

# Classroom Management Practices of Behavior Difficulties : Variables Influencing Their Use By Elementary Teachers

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## Introduction

- Students with emotional and behavioral difficulties (EBD) in an inclusive setting is challenging (Hornby & Evans, 2014).
- There is a gap between evidence-based classroom management practices (CMP) to support EBD's educational success and those implemented in regular classroom (Gable et al., 2012; State et al., 2017).
- Descriptive and correlational studies suggest links between certain socio-demographic variables and the use of practices, but little is known about what is specifically used and its influence when taken as a whole.

Among evidence-based proactive and reactive practices, what is specifically used by elementary teachers to manage behavior difficulties ?

What's the contribution of personal and contextual variables to explain their use when taken together?

## Methods

### Participants and procedure

- N = 1373 elementary teachers
- Recruited by email and completed a self-report Web questionnaire.

### Measures

#### Personal variables (IV controlled)

- Gender: 92,0 % ♀, 8,0 % ♂
- Teaching experience: 15.67 (8.6) years

#### Contextual variables (IV)

- Sector: General education teaching (88,0 %)  
Special education teaching (12,0 %)
- Grade level (kindergarten to 6<sup>th</sup>): 3.92 (2.0)
- Training EBD (hours):
  - Preservice: 51.92 (64.2)
  - Inservice :16.40 (43.8)
- Number of EBD in class: 2.54 (3.4)
- Number PIP Participation: 3.15 (5.1)

#### Classroom Management Practices (CMP) Inventory (DV)

	Proactive					Reactive		
	Self-regulation	Teaching planning	Rules and instructions	Positive reinforcement	Functional assessment	Mild negative	Less recommended	Punitive
Nadeau et al., (2018)								
Items(n)	15	15	10	6	3	10		9
Alpha	.84	.84	.85	.71	.90	.70		.80
RMSEA	.05	.05	.06	.05	.00	.05		.08
CFI	.95	.95	.96	.99	1.00	.94		.96

#### Data Analysis

- Descriptive; Paired t tests; Hierarchical linear regression

## Results

### Among proactive practices

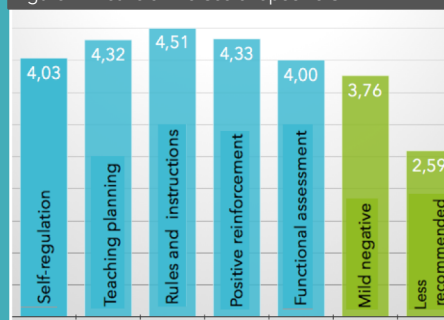
- rules and instructions, teaching and planning and positive reinforcement are reported to be used very often
- self-regulation and functional assessment are the least implemented.

### Among reactive practices

- mild negative is less than often used, while less recommended punitive is more or less used.

Paired t Test indicate that the scores all differ at  $p < .01$ .

Figure 1. Means of the Use of Specific CMP



Note. 6-point Likert Scale (1 = never; 5 = very often). All correlations (r) are significant at  $p < 0.001$ .

### Contribution of Personal and Contextual variables (Table 1):

- Except for Rules and Instructions, six CMP models are predicted by Contextual variables beyond Personal variables, for a explained variance between 1 to 4%.
- Grade level and PIP participation are related to the greatest number of CMP (5):
  - the higher the level, the less implemented is self-regulation, positive reinforcement, functional assessment and the more implemented is less recommended punitive;
  - the more often involved in PIP, the more implemented is self-regulation, teaching and planning, positive reinforcement, and reactive practices.
- Teaching in special education is related to a greater use of self-regulation, teaching and planning, positive reinforcement and functional assessment.
- Preservice training on EBD is related to one CMP: the fewer hours of training, the more the less recommended practices are used
- There is no significant link between the number of EBD and the DV's.

Table 1. Hierarchical Linear Regression Models Predicting CMP (N = 1373)

	Classroom Management Practices						
	Self-regulation	Teaching planning	Rules and instructions	Positive reinforcement	Functional assessment	Mild negative	Less recommended punitive
<b>Predictors</b>	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$	$\beta$
<b>Step 1 - R<sup>2</sup></b>	.05***	.04***	.05***	.03***	.04***	.02***	.01*
Gender	-.11***	-.13***	-.13***	-.11***	-.03	-.03	.02
Teaching experience	.01***	.16***	.15***	.08**	.18***	.08**	.06*
<b>Step 2 - <math>\Delta</math> R<sup>2</sup></b>	.03***	.02**	.00	.04***	.02***	.01*	.03***
Sector	-.08**	-.06*	.05	-.08**	-.07*	-.01	-.01
Grade level	-.08**	.00	-.01	-.13***	-.06*	-.07**	.14***
Training EBD Preservice	.04	.00	.01	.05	.02	.04	-.06*
Training EBD Inservice	.05	.06*	.05	.02	.06*	.01	.01
EBD in class	.03	-.02	.00	-.01	.03	.00	.05
PIP Participation	.07*	.06*	.05	.08**	.04	.06*	.07*
<b>Total Adj. R<sup>2</sup></b>	.08***	.06**	.05	.07***	.06***	.03*	.04***

Note. \*  $p < .05$ ; \*\*  $p < .01$ ; \*\*\*  $p < .001$ . Gender coded as male = 0, female = 1. Sector of teaching coded as general = 0, special = 1. Training EBD Preservice and Inservice = hours. EBD in class and PIP Participation = number.

## Discussion & Conclusion

This study aimed to determine the use of specific practices and verify the relative contribution of contextual variables beyond personal variables.

- Globally, results suggest that the gap between evidence-based CMP and what's implemented by elementary teachers in Quebec (Canada) is not as large as it is observed elsewhere (Gable et al., 2012; State, et al., 2017):
  - All proactive practices are reported as often used;
  - Even though they are still used, reactive practices are less used than proactive practices;
  - Encouragingly, the least implemented are those being less recommended.
- Contribution of controlled Personal variables are in line with previous studies:
  - Male uses most proactive practices less frequently than female (but no difference on reactive practices) (Schiefele, 2017);
  - Teaching experience higher = more frequent use of every practices, particularly teaching and planning, rules and instructions and functional assessment).
- Among Contextual variables, the use of CMP is:
  - Mostly related to Grade level, PIP participation and Sector of teaching education.
  - Little related to hours of training on EBD in Preservice training and Inservice;
  - None are significantly influencing the use of rules and instructions, which is the often used.

## Future Directions

- Teacher support through consultation (PIP process; Inservice) remains critical to increase the use of self-regulation, positive reinforcement and minimize the use of less recommended punitive measures, especially at the upper elementary levels and for novice teachers ;
- Expertise of teachers in the special education sector should be exploitable in the general one;
- Other sources of influence (ex: beliefs) and observation measuring fidelity of implementation should be explored.

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