

Child Temperament, Parenting Styles, and Internalizing and Externalizing Behaviors as
part of a Comprehensive Assessment Tool

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Abstract

This literature review investigated the literature on parenting style and its influence on child temperament. Temperament, as defined as an innate style of responding to the environment in behavioral and emotional ways, has been shown to predict child behavior under certain circumstances. Parenting style has been found to be the first and most important influence on a child development. According to the literature, as a child grows and develops, it is important for parents to change their way of parenting to meet the needs of their child. Parents are recommended by research findings to follow the goodness-of-fit model to base their parenting style on their child's individual needs. Temperament and parenting styles also have shown an influence on a child internalizing and externalizing behaviors as indicated in several studies. Temperament has been

related to the development of internalizing and externalizing behavioral problems especially when conflicting parenting styles are present. This review examined how internalizing and externalizing behavior may cause problems in the school and home setting. The literature indicated that knowledge about a child's individual temperament is beneficial for school personnel as it is a good predictor, as to how a child will respond to a given situation or task.

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Chapter I: Introduction

Temperament is an individual's innate style of responding to the environment in both behavioral and emotional ways (Griggs, Gagnon, Huelsman, Kidder-Ashley, & Ballard, 2009). All children have a temperament that will influence their emotions and how they adapt to change in their environments (Steinberg, 2004). Some theorists have described temperament as a highly heritable construct with a strong relationship to adult personality (Bird, Reese, & Tripp, 2006). Temperament styles include, but are not limited to, easy child, slow-to-warm-up child, and difficult child (Chess & Thomas, 1986).

A child's response to different parenting styles is a popular topic of research (Lengua, 2008). Parenting is a reciprocal process where the parent influences the child's development, and in return, the child influences the parent. Most parents would agree their life would be substantially different if they did not have children (Sclafani, 2004). However, parents differ on how to raise a child. Thomas and Chess believed the key to good parenting is to follow the goodness-of-fit model. The goodness-of-fit model states that the quality of fit between a child's temperament and the child's environment plays a bigger role in determining a child's outcome than just temperament or the environment solely (Griggs et al., 2009). As a child grows and develops, his or her needs change, and with that parenting needs to change as well to fit the needs of the child (Steinberg, 2004).

The easy child is the most common temperament and characteristics include: keeping regular routines (feeding, sleeping), usually adapt to new situations or activities quickly, and the child is cheerful, and resilient. Slow-to-warm-up children are referred to as the cautious children. The characteristics of the child are shy or timid, withdrawn in

new situations or when around strangers, slow to adapt especially in social situation, and is attached to caregivers. Difficult children are referred to as feisty, fussy, or hyperactive (Chess & Thomas, 1986). They seldom hold back, are active, intense, easily distracted, moody, and sensitive (Daniels, 2009). Difficult children place special demands and stress on parents (Chess & Thomas, 1986).

The specific characteristics in child's temperament such as high negative emotions are more vulnerable to parenting styles. For example, children with difficult temperaments face a higher risk for adjustment problems under unfavorable family conditions or poor parenting (Lengua, 2008). A child's temperament characteristics can intensify with a clashing parenting style (Steinberg, 2004).

Diana Baumrind coined three principal parenting styles: 1) Authoritative; 2) Authoritarian; and 3) Permissive (Baumrind, 1966). Authoritative parenting consists of parenting characteristics of warm but firm parenting, high level of communication with child, a democratic approach to parenting, awareness of growing independence of the child, flexibility and attentiveness. The parents listen to their child's needs and wishes and make executive decisions for the needs of the child. The authoritative parent describes his or her perspective as an adult and future consequences or benefits of the child's actions (Baumrind, 1966). The child is allowed to make choices with the parent providing feedback on the choices made. Most children raised under authoritative parenting styles are self-reliant, self-confident, and socially responsible (Daniels, 2009).

Authoritarian parents attempt to shape, control, and evaluate behaviors and attitudes of a child through their own ideas of ways to behave and act. These parents demand obedience and favor punitive, forceful measures of discipline. Authoritarian

parents believe in keeping the child in his or her place, limiting autonomy. The parents have a firm set of rules that must be followed at all times. These parents do not allow the child to voice their opinion and needs, as it is viewed that the parent knows what is best for the child (Baumrind, 1966). Authoritarian parenting consists of ideas of ‘My way or the highway!’. The children of authoritarian parenting are more likely to be unhappy, withdrawn, inhibited, display poor communication skills, less self-assured, and less socially adept (Daniels, 2009).

Permissive parenting may be described as nonpunitive, accepting, and affirmative towards their child’s impulses, wants and actions. The parent includes the child in making decisions and makes minimal demands on household responsibility. These parents allow their child to exercise their own level of freedom as much as possible with safety as a consideration and do not encourage the child to obey to societal rules. The permissive parent uses reason and manipulation, not control or power, to get their child to obey rules (Baumrind, 1966). Permissive parenting is highly involved parenting. The parent is seen as more of a friend than a parent or as a “cool” parent. The child may be labeled as “spoiled.” Children of permissive parents are expected to always get their way, are less mature, more irresponsible, and lack self-control (Daniels, 2009).

Research has shown children’s adjustment problems are related to parental control and low levels of warmth (Lengua, 2008). Parental control is when parents consistently shape their child’s behavior to suit their own expectations and preferences, rather than the child’s needs (Chess & Thomas, 1986). Parental warmth can be described as expression of verbal and physical affection, praise and acceptance of the child. Low parental

warmth includes criticism, disapproval and rejection of the child (Hemphill & Sanson, 2001).

According to Baumrind, authoritative parenting has high levels of warmth and high levels of control. Authoritarian parenting styles have low levels of warmth and high levels of control. Permissive parenting has high levels of warmth and low levels of control. Ideally, parents would display high levels of warmth and control, thus stating that authoritative parenting is the best parenting style for the child's development (Baumrind, 1967).

Different parenting styles may have an influence on internalizing or externalizing outcomes in children, depending on child temperament and how that child responds to the parenting style (Lengua, 2008). Internalizing behaviors are behaviors such as anxiety, psychosomatic complaints, shyness, social regression, withdrawal, low self-worth, irritability, and depression. Externalizing behaviors are behaviors related to conflict with the environment including antisocial conduct, delinquency, aggression, and hyperactivity (Yahav, 2006). Authoritarian parents may practice harsh parenting which can lead to antisocial behaviors especially children of difficult temperaments (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008).

Children are likely to show internalizing and externalizing behaviors when their parents display rejection, overprotection, and favoritism. Children who feel rejected may demonstrate externalizing behaviors such as aggression, hostility, emotional instability and low self-worth. They may internalize symptoms such as anxiety and depression. Children who are overprotected may be at higher risks of developing anxiety. They may also develop external psychopathologies such as criminal behavior and addictions.

Parents who show favoritism towards their child may cause increased tension between the child and his or her siblings. The child may feel guilty or anxiety taking away attention from their siblings (Yahav, 2006).

The recommended form of parenting is the authoritative parenting style which consists of clear, firm expectations of what is expected of the child (Baumrind, 1966). Other parenting styles may lead children to internalize or externalize behaviors. Harsh punishment such as physical punishment or yelling correlates to antisocial behavior in some children, especially those with difficult temperaments. Children with difficult temperaments are more affected by the type of parenting style when it comes to externalizing behaviors compared to children with average and easy temperaments. The best way to parent children with difficult temperaments is to show sensitivity and warmth towards the child (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008).

An increasing amount of services are requested for younger children indicating school psychologists will take on more responsibility for early success and interventions in the preschool and early elementary setting. They will be responsible for preschool assessment, intervention and program evaluation. In these responsibilities, school psychologists will be looking at social competence which may be influenced by child temperament (Mendez, McDermott & Fantuzzo, 2002).

The research on temperament demonstrates a rationale for assessing temperament based on its relation to school adjustment, classroom behaviors, and social withdrawal. However, school psychologists and educators rarely take temperament into account in formal, school-based and early childhood assessment. The literature review also shows evidence for an association between temperament and the quality of peer play

interactions (Griggs et al., 2009). It is important for school psychologists and educators to be cognizant of these characteristics and distinguish temperament from maladaptive behavior. School psychologists have a unique opportunity to bridge the transition from preschool to elementary school by identifying and promoting social competence and continuing interventions into the elementary school (Mendez et al., 2002).

The ecological approach asks that school psychologists expand the focus of assessment beyond the “child as problem” thought process to include elements of the child’s environment or ecological system that may interact with within-child traits to predict outcomes. Environmental variables are more readily changed than within-child traits and therefore, this should be the focus of intervention targets (Griggs et al., 2009).

Statement of the Problem

Over the last decades there has been a body of research conducted on child temperament and additional research on parenting styles. However, there is less research on how child temperament and parenting styles interact and relate to problem behaviors. Currently, there are minimal amounts of research about how the school psychologist can apply temperament, parenting styles and externalizing and internalizing behavior data into their comprehensive evaluations. This study is aimed at providing insight for school psychologists to apply the knowledge of child temperament into their comprehensive assessments.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to investigate the connection between child temperament, parenting styles and internalizing and externalizing behaviors. The study will investigate if school psychologists use temperament as an assessment tool when

evaluating child behaviors. The study looks primarily at preschool and elementary-aged children. The data will be collected through a comprehensive literature review during the Fall of 2010.

The literature suggests that child behavior can be influenced by many factors. It looks at how parenting style interacts with temperament to influence emotional and behavioral outcomes. This study focuses on parents as one influential factor of a child's development and behavior. It examines aspects of child temperament and development that school psychologists may consider when conducting assessments and using the decision-making model for child outcomes.

Research Questions

The following are questions to guide you through the literature review. The questions are to be answered throughout the research process:

1. What does the research say about child temperament?
2. What are research-based models/styles of parenting?
3. Are particular parenting styles/qualities ideal for certain temperaments?
4. What parenting styles/qualities and child temperaments are associated with internalizing and externalizing behavior problems?
5. What does research say about school psychologists' application of temperament and parenting information?

Assumptions of the Study

Assumptions of the study are that the literature will be primarily peer-reviewed, with the valid outcomes. It would be impossible to review and examine all the peer-reviewed literature for this study. All non peer-reviewed literature should be interpreted

with caution. All of the literature review and research is within the last ten years except for foundational research.

Definition of the Terms

To understand the content area of this study, certain terms may need clarification. The following are defined vocabulary words used in the study.

Authoritarian Parenting - The parent(s) have complete control of the parent-child relationship (Baumrind, 1966).

Authoritative Parenting - The parent(s) has a democratic approach to parenting that allows the child to make choices on his or her own with the parent making the final decision (Baumrind, 1966).

Externalizing Behaviors - Behaviors related to conflict with the environment including antisocial conduct, delinquency, aggression, and hyperactivity (Yahav, 2006).

Internalizing Behaviors - Behaviors such as anxiety, psychosomatic complaints, shyness, social regression, withdrawal, low self-worth, irritability, and depression (Yahav, 2006).

Permissive Parenting - The parent allows high levels of freedom for the child to grow and develop and is seen as a resource for the child (Baumrind, 1966).

Temperament- An individual's innate style of responding to the environment in behavioral and emotional ways (Griggs et al., 2009).

Limitations of the Study

Limitations of the study may include methodological issues in parenting literature, for example, the difficulty to identify cause and effect in children with parents of two different parenting styles. It may be hard to detect what parenting style has more

effect on the child. There are various other factors such as peer influence that may affect child temperament and internalizing and externalizing behaviors. This study will not be able to retrieve every study in the large body of research on these topics.

Chapter II: Literature Review

The chapter will include the following topics: 1) description of child temperament; 2) descriptions of parenting styles; and 3) definition of internalizing and externalizing behaviors in children. First, the chapter will start by describing what child temperament is and how it may look different for each child. Second, the chapter will compare and contrast different parenting styles and responses to various child temperament. Third, the chapter will compare parenting styles and their influence on children's internalizing and externalizing behaviors and emotions. It will also identify what child temperaments are most susceptible to internalizing and externalizing behaviors under various parenting styles. Finally, the chapter will look at the school psychologist's role in understanding and detecting child temperament and internalizing and externalizing behaviors.

Child Temperament

Every child is born with his or her own unique temperament (McClowry, 2003). Temperament is of special interest, as it is a good predictor of child behavior in the future (Ramos, Guerin, Gottfried, Bathurst, & Oliver, 2005). Temperament is a window through which children see and react to the world. It is most apparent during times of stress and change in the child's life. Temperament is not to be confused with "Temper" or "Temper Tantrum" as children can respond to their environment in both positive and negative ways (McClowry, 2003).

According to Chess & Thomas (1986), there are three temperament classifications: 1) easy temperament; 2) difficult temperament; and 3) slow-to-warm-up temperament. The easy temperament child may be, to no surprise, the easiest child to

raise. The child is able to adapt quickly and form good attachments to parents and caregivers. Such children are easily transitioned to new experiences and environments. They quickly develop eating, sleeping, and toileting schedules. These children are highly predictable in their actions and behaviors. Easy children display predominately upbeat moods, with mild to moderate mood intensity levels. When these children are frustrated, it is at a level that is age-appropriate. About 40%-60% of children fit this category (Sclafani, 2004).

