

Are All Students Equal? Examining the Disproportionality and Effects of Out of School Suspensions Among African American Male Students

Angela M. Powell
Justyn D. Smith
Sam Houston State University

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the disproportionate rates of out of school suspensions among African American male students. A logistic regression analysis was conducted and found that African American Males were statistically significant for being disciplined with out of school suspension.

Statement of the Problem

Zero Tolerance Policy controversy

Developed to foster a safer school environment (Lewis, Bonner, Butler, & Joubert, 2010; Peguero & Shekarkhar, 2011)

Fostered severe punitive discipline (Rudd, 2014)

Negative Stereotypes

Disproportionate rates of out of school suspension

Negative sense of self and disengagement from school

Viewed as "troublemakers"



Statement of the Problem

Significant gaps in academic achievement

Increased dropout rates

Social discord among peers

Negative school climate



Gaps In Literature

No data was found to explain that out of school suspensions reduce school/classroom disruption or improve the school climate.

Where do we go from here?

How do we restore academic regression in affected students?

Rationale

African American students

- 13% of Texas' elementary population

- 42% of Texas' out of school population

African American Male students

- 51% of Texas' elementary population

- 84% of Texas' elementary out of school suspensions



Literature Review

Extensive research to support the disproportionate discipline rates among minority students (Skiba, Michael, Nardo, and Peterson, 2002) yet the gap continues to increase.

As the number of suspensions increase so does the likelihood of academic regression (Morris & Perry, 2016; Wong, 2016).

Schools serve more severe punishments to African American males based on generalization and policies rather than examining each situation case by case (Castillo, 2014; Smith & Harper, 2015).



Literature Review

Zero Tolerance Policy placed great barriers on African American male students' academic progress as they are placed in OSS at alarming rates (Smith & Harper, 2015).

Punitive policies have a negative impact on school climate causing even more social disconnection among minority students (Wong, 2016).

Educators tend to impose harsher sanctions for African American and Hispanic students than White students (Castillo, 2014).



Theoretical Framework

Integrative Model of Development (Iruka, Curenton, & Gardner, 2015)

Focuses on how severe and disproportionate discipline impacts minority children

Lack of consideration of social class, ethnicity, and race impedes the process and development of minority children

Cultural experiences have caused minority children to feel oppressed and criminalized based on SES, ethnicity, and gender



Theoretical Framework

Integrative Model of Development (Iruka, et. al, 2015)

"Cookie-cutter" approach is ineffective

Educators should:

Be more cognizant of multicultural variables

Provide more differentiated and reasonable consequences

Evaluate offenses on a case-by-case basis



Research Questions

Does ethnicity, gender, and In-school suspension (ISS) predict out of school suspensions in African American male students?

Null: Ethnicity, gender, and In-school suspension (ISS) do not predict out of school suspensions in African American male students.



Method

Participants

For this study, data from 153 elementary schools in the Houston Independent School District (HISD) was obtained from the Texas Education Agency (TEA).



Unweighted Cases ^a		N	Percent
Selected Cases	Included in Analysis	2085	100.0
	Missing Cases	0	.0
Unselected Cases	Total	2085	100.0
	Missing Cases	0	.0
Total		2085	100.0

^a. If weight is in effect, see classification table for the total number of cases.

Why Houston ISD?

Participants

HISD serves approximately 215,000 students.

Largest public school district in Texas.

7th largest in the United States.

Of the approximate 215,000 enrolled students, there are approximately 106,000 elementary students.

HISD's overall student body is comprised of 62.1% Hispanic, 24.9% African American, 3.6% Asian, and 8.2% White.



Method

Participants

		Frequency	Parameter coding (1)
SEX	Female	357	1.000
	Male	1728	.000
African American	Non African American	407	1.000
	African American	1678	.000

