

Effects of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders and Executive Dysfunction on Literacy Achievement: Through the Lens of Secondary-Level Education



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Research Questions

- What **behavior interventions** must be implemented for at-risk students displaying behavioral disorders?
- How do signs of **emotional and behavioral disorders and executive dysfunction (E/BD)** associate with **reading deficits**?
- How can **modern literacy programs** account for students with E/BD and executive dysfunction by **incorporating executive functioning skills into reading instruction**?
- What are a **self-contained** classroom's **positive** and **negative** effects on a student with EBD?

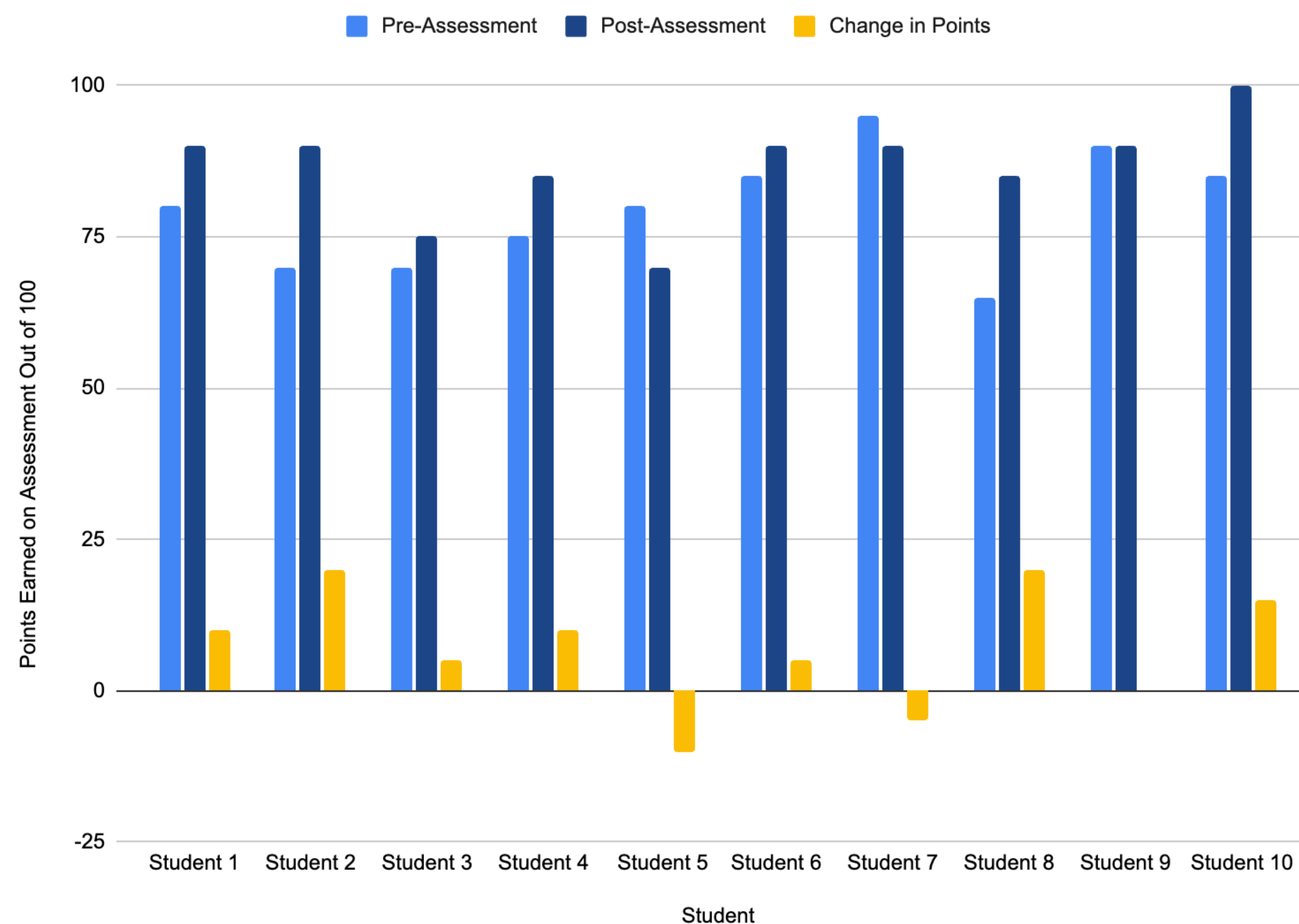
Methods

- The study specifically examined **seventh-grade students** with E/BD and executive dysfunctioning disorder in a private school setting.
- The **independent variable** consisted of tiered intervention programs within the *Units of Study* curriculum created by Lucy Calkins in collaboration with Columbia University's Teachers College Reading and Writing Project.
- Executive functioning interventions increased students' **understanding** and awareness of their cognitive functioning and what **organizational** skills are needed to **respond** and **comprehend** a text.
- Behavioral regulation support involved self-examination of **conduct** during whole group instruction.
- The **dependent** variable consisted of the student's **comprehension level**, typical **attention** to task, **generalization** of literacy skills, and **conduct** management.
- **Measurement Instrument** Used for Pre and Post Assessment: Teachers College Reading and Writing Project Benchmark Reading Levels (TCRWP)
- **Observations** were collected under natural, non-manipulative settings in general and self-contained classrooms and followed guidelines of Pennsylvania Training and Technical Assistance Network's FBA Worksheet.

Results

As a result of accommodating the specific needs of students with E/BD and executive dysfunctioning, the **increase** of mean test scores is deemed to be **statistically significant**. Based on the major findings of the pre and post mean data, there was a **7 point increase**. The **pretest** results recorded a number of students at or above 80% **to be 6 students and the number of students below 80% to be 4 students**. After **implementing** accommodations, posttest results recorded a number of students above 80% **to be 8 students and the number of students below 80% to be 2 students**.

Analyzing Learning Outcomes: A Comparison of Pre and Post Accomodation Implementation on Comprehension Assessment Scores



Conclusion

- **Executive functioning** skills help students in the organization of not only their physical school materials, but **organization** of their thoughts, the ability to **follow** multi-step directions, and **chunk** information given to them in order to comprehend the text.
- The behavior **interventions** that must be implemented for at-risk students displaying behavioral disorders are **individualized check-lists** and **recurring brain breaks**.
- Signs of **emotional and behavioral disorders** are associated with **reading deficits** since students display distracted behaviors when content/ text is **above** their independent comprehension level, stemming from **avoidance** and possible **peer embarrassment**.
- **Self-contained classrooms/separate** environments allow students to have attentive **one-on-one**, direct instruction on **literacy instruction, emotional regulation, and executive functioning** skill building.

References