The difficult child may have difficult behaviors. The child may avoid cuddling or creating secure attachments with the caregiver. Difficult children commonly express negative moods and display high levels of activity even in inappropriate environments. These children will not react well to deviations to their daily schedules as they are very sensitive to change. They are very hard to predict what they will do in new situations and will often throw tantrums when frustrated. Empirical evidence has shown that difficult temperaments early in childhood are concurrently and prospectively correlated to both internalizing characteristics such as anxiety, sadness, social withdrawal, and fear and externalizing characteristics such as hyperactivity, noncompliance, aggression and moodiness (Paulussen-Hoogeboom, Stams, Hermanns, Peetsma, & Van Den Wittenboer, 2008). About 10%-15% of children fit into this category (Sclafani, 2004).

The differential susceptibility hypothesis implies that children with difficult temperaments are more affected by physical punishment because they have greater difficulty handling their emotions after being physically punished. For some children, this will lead them to be unable to control their behavior. When it comes to externalizing behaviors, children with difficult temperaments were more affected by the kind of

parenting they received than children with other temperaments (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008).

The slow-to-warm-up child is a mixture of characteristics of the easy and difficult child. These children will hesitantly explore new situations after they are comfortable leaving the parent and at their own pace. For example, when these children first attend kindergarten, the parent may need to be with them in the beginning and decrease the amount of time spent in the classroom over several days or even weeks. The slow-to-warm child is usually described as shy and having a low activity level. Kagan defines his “inhibited” child in similar ways. He describes the inhibited child as withdrawn from new situations, unfamiliar objects and people, on-looking or playing alone in social situations (Rimm-Kaufman & Kagan, 2005). This category makes up about 15%-23% of children (Sclafani, 2004). Not every child fits into one of these three categories. Some children may display characteristics of any of the three, depending on environment and situations, therefore not meeting a clear cut category (Sclafani, 2004).

According to McClowry, there are five main principles of a child’s temperament: 1) each child is born with an individual temperament; 2) temperament contributes to how the child acts in situations and reacts to emotional situations; 3) temperament is most noticeable in times of stress, change and transition periods; 4) temperament is reluctant to change; and 5) the goodness-of-fit model is the preeminent way to parent children (McClowry, 2003).

The goodness-of-fit model suggests that healthy functioning occur when there is a goodness-of-fit or “compatibility” between the characteristics of the child and the demands and expectations of the environment (Chess & Thomas, 1986). The goodness-

of-fit model includes parenting styles and expectations that match up with the child's temperament, leading to the best outcome for the child to develop (Sclafani, 2004). If parents identify and practice the goodness-of-fit model with their child, their child is most likely to experience a positive development. However, if there is an "incompatibility" or poorness-of-fit model between the child and the environment, psychological functioning is impaired, and therefore, may lead to a risk of behavior disorder development (Chess & Thomas, 1986). If the parents follow the contrary or poorness-of-fit model, the most likely outcome is behavioral conflict (McClowry, 2003).

There are nine different characteristics that make up a child's temperament: activity level, sensitivity (threshold level), intensity of reaction, adaptability, distractibility, inhibition (approach/withdrawal), negative emotionality (quality of mood), persistence, and regularity (rhythmicity). Children high or low in these areas are usually described by parents as being difficult children or presently challenging behaviors (Chess & Thomas, 1986).

Extreme temperaments can create risk factors for children, as specific temperament characteristics can be seen noted as early warning signs for maladaptive behavior. Hyperactivity is the extreme for the activity level temperament. Children with hyperactive temperament respond with excessive fine- or gross-motor activity. Children with a sensitive temperament may have a low sensory threshold possibility indicating a sensitivity. These children may complain about clothes feeling tight or people staring at them, or they may refuse to be touched by others. Children with a high intensity temperament may yell, scream, or physically attack when feeling threatened. Poor adaptability temperament children may resist, shut down, and become passive-aggressive

when asked to change activities. Children with a distractible temperament will pay more attention to their surroundings than to their parents. Inhibition is apparent when the child is clingy, shy and unresponsive to new situations or strangers. Children with negative emotionality are found to appear lethargic, sad, and lack the energy to perform tasks. Negative persistence is shown when a child is stuck in his or her whining or complaining. Children demonstrating irregularity may escape stress by needing to drink, eat, sleep, or use the bathroom at irregular times even when they really do not have the need (Harrington, 2004).

At times, an exaggeration of a temperamental characteristic may look like behavioral concern or even a psychological disturbance. Kagan found that inhibited children withdraw from new situations or environments, avoid new people, and spend more time playing alone which may look like affective disorder or social phobia (Rimm-Kaufman & Kagan, 2005). A slow-to-warm-up child may be pressured to quickly adapt to a new environment (Chess & Thomas, 1986). This expectation is unrealistic and stressful for children of this type of temperament, and may lead to an intensification of the initial response to a more withdrawn response. Instead of allowing the child to explore the environment at their own pace, the child may not adapt adequately at all to the new environment (Chess & Thomas, 1986).

Some empirical studies have shown that children who inhibit their emotional expressions to manage emotions such as anger and sadness show higher levels of internalizing symptoms such as anxiety and depression (Betts, Gullone, & Allen, 2009). The withdrawn child would benefit the most from parenting that encourages spontaneity and choices (Sclafani, 2004). Children low in persistence are not well organized and may

initially need more parental guidance with organization. Negative emotionality is the child's reaction to stressors with high degrees of emotions including anger, irritability, fear or sadness (Paulussen-Hoogeboom et al., 2008). Children who are high in negative emotionality are prone to getting into fights. Parents should not respond to high negative emotionality children in a counterproductive way, as this may increase the momentum and intensity leading to an argument. Contrary to what most people believe, children who are successful in winning a power struggle with a parent is likely to feel a loss. Children expect their parents to have more control and power than themselves so they can feel protected (McClowry, 2003).

Temperament is a relatively permanent feature that carries on into adolescence and adulthood. However, parenting styles interact with child temperament in that parents have the power to modify maladaptive temperament characteristics through optimal parenting styles (Sclafani, 2004).

Parenting Styles

Parenting styles have a profound effect on child behavior (Yahav, 2006). Parents are encouraged to trust their instincts and to be flexible, affectionate, and attentive to individual needs. They need to be ready to change their parenting styles with the development of their child. However, when it comes to discipline, parents need to have consistent rules with consistent consequences (Daniels, 2009). With consistent parenting, the child is able to learn about what is expected of him or her and how to behave in a socially acceptable manner. Children are less likely to act out or have behavior problems when they know the rules of what the consequences are for not following the rules (Sclafani, 2004). The leading research about parenting styles comes from Baumrind

where she classified parenting characteristics into three groups: 1) authoritative; 2) authoritarian; and 3) permissive (Baumrind, 1966).

The authoritative parent is warm, involved, and considerate of the child's wants and desires (Sclafani, 2004). Authoritative parents are high in warmth and control (Daniels, 2009). The parenting style makes a comfortable home environment for the child that includes alternatives and choices for the child. The child has a voice in decision making that is age-appropriate. There is a high level of communication between the parent and the child, with the expectations and limitations of the child clearly and firmly expressed. The parents help their child become competent and independent. The authoritative parent is family-centered (Sclafani, 2004).

The children of authoritative parents tend to be compliant and self-assured (Sclafani, 2004). These children typically are goal-oriented towards their daily activities and practice achievement-oriented behavior. Children of authoritative parents may be able to cope with unexpected stress and handle problems in calm and purposeful ways. These children get along well with peers and have high energy in a non-hyperactive fashion. They are cooperative and show respect towards adults and authority figures (Sclafani, 2004).

Authoritarian parenting style is characterized by enforcement of rules and demand for obedience (Sclafani, 2004). Their motto is 'My way or the highway!' (Daniels, 2009). Rules are always implemented, but not always explained in a clear manner. Parents may be seen as cold and detached (Sclafani, 2004). Authoritarian parents may be high in control and low in warmth (Daniels, 2009). Parents can easily show anger and disapproval when their child misbehaves. When it comes to discipline, they are punitive

and harsh in response. They view children as little hellions in need of order and control. They do not allow their children to make independent choices. Authoritarian parents believe children's opinions do not need to be considered and do not allow questioning of their rules or authority (Sclafani, 2004).

Children of authoritarian parents are more likely to be fearful and anxious (Sclafani, 2004). Some children may be perfectionists in what they do so they do not disappoint their parents. They may be withdrawn from social events and settings. They are moody, unhappy, unpredictable, and vulnerable to stressful conditions. They can be deceitful and secretive as a child and rebellious as a teenager (Sclafani, 2004). Numerous studies have found that children of authoritarian parents are at a higher risk for depression (Betts et al., 2009).

The permissive parents in Baumrind's model are often warm and accepting (Sclafani, 2004). These parents may act as a "friend" towards their child (Daniels, 2009). They allow a plethora of room for their child to explore and grow (Sclafani, 2004). These parents are high in warmth and low in control (Daniels, 2009). Permissive parents tend to encourage the child to make independent choices and allow unrestricted behavior. They avoid setting rules and disciplining their children for fear of disrupting the natural development of the child. The permissive parent will likely give into whining and tantrum threats to keep the peace and limit fighting with the child (Sclafani, 2004).

Children of the permissive parenting style may lack self-control, since none is expected of them (Sclafani, 2004). These children are impulsive and live life without a definitive direction. Most children do not enjoy playing or socializing with these

children, as they are unpleasant, demanding, domineering, and stubborn. They will try almost anything to get their way (Sclafani, 2004).

According to McClowry (2003), there are three ways parents can respond to their child's temperament: 1) counterproductive; 2) adequate, and 3) optimal. The counterproductive response is usually directed in an angry-toned voice (McClowry, 2003). This response would be most related to the authoritarian style of parenting (Baumrind, 1966). The child might raise his or her voice at the parent's angry response and it may escalate from there. An adequate response is delivered in a natural way that serves the purpose of having the issue resolved quickly. The child knows not to question the parent's reasoning or decision. An adequate response would most likely come from an authoritative or authoritarian parenting style. An optimal response is delivered in a warm, understanding fashion. It is a response that is intended to help the child mature and make his or her own decisions and takes into account the child's individual temperament (McClowry, 2003). This pattern of response would be most related to the permissive parenting type (Baumrind, 1966).

Adequate and optimal responses are recommended for most situations. The short adequate response is a signal to the children that their behavior is becoming unacceptable. The optimal response acknowledges the child's unique temperament and is tailored to the individual needs of the child. An optimal response is intended to allow the child to make decisions and gain a sense of independence (McClowry, 2003).

Parents may also differ in response to their child in the form of attention. Well-behaved children typically receive more attention from their parents because they make their parents look good in regards to the surrounding public. These children will be

praised for their good behaviors reinforcing the positive behavior to continue. Children who have negative emotions are likely to receive less attention because the caregivers are likely to be impatient with the child and embarrassed by the child's behavior. However, these children may gain attention right away that reinforces their negative behavior. As mentioned earlier, children that are high or low in temperament dimensions may look disobedient. Children high in the withdrawal temperament domain are very sensitive and may not be capable of accurately verbalizing what they are feeling. This may look like misbehavior leaving parents frustrated and bewildered about their child's behavior (McClowry, 2003).

When the parent or child fails to live up to the other's expectations is when arguments between the parent and child commence. Parents who yell or physically punish their children are sending two harsh messages. First, they relay that the child is so powerful that the parents can lose control. The second message is if you are angry, it is acceptable to verbally or physically harm someone. Warm parenting is positively reinforcing the child's lifelong psychological development. The ideal parenting characteristics include expressing warmth, generating trust, showing affections, giving attention, and acknowledging goodness and talents. Temperament is related to the type of attention the child desires or seeks (McClowry, 2003).

Internalizing and Externalizing Behavior

A young child's behavior is an indicator to what inborn tendencies need to be changed or addressed before the child reaches adolescence (Sclafani, 2004). Children with difficult temperaments are more vulnerable or prone to the effects of family stress, discord, and negative child-parent relationships than children with easy temperaments,

who are more resilient to such effects. Children with difficult temperament in families of high conflict have the most susceptibility to both internalizing and externalizing behaviors, whereas children of easy temperaments displayed less internalizing and externalizing behaviors, regardless of family conflict (Ramos et al., 2005). Infants who experience a difficult temperament also experience a greater incidence of attention problems and aggressive behaviors as reported by parents and teachers in the elementary school years (Ramos et al., 2005).

In times of family stress, easy temperament children are most likely to internalize their behaviors (Sclafani, 2004). Internalizing behaviors may include anxiety, psychosomatic complaints, shyness, social regression, withdrawal, low self-worth, irritability, and depression. For example, a child who just lost a grandparent may be socially withdrawn and complain of headaches or stomachaches (Yahav, 2006). Slow-to-warm children are more anxiety-ridden, withdrawn, and fearful, all emotions that are internalized (Scalfani, 2004). Internalizing symptoms such as inhibition has been associated with affective disorder (Rimm-Kaufman & Kagan, 2005).

Temperament has been continuously related to the development of externalizing behavior problems in the early years (Ramos et al., 2005). Children who externalized behaviors such as irritability and distractibility as a young child were more likely than others to have delinquent tendencies and acting out as teenagers. Teachers could implement their knowledge about a child's temperament as a tool to use to tailor their approaches of teaching to a specific child based upon the child's likely responsiveness (Sclafani, 2004). For example, for a child who likely withdraws from new environments or situations and adapts slowly to them, it is the poorest-of-fit and very stressful for the

child to transition rapidly to a new task. If the next task is a desirable social interaction, it is also poorest-of-fit to not try to help the child transition to the next task. The goodness-of-fit model would say that teachers should exercise their ability for control so that the child can *gradually* achieve a positive adaption to the new task (Chess & Thomas, 1986).

Externalizing behaviors include antisocialism, conduct disorders, delinquency, aggression, and hyperactivity (Yahav, 2006). An example of these behaviors may be a child picking fights on a playground or missing an excessive amount of school. In each child, it is important to determine if the externalizing problems are more strongly related to negative aspects of parenting, or to the absence of positive aspects (Bradley & Corwyn, 2007). Researchers have determined that parental warmth and positive attitudes help the children gain self-control and reduce behavior problems in middle childhood and early adolescence (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008). Families that have difficulties knowing how to discipline their children lead the children to externalizing their problems (Sclafani, 2004). For example, children who are constantly yelled at or physically punished by their parents may externalize their emotions into aggressive behaviors (Daniels, 2009).

Children exposed to a family environment that displays conflict, anger, and hostility are at a higher risk for a wide range of maladaptive problem behaviors. Children in such environments are susceptible to developing externalizing problems such as aggression and noncompliance (Ramos et al., 2005). Children are more likely to externalize problems when their parents use harsh control discipline (Bradley & Corwyn, 2007). Children with difficult temperaments will be more affected by harsh parental discipline because they have a hard time dealing with the emotional aftermath of harsh

punishment. Harsh punishment is positively correlated with antisocial behavior (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008). Lengua found that older children displayed higher levels of effortful control, and parents were more consistent and used less physical punishment with older children. Effortful control was linked to decreases in externalizing problems.

Anxiousness in children was related to higher rejection and physical punishment from parents. Parents who would reject, be inconsistent in discipline, and use physical punishment were significantly positively related to internalizing and externalizing problems in children. Lengua found a relation between frustration and inconsistent discipline to predict internalizing problems in children (Lengua, 2008).

Externalizing behaviors have been correlated to low self-regulation in children, and low self-regulation has been correlated to harsh discipline (Bradley & Corwyn, 2007). Most children will adopt self-control as long as parents are not insensitive, however, children with difficult temperaments will require more sensitive assistance from parents to deal with life's challenges (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008). Children with difficult temperaments are more susceptible to the kinds of parenting they receive when it comes to manifesting externalizing behavior than children of average or easy temperaments. When exposed to high levels of maternal sensitivity, children with difficult temperaments showed a noteworthy reduction in externalizing behaviors (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008). Ideally, parents should express warmth and sensitivity which encourages children to share and consider others' feelings, therefore regulating negative emotions (Bradley & Corwyn, 2007).

Internalizing and externalizing behaviors have been linked to a child's perception of three characteristics of parenting: 1) parent rejection; 2) overprotective parenting; and

3) favoritism (Yahav, 2006). Parent rejection and overprotection may be found in the authoritarian parenting style, and favoritism in the permissive parenting style (Daniels, 2009).

Parent rejection is when parents lack parental warmth and affection, instead expressing overt hostility and aggression, or inattention or neglect, towards their child. Children who feel rejected by their parents exhibit increased levels of hostility and aggression (Yahav, 2006). These children also are more dependent, emotionally unstable, and have lower self-worth. One explanation is that parental rejection hinders child attachment and destroys the child's will to accept parental values and beliefs (Yahav, 2006).

As much as parent rejection may cause externalized behaviors, it can equally lead to internalized behaviors in children. Children who are rejected by their parents may develop pathologies such as anxiety and depression (Yahav, 2006). Betts et al. (2009), suggest that without proper nurturance from parents, children can develop low levels of self-confidence and difficulties in establishing honest and supportive relationships with others. Children with high anxiety will be more affected by parent rejection than children low in anxiety. These children may see their relationship with their parents is threatened which increases internalizing problems (Lengua, 2008).

Overprotection can be described as a high physical and social contact with the child, unnecessary concern over the child, prevention of independent behavior, and unnecessary permissiveness. These parents can cause a child to be emotionally unbalanced because the child feels unaccepted and unworthy. Overprotection can cause internalizing and externalizing behaviors in children. The children can experience

psychopathologies such as criminal behavior and addiction. They may demonstrate internalizing behaviors such as anxiety and eating disorders. The child may also feel the need to be perfect to lessen tension in the parent-child relationship. Parental overprotection does not allow the child to gain independence or autonomy (Yahav, 2006). It reduces the child's possibilities of reaching their goals and therefore, induces depressive symptoms (Oldehinkel, Veenstra, Ormel, Winter & Verhulst, 2006).

Parental favoritism may be defined as displaying more interest in one child over his or her siblings (Yahav, 2006). The parents show warmth, intimacy, admiration, and great interest toward the favorite child. The parents usually pick a child who has a particular talent or interest that intrigues the parent. The child usually feels uniqueness and grandiosity; however, he or she also feels guilty for taking away the attention from his or her siblings. The siblings feel inferior to and hostile towards the favorite child and may team up against the favorite child. The favored child may experience high levels of anxiety from parent's expectations and guilt of taking away from his or her siblings. The siblings often suffer emotional damage due to feeling rejected and unappreciated by their parents (Yahav, 2006).

Children can experience maladaptive adjustment problems when parents are inconsistent in their discipline and use physical punishment. Physical discipline is positively correlated with aggression and depression in children. Children who are highly anxious might be so over stimulated by physical punishment that they may not even grasp the rules the parents are enforcing. Using harsh discipline may increase the internalizing and externalizing behaviors in anxious children. Research has shown that mild discipline is effective in gaining compliance for anxious children. Children who are

high in frustration may see inconsistent discipline as stressful as it is unpredictable. Children with certain character traits, such as high negative emotionality, are more influenced by parental styles. For example, children with difficult temperaments are at a higher risk for maladaptive problems under stressful parenting conditions (Lengua, 2008).

Different parenting styles may predict various internalizing and externalizing behaviors in children, depending on the child's temperament. Research indicates that an affectionless and controlling parenting style and some child temperaments are important predictors of risk for adolescents developing depression (Betts et al., 2009). Children who express high anxiety are more adversely affected by parental rejection than children who have normal levels of anxiety. For children who have high irritability, externalizing behaviors are increased with parents who are hostile. High maternal control was related to internalizing problems in children with high irritability. Children who are high in frustration, parental rejection may cause greater irritability and anger. Both temperament and parenting style are related to child outcomes (Lengua, 2008).

