review of these curricula in the area of classroom management. Specifically, the courses required for secondary education majors may need to be adapted to include a greater emphasis on classroom management. Those classroom management skills that have been found to be effective at the secondary level should be deliberately and overtly taught to undergraduate majors in secondary education in order to help them develop their abilities to manage classrooms effectively and gain confidence in their ability. Since effectiveness in classroom management has been related to satisfaction in teaching, and to classroom learning, teaching these skills to secondary majors may help them to become more effective and satisfied teachers.

The management courses that are required for elementary and special education majors may also need to be evaluated. Although student teachers in these groups felt more prepared than secondary education majors, their feelings of preparedness were only moderately similar to their ratings of importance implying that they may not feel totally prepared to utilize the classroom management skills that they consider important. The content of these courses may need to be adapted in order to either focus more on those aspects of classroom management that the students consider important, or by helping the students understand more fully the importance of the aspects of classroom

management that are emphasized in the course. These measures may help those student teaching in elementary and special education classrooms to feel more confident in implementing the classroom management skills and techniques that they consider to be the most important.

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APPENDIX A
INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Consent Form

My name is Lisa Nelson and I am currently working on my master's degree at U.N.I. I am asking you to participate in a study concerning classroom management. The purpose of the study is to find out how student teachers feel about the importance of, and their preparedness to utilize, several aspects of classroom management, and to look for factors that may influence these feelings. The findings may prove useful to teacher education faculty at U.N.I.

Please know that your participation in this study is voluntary and you may discontinue participation at any time without penalty. I assure you that your name will not be associated with the information you provide. If you have any questions about this research, feel free to contact me at (319) 277-0499, or my committee chairperson, Dr. Melissa Heston, Department of Educational Psychology and Foundations, University of Northern Iowa, at (319) 266-1659. For answers to questions regarding the research and the rights of research subjects, contact the office of the Human Subjects Coordinator, University of Northern Iowa, (319) 273-2748.

The value of this research depends upon you completing the following questionnaire in an honest manner. Please sign below to show your agreement to participate, complete the demographic information sheet and rating scale which follow, and return this packet to your coordinator.

Thank you for your time and attention. Again, the value of this research depends upon a high response rate. Your voluntary cooperation is appreciated.

I am fully aware of the nature and extent of my participation in this project as stated above and the possible risks arising from it. I hereby agree to participate in this project. I acknowledge that I have received a copy of this consent statement.

(signature of subject or responsible agent)

(date)

(printed name of subject)



(signature of investigator)

APPENDIX B
SAMPLE RATING SCALE

Rating Scale

This scale is designed to measure two things - 1) The importance of several aspects of classroom management, and 2) How prepared you feel, based on what you learned from the program you've taken at U. N. I., to utilize each aspect of management in your classroom.

After reading each item below, please mark first how important you believe each item is to effective classroom management with "1" representing "not important," up to "5" representing "extremely important," with "U" indicating "uncertain."

Next, rate how prepared you feel, based on what you learned from the program you've taken at U. N. I. to utilize each aspect of classroom management, using "1" to represent "not prepared," up to "5" representing "extremely prepared," with "U" for "uncertain."

| | How important is this? | | | | | | | How prepared do you feel? | | | | | |
|---|---------------------------|----------|----------|------|-----------|-----------|-------|------------------------------|--------|------------|------|-----------|-----------|
| <u>Items:</u> | not | slightly | somewhat | very | extremely | uncertain | ..... | not | poorly | adequately | very | extremely | uncertain |
| 1. Establishing rules and procedures and directly teaching them to students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 2. Rewarding appropriate behavior in varieties of ways that are appealing to students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 3. Responding consistently to student behavior | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 4. Modeling positive behaviors for students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 5. Making classroom learning relevant to students' lives | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |

