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Academic Engagement and Relationship to Office Discipline Referrals

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ACADEMIC ENGAGEMENT AND RELATIONSHIP TO
OFFICE DISCIPLINE REFERRALS

A Dissertation

Submitted to the School of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree
Doctor of Education

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The present study begins to establish the psychometric properties of a student-completed behavioral measure in relation to an established teacher-completed measure, and evaluates the strength of the relationship between these two measures and high school students' problematic behaviors.

First, a self-behavior rating (SBR) was compared to the established teacher-completed direct behavior rating (DBR) to assess the level of inter-rater reliability with regard to academic engagement, passive off-task, and disruptive off-task behaviors. Next, the strength of the relationship between SBR/DBR and office discipline referrals (ODRs) was examined. Finally, SBR, DBR, and prior-year ODRs were analyzed to determine each one's predictive validity in relation to current-year ODRs.

Moderate correlations between academic engagement ratings as well as passive off-task ratings on SBR and DBR, were indicated. A weaker correlation between disruptive

off-task behavior was indicated on the two measures. Evidence for convergent validity between disruptive off-task behavior measured via DBR and SBR with ODRs was indicated. Convergent validity with passive-off task behavior on DBR or SBR was not indicated. Divergent validity for academic engagement measured by DBR and SBR in relation to ODRs was indicated. Both prior-year ODRs and SBR ratings of disruptive off-task behavior were predictors of current-year ODRs. SBR disruptive off-task behavior ratings were the strongest predictor of ODRs; however, these only explained a portion of the variability in current-year ODRs.

Limitations of the current study included a small sample size, minor statistical assumption violations, differences in teacher characteristics, differences in types of classroom activities, and possible variation in participants' perceptions of behavior. Recommendations for future research as well as suggestions for educational professionals implementing behavioral problem-solving models are offered.