Temperament Assessment

Early social development and learning is an increased area of concern at the national, state and local levels of education policy interventions (Mendez, McDermott & Fantuzzo, 2002). As an increasing amount of services are requested for younger children, school psychologists will take on more responsibility for early success and interventions in the preschool and early elementary setting. They will be responsible for preschool assessment, interventions, and program evaluation. In these responsibilities, school psychologists will be looking at social competence which may be influenced by child

temperament. Social competence can be described as the social and communicative ability children use to make relationships with adults and peers to succeed in their environment (Mendez et al., 2002).

Temperament research has been a popular topic throughout the decades and has produced numerous empirical studies of child development (Griggs, Gagnon, Huelsman, Kidder-Ashley & Ballard, 2009). However, school psychologists and educators rarely take temperament into account in formal, school-based and early childhood assessment. The research on temperament demonstrates a rationale for assessing temperament based on its relation to school adjustment, classroom behaviors, and social withdrawal. For example, young children who display longer attention spans, lower activity levels, and less negative emotionality show stronger skills of school readiness and may transition well into kindergarten and early grades (Griggs et al., 2009).

The literature review also shows evidence for an association between temperament and the quality of peer play interactions. For example, children who display low levels of adaptability and high levels of negative mood tend to be more neglected by their peers as these characteristics can have negative impacts on peer play. Also high levels of activity, intensity and distractibility and low levels of persistence are also associated with peer rejection. Recent research has found relations between inhibition, impulsivity, social competence, and peer play (Griggs et al., 2009). It is important for school psychologists and educators to be cognizant of these characteristics and distinguish temperament from maladaptive behavior. School psychologists have a unique opportunity to bridge the transition from preschool to elementary school by

identifying and promoting social competence and continuing interventions into the elementary school (Mendez et al., 2002).

Research has also found temperament differences in gender over numerous studies (Griggs et al., 2009). Boys tend to be more active and distractible and less persistent on tasks. Girls display more effortful control, task persistence, personal/social adaptability, flexibility and reactivity. In early years of education, teachers commonly report less conflict in peer play among girls than boys (Griggs et al., 2009). In one Head Start study, boys were found to engage in daily antisocial aggression three times more than girls at the Head Start (Stormont, 2002).

Griggs et al. (2009) also referenced Thomas and Chess's goodness-of-fit model when describing teacher-student relationships. The "child x environment" model is important to consider when comparing ecological variables. The research on the relation between child temperament and how others respond to them and the child's perceived "teachability" supports the goodness-of-fit model. Teachable students tend to be low in activity, distractibility, and negative emotionality and high in adaptability, task persistence, and flexibility. Children who display difficult temperament patterns are likely to be perceived as problematic by their teachers (Griggs et al., 2009). This is important for school psychologists to keep in mind when teachers are referring students for behaviors in these areas.

The ecological approach asks that school psychologists expand the focus of assessment beyond the "child as problem" thought process to include elements of the child's environment or ecological system that may interact with within-child traits to

predict outcomes. Environmental variables are more readily to change than within-child traits and therefore this should be the focus of intervention targets (Griggs et al., 2009).

As a school psychologist, we must follow guidelines to ensure best practices in the field. Under the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) guidelines it states:

The school psychologist has knowledge of varied psychological and educational assessment methods violated for the problem area under consideration, including record review, formal and informal test administration, functional behavioral assessment, curriculum-based measurement, interviews, observations and/or ecological or environment assessment (NASP, 2000 p.44).

According to the above NASP guideline, it is important for school psychologists to assess the child's ecological and environmental factors that are impacting the child. However, there is a very limited amount of research on the use of temperament assessments as a tool for assessing how the child interacts with his or her environment.

The consequences of internalizing and externalizing behaviors can have destructive effects on the child, families, school personnel, students and society as a whole. Children with these behaviors tend to come from families that are under stress, unstable, and inconsistent with demands and parenting. Thus, parenting practices have been a prime focus for school and in-home interventions (Maughan, Christiansen, Jensen, Olympia & Clark, 2005). Early intervention should commence as soon as behavior is stable in young children. Young children who are at risk for stable externalizing behaviors should have researched-based interventions as soon as possible due to their

increased risk of maintaining and possibly developing a more severe problem behavior (Stormont, 2002).

A longitudinal study found that children who were said to have externalizing problems when they were seven-years-old were rated by their mothers as having a difficult temperament when they were infants which may be described as colic and excessive crying (Stormont, 2002). Temperamental characteristics are important for the school psychologist to assess as early risk factors but they should not be used solely to predict externalizing behaviors (Stormont, 2002). A child's temperament appears to interact with family characteristics as well. The following family factors may be important predictors of externalizing behaviors in some children with certain temperaments: marital conflict, maternal depression, low maternal education level, and family/parenting stress (Stormont, 2002).

It is critical for a school psychologist to distinguish between a psychological disorder and a manifestation of behavior from a negative environment. The NASP guideline states:

The school psychologist evaluates the components of the environment that facilitating or impede learning or behavioral changes for infants and children and identifies who the environmental factors and children's characteristics interact to effect learning and social behavioral outcomes (NASP, 2000, p. 44).

A positive student-teacher relationship matters especially for children with difficult temperaments. Low levels of student-teacher conflict may reduce the risk of negative behaviors associated with children with difficult temperaments (Griggs et al., 2009).

In summary, school psychologists are taking on more responsibility for students early in the preschool and elementary setting (Mendez et al., 2002). Temperament has been a popular topic of research throughout the decades and has produced many findings in child development (Griggs et al., 2009). However, very few recent studies have shown that school psychologists actually take temperament into account in formal, school-based and early childhood assessments. It is important for school psychologists to be cognizant of extreme temperament characteristics and not to confuse them with maladaptive behaviors (Mendez et al., 2002). The ecological approach asks that school psychologists look beyond the “child as a problem” and assess elements of the child’s environment and ecological system that may be affecting the child (Griggs et al., 2009). All of these findings warrant a need for additional research on a school psychologist use of temperament assessment in best practices.

Chapter III: Summary, Critical Analysis, and Recommendations

This chapter will include a summary, a critical analysis and future recommendations of the literature from chapter two. It will include a summarization of child temperament, parenting styles, and their relativity to internalizing and externalizing behaviors. This chapter will include a critical analysis of the research described in chapter two. Future recommendations will be made based on the critique of the data and any ambiguity between the relationship of child temperament, parenting styles, internalizing and externalizing behaviors, and the school psychologist's consideration of temperament.