| | How important is this? |  |  |  |  |  | ..... | How prepared do you feel? | | | | | |
|---|------------------------|----------|----------|------|-----------|-----------|-------|---------------------------|--------|------------|------|-----------|-----------|
| | not | slightly | somewhat | very | extremely | uncertain | | not | poorly | adequately | very | extremely | uncertain |
| 6. Incorporating logical consequences (linked to behavior, agreed upon by students & teacher as fair) into the management plan | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 7. Arranging the physical environment of the classroom (traffic flow, location of materials for easy access, distinct areas for special activities, ease in monitoring etc.) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 8. Being aware of what is going on in the classroom and communicating this awareness to the students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 9. Attending to more than one activity or event in the classroom simultaneously | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 10. Making smooth transitions between activities (giving students warnings before transitions are made, bringing closure to each activity, and maintaining focus on each activity once it begins) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 11. Alternating between high-energy and low-energy tasks | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 12. Knowing how to read and respond to a student's level of frustration (using "hurdle helps") | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |

| | How important is this? |  |  |  |  |  | ..... | How prepared do you feel? | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|----------|----------|------|-----------|-----------|-------|---------------------------|--------|------------|------|-----------|-----------|
| | not | slightly | somewhat | very | extremely | uncertain | | not | poorly | adequately | very | extremely | uncertain |
| 13. Utilizing a variety of sensory input modes (visual, auditory, tactile, etc.) in lessons | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 14. Encouraging group cohesiveness and cooperation as opposed to competition | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 15. Utilizing active listening techniques to encourage students to solve problems independently | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 16. Using time-out procedures to remove a student from a provocative situation and allowing the student to decide when to return | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 17. Identifying and redirecting attention-seeking behaviors | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 18. Finding and treating the cause of misbehavior | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 19. Moving around the classroom to assist students and monitor their progress | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 20. Influencing student behavior through teacher modeling | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 21. Working with students to develop individual plans for correcting misbehavior | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | ..... | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |

| | How important is this? |  |  |  |  |  | ..... | How prepared do you feel? | | | | | |
|--|------------------------|----------|----------|------|-----------|-----------|-------|---------------------------|--------|------------|------|-----------|-----------|
| | not | slightly | somewhat | very | extremely | uncertain | | not | poorly | adequately | very | extremely | uncertain |
| 22. Finding ways to link classroom learning to the lives of students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 23. Recognizing student frustration and providing appropriate assistance | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 24. Adapting and individualizing instruction (providing challenging activities for more able students and achievable goals for less-able students) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 25. Fostering cooperation among students | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 26. Responding to behaviors in the same way, regardless of the time of day or student involved | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 27. Demonstrating enthusiasm for each subject | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 28. Being prepared and organized so that "down time" is reduced | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 29. Encouraging parent involvement in school activities | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |
| 30. Separating the child from the child's behavior | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U | | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 | U |

APPENDIX C
SAMPLE DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION PAGE

Demographic Information

Please complete the following items by filling in the blank or circling a response, where appropriate.

1) Student Teaching Center _____

2) Last four digits of Social Security Number _____

3) Major(s) _____

4) Minor(s) _____

5) Gender: F M

6) Age _____

7) Number of semesters at U. N. I. _____

8) During your first student teaching placement, how many students were in the class you taught (if you taught more than one class, state the average number)? _____

9) Which of the following courses dealing with classroom management or discipline have you taken at U. N. I.? (please check)

- _____ 20:040 Nature and Conditions of Learning
 _____ 20:151(g) Current Approaches to Classroom Discipline
 _____ 20:173(g) Behavior Disorders in Children
 _____ 21:120 Elementary Classroom Management
 _____ 21:122 Classroom Management: Middle Level
 _____ 22:142(g) Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders, K-6
 _____ 22:143(g) Teaching Students with Behavioral Disorders, 7-12

other _____

10) How often did you encounter a discipline problem during your first student teaching placement?

| | never | rarely | sometimes | often | very often |
|-----------------|-------|--------|-----------|-------|------------|
| (please circle) | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |