

Abstract

Students' time in class and exposure to academics are essential to academic success. Disruptive student behavior can result in time out of class and missed academic instruction, which can lead to grade retention. Literature exists on reading ability, behavior, and grade retention all independent of each other but little exists on relationships between reading scores, office discipline referrals, and grade retention occurrences. With a focus on Gesell's theory of neuromaturation, the study investigated data to support brain development theories and effects on executive functioning. The quantitative study was designed to determine whether a positive correlation existed between reading scores on standardized tests, office discipline referrals and grade retention occurrence. The sample consisted of a random, anonymous 100 student data covering a three-school year period: 2012-2013, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016. Data analyses were performed using IBM SPSS and G*Power and included Spearman correlation and Kruskal-Wallis H test. Spearman correlation analysis found statistical correlational significance between reading scores and office discipline referrals; as reading scores improved, office discipline referrals declined. Results from Kruskal-Wallis H test showed statistical significance ($H(2) = 10.42, p = .005$) among office discipline referrals as a function of reading scores meaning students' high school office discipline referrals are correlated with seventh-grade reading scores and category. Since statistical analysis was not performed between reading scores and grade retention due to lack of variability on grade retention data ($n = 4$), a descriptive profile was generated for all grade retained students. The study's findings showed relationships between higher standardized test reading scores and lower office discipline referrals and grade retention which can be used by educators when reviewing data, implementing interventions, and developing school- or system-wide improvement plans.