Summary

As stated in chapter two, every child is born with a unique temperament. Temperament is defined as how children view and react to the environment in behavioral and emotional ways (Griggs, Gagnon, Huelsman, Kidder-Ashley & Ballard, 2009). It is an indicator as to the type of attention the child seeks or desires. Temperament is most apparent in times of stress and change (McClowry, 2003). There are three primary temperament classifications: 1) easy; 2) difficult; and 3) slow-to-warm-up. Children high or low in the nine different characteristics of temperament are usually described by parents as having challenging behaviors (Chess & Thomas, 1986). Children will have the best developmental outcome when parents fit their parenting to their child's temperament. Temperament is a relatively permanent feature that remains into adolescence and adulthood. However, effective parenting styles can optimize a child's temperament, and parents have the power to change unwanted behaviors related to temperament. Understanding a child's temperament is useful for teachers in their

approach to teaching a specific child based on how the child is likely to respond (Sclafani, 2004).

Parenting styles have a significant effect on child behavior (Yahav, 2006). Baumrind classified three main parenting styles: 1) authoritarian; 2) authoritative; 3) permissive (Baumrind, 1966). The authoritarian parents demand rules and obedience. They are insensitive to the child's needs and opinions. Authoritative parents are warm, involved, and considerate of the child's wants and desires. They allow the child to make choices, but provide the child feedback on the choices made (Sclafani, 2004). Permissive parents are warm, accepting, and often act like a 'friend' towards their child. They allow a lot of freedom to make their own choices (Daniels, 2009).

According to McClowry (2003), parents may respond to their child's wants and needs in three primary ways: 1) counterproductive; 2) adequate; and 3) optimal. Parents may also differ in response to their child in the form of attention leading children to be positively or negatively reinforced by their behaviors. The ideal parenting characteristics include warmth, trust, and affection, provide attention, and acknowledge goodness and talents (McClowry, 2003). Therefore, the authoritative parenting style is most desired for optimal child outcomes (Daniels, 2009).

In times of stress, children of different temperaments might internalize or externalize behaviors (Sclafani, 2004). Internalizing behaviors may include anxiety, psychosomatic symptoms, shyness, social withdrawal, low self-worth, irritability, and depression. Externalizing behaviors include antisocialism, conduct disorders, delinquency, aggression, and hyperactivity (Yahav, 2006).

Internalizing and externalizing behaviors have been found in a child's perception of parent rejection, overprotective parenting, and favoritism (Yahav, 2006). Children are more likely to externalize problems when their parents use harsh forms of discipline (Bradley & Corwyn, 2007). Parents need to consider their child's temperament when it comes to discipline (Daniels, 2009). Children exposed to a family environment that displays conflict, anger, and hostility are at a higher risk for a wide range of maladaptive problem behaviors (Ramos, Guerin, Gottfried, Bathurst, & Oliver, 2005). Researchers have observed that parental warmth and positive attitudes help the children gain self-control and reduce behavior problems in middle childhood and early adolescence (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008).

The understanding of child temperament, parenting styles and their influence on internalizing and externalizing behaviors is a strong tool for school psychologists as these characteristics carry into the classroom. With this understanding, a school psychologist can give advice to teachers and parents on styles of discipline in which the child will positively respond. It is important for the child to watch for internalizing and externalizing behaviors within the classroom and intervene with that student to assess the source of the behaviors. School psychologists are responsible for adjusting the behaviors so they do not interfere with school success. In current research, virtually no studies address child temperament, parenting styles and its influence on internalizing and externalizing behaviors and if the school psychologist takes these factors into account when conducting a comprehensive evaluation.

Critical Analysis

In this section, the research studies will be analyzed in the areas of methodologies used and the strengths and weaknesses of the methodologies. It is evident that there is a body of literature on temperament, parenting styles, and internalizing and externalizing literature. Interestingly, much of the literature review used similar assessment tools in their methodologies such as observations, interviews and rating scales. Some literature reviews used the same rating scales to measure behavior for different purposes. Many of the research studies used large samples; however, these samples were not always representative of the general population. This section will compare the strengths and weaknesses of the assessment tools used in the research studies.

The temperament literature had several strengths. Much of the temperament literature used similar methodology and assessment tools. Bradley & Corwyn (2007; 2008) has especially strong assessment approaches. They collected data through interviews, observations and inventories. A second strength in the Bradley & Corwyn (2007; 2008) studies is that they took many factors into account and collected a plethora of data when measuring effects of temperament, parenting and externalizing and internalizing factors. A third strength is Bradley and Corwyn used assessment tools with good psychometric properties. They looked at measures of maternal sensitivity through tasks and observations and maternal harshness through Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment Inventory (Bradley & Corwyn, 2007; 2008). They collected data as the teachers assessed the children using the Child Behavior Checklist (CBCL) (2008). Temperament was assessed by maternal report using the Infant Temperament Questionnaire (Bradley & Corwyn, 2008). Finally, social skills were assessed through

the Social Skills Rating System (SSRS) (2007). Chess & Thomas' study (1986) was also strong in using multiple assessment tools. Many school psychologists use the CBCL and the newer version of the SSRS; the Social Skills Improvement Scale in assessing children for various reasons, but it is unclear if school psychologists use the tools to assess temperament.

The temperament literature had several weaknesses. Bradley & Corwyn (2008) used a large sample of participants, primarily of White European descent. The large sized sample is a benefit to the study; however, it is not a representative example of the U.S. population. Therefore, a weakness of the study is it cannot be generalized to all U.S. children. A second weakness of the Bradley & Corwyn (2008) study is that only the mother reported on the child's behavior. The literature may be more validated if the father would report on the child's behavior as well.

The parenting styles literature had strengths in that investigators used varying assessments to measure parenting styles. Bird, Reese & Tripp (2006) and Paulussen-Hoogeboom, Stams, Hermanns, Peetsma & Van Den Wittenboer (2008) had especially strong assessment approaches. In both studies, the parents were given the Children's Behavior Questionnaire. Paulussen-Hoogeboom et al. (2008) also used the Parenting Dimensions Inventory and the CBCL. Maughan et al. (2005) used a meta-analysis to examine the effectiveness of the Behavioral Parent Training, which is one of the most used interventions for parents of children with behavioral problems. Yahav used the Achenbach Self-Report Questionnaire and the Family Relations Self-Report Questionnaire. All were different assessment tools used to measure the effects of parenting styles on child behavior.

The Paulussen-Hoogeboom, et al. (2008) study used a relatively large sample to generalize findings. They randomly sampled 750 participants via a letter and 196 participants from the Netherlands were used in the study. The Maughan et al. (2005) study had many strengths in the experimental design. It was a meta-analysis that included between-subjects, within-subjects and single-subjects experimental designs. Yahav (2006) used a good research design that looked at multiple regression, looking at many factors at once and how they influence each other. Bird et al. (2006) addressed many area of gaps in previous research. Many studies on parenting styles and temperament used the CBCL to gather information about the child. As mentioned earlier, many school psychologists use the CBCL to assess child behaviors. However, there is little research that report school psychologists using the CBCL to assess the child's temperament or how their behaviors may be related to parenting styles.

The parenting styles literature also had weaknesses in their methodology. In the Bird et al. (2006) study, the same evaluator assessed the children; this eliminated inter-rater reliability issues but many have introduced rater bias. Bird et al. (2008) used primarily families in the middle class and of white European ethnicity, which is a weakness in the study. Yahav (2006) had a sample size of 159 children of middle class families, which is not representative to the general population. Paulussen-Hoogeboom et al. (2008) had a random sample with good representation of this geographic region, but it does not generalize beyond the region. A second limitation is that only mothers filled out the questionnaires (Paulussen-Hoogeboom et al., 2008).

The literature on internalizing and externalizing behavior had several strengths. In Lengua's (2008) study, children rated their mothers' parenting practices. Children

reported on maternal rejection/acceptance and inconsistent discipline using the Parenting Behavior Inventory. Both mother and child report of externalizing and internalizing behaviors were obtained and combined to create cross-reporter measures. Mothers reported on children's internalizing and externalizing problems using the CBCL (Lengua, 2008). Betts et al. (2009) study used the Reynold's Adolescent Depression Scale -2nd edition, the Emotional Regulation Questionnaire, Revised Dimensions of Temperament Survey, and the Parental Bonding Instrument. Ramos et al. (2005) study used the Behavioral Style Questionnaire (BSQ), Family Environment Scale and the CBCL.

In the Lengua (2008) study, participants were selected and represent a range of socio-demographic characteristics including an adequate representation of families of color, single- and two-parent households, and a full range of family income, which is a strength of the study. The sample represented a range of children's externalizing and internalizing problems with rates of clinical levels of problems. The Betts et al. (2009) and Ramos et al. (2005) studies used assessment inventories that have good psychometric properties. In all three areas, temperament, parenting styles and internalizing and externalizing behaviors, researchers used the CBCL to measure child behavior. The CBCL may be a good tool for school psychologists to use when they want to look at all three of these domains that impact a child's behavior in school.

The literature on internalizing and externalizing behaviors has several weaknesses as well. In the Lengua (2008) study, some children seemed to experience the game as anxiety-provoking, whereas others experienced it as enjoyable, which is a weakness in the study. Betts et al. (2009) used a sample of 88 participants (33 male, 55 female) who showed depressive symptoms. This is a small sample size, which is a weakness in the

study. Ramos et al. (2005) had a predominately white sample, which is not representative to the general population.

A very limited number of research studies were found relating to temperament in the schools. Since the number of research studies was very limited, any research conducted in this area is a strength as there are a lot of gaps in the research. A weakness is that many studies do not investigate the role of the school psychologist in the use of temperament assessment.

Instrumentation was a strength in the handful of studies on temperament in schools. Griggs et al.'s (2009) study was one of the very few that looked at the school psychologist's role in considering child temperament. One or both of the child's parents rated their child using the BSQ. Griggs et al. also used the Student-Teacher Relationship Scale, which assesses the quality of the relationships between teachers and their students, and the Penn Interactive Peer Play Scale, which measures teachers' perspectives of children's play behaviors with peers (Griggs et al., 2009). Mendez et al. (2002) used the Temperament Assessment Battery for Children-Teacher Form, the California Child Q-Sort to evaluate emotional regulation, the Expressive One-Word Picture Vocabulary Test-Revised to measure verbal expressive language, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test-Third Version, and the Penn Interactive Peer Play Scale. Rimm-Kaufman and Kagan (2005) used classroom observations to measure temperament in their study. As a school psychologist in training, I have not heard of many of these rating scales as part of my professional training. It raises the question of whether school psychologists do not assess for temperament because they are not trained on the assessment batteries.

Griggs et al. (2009) filled a gap in the research and is one of the few research studies considering the influence of temperament in the classroom. The authors used multiple assessment tools that had good psychometric properties and conducted multiple regression analysis. One weakness is the authors were only able to use a small population due to the lack of response; therefore, the generalizability should be interpreted with caution (Griggs et al., 2009). Mendez et al. (2002) looked only at low-income African American children who participated in Head Start. Rimm-Kaufman and Kagan (2005) used a large sample of Caucasian children with inhibited and uninhibited temperament types in the classroom, but these findings cannot be generalized to the general population.

After reviewing the studies, it can be said that previous research in the areas of temperament and parenting styles was fairly extensive. Research is beginning on the topics of temperament and internalizing and externalizing behaviors and temperament use in the classroom. However, much more research is still needed to fill in gaps of the use in temperament assessment in the classroom. After investigating all of this research, virtually no research articles were found indicating that school psychologists use temperament as part of their evaluations.

Recommendations

Further research about temperament in the classroom is needed for a better understanding of the precursors for child behaviors. With a better understanding, teachers, psychologists, counselors, and parents will be able to provide the best learning experience for the child based on optimal settings. An understanding of child

temperament will give teachers insight on how the child is most likely to respond to situations and transitions.

The understanding of child temperament, parenting styles and their influence on internalizing and externalizing behavior is a strong tool for school psychologists. Child temperament does not just stay at home; it is also present in the classroom. It is recommended that school psychologists collaborate with teachers and parents to create an environment that is stimulating to the child. With understanding of the child's temperament, a school psychologist can give advice to teachers and parents on styles of discipline the child will react most positively to.

A school psychologist frequently makes observations in the classroom. It is important that he or she is aware if a child is displaying internalizing or externalizing behaviors. For example, if two children are being physically abused at home their reactions may look different. The oldest child might pick fights on the playground and be hyperactive in the classroom. The youngest child may seem very quiet and withdrawn from his or her peers. The school psychologist may interview the child to inquire what is happening that may be facilitating the internalizing and/or externalizing behaviors. It is important for the school psychologist to be cognizant of what is driving the child's behavior.

It is recommended for researchers to conduct further studies to measure the amount of consideration school psychologists use when assessing children for special education services. As of the current date, there are very few research articles that look directly on the school psychologist's concerns with child temperament. Further research

in this area may lead to findings of best practices for school psychologists to use in comprehensive assessments.

It is recommended that school psychologists use temperament rating scales as part of a comprehensive assessment tool in their evaluations. A temperament screening may help in making educational decisions such as interventions. It is recommended for school psychologists to become familiar with temperament and to not misdiagnose examples of temperament as maladaptive behaviors.

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