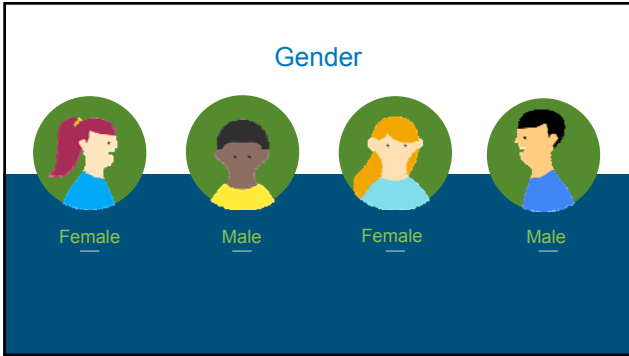


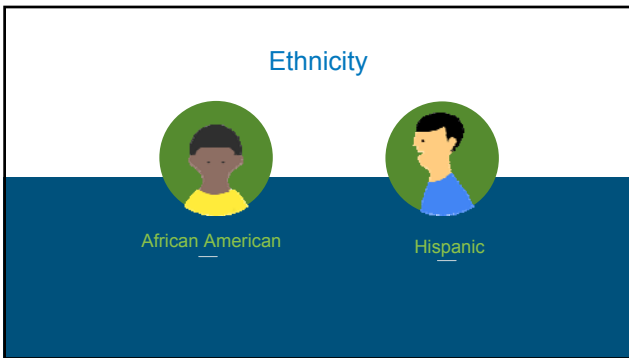
Data Analysis

Logistic Regression: A statistical method for analyzing a dataset in which there are one or more independent variables that determine an outcome. The outcome is measured with a dichotomous variable (in which there are only two possible outcomes).

3 predictors- Gender, Ethnicity, In School Suspension

1 - Out of School Suspension






Where are the White Students?

TEA has to abide by the guidelines of FERPA.

The Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA) is a Federal law that protects the privacy of student education records.

When TEA provides student level data, they drop records if there are 4 or less records of the same values so students can't be identified.



In School Suspension



- Defined as student remaining in the school but removed from the classroom.
- Placed in a designated area for a specified amount of time, still receiving instruction.

Out of School Suspension



- Defined as student being removed from the school for a specified amount of time and doesn't receive any instruction or interventions.

Results

No Missing Data

	Case Processing Summary					
	Valid		Missing		Total	
	N	Percent	N	Percent	N	Percent
SEX * Ethnicity * Out of School Suspension	2085	100.0%	0	0.0%	2085	100.0%



Results

African American and Sex were statistically significant.

Being Male were .622 times higher than being female for being placed in OSS

Being African American increased your chance of being placed in OSS by .509.

Variables in the Equation						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a AFAM(1)	-.675	.117	33.580	1	.000	.509
SEX(1)	-.474	.124	14.687	1	.000	.622
Constant	.877	.260	210.963	1	.000	2.405

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: AFAM, SEX.



Results

Added ISS into model with AFAM and Sex.

Only gender was the statistically significant variable.

Males became the only statistically significant predictor indicating that being male made you .328 times more likely to be placed in OSS.

Variables in the Equation						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a AFAM(1)	15.226	1306.445	.000	1	.991	4097762.566
SEX(1)	-1.116	.499	5.008	1	.025	.328
ISS(1)	35.357	1864.448	.000	1	.983	1237940431160
Constant	-34.822	1864.448	.000	1	.985	.000

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: AFAM, SEX, ISS.



Results

When used ISS as dependent variable and AFAM and SEX as Predictors, if you were AFAM, you were 2.04 times more likely than being Hispanic of being placed in ISS and being male you were 1.54 times more likely than being female of being placed in ISS.

Variables in the Equation						
	B	S.E.	Wald	df	Sig.	Exp(B)
Step 1 ^a AFAM(1)	.712	.117	37.182	1	.000	2.038
SEX(1)	.429	.125	11.791	1	.001	1.535
Constant	-.914	.061	225.505	1	.000	.401

a. Variable(s) entered on step 1: AFAM, SEX.



Discussion

Data and study support prior research regarding the predictors of OSS.

Results support Integrative Model of Development. (Reviewed Earlier)

African American Males are disproportionately disciplined with OSS. Thus creating the school to prison pipeline.

Limitations

Due to FERPA regulations White students were withheld from the data given.

Conclusions & Implications

School districts should consider more multicultural training for teachers in order to deliver more sensitive lessons in the classroom.

Districts are also more likely to opt to suspension rather than mental-health treatment due to a lack of funding for treatment. Therefore, more funding should be allocated to schools to provide more mental-health training for students exhibiting disciplinary issues.

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support for ALL Students

Integrative Model of Development (Iruka, et. al, 2015)

- Social Skills
- Code Switching
- Proactive Teaching
 - Teach expectations for future behaviors
 - Model expected behaviors
 - Explain goals and purpose of transition prior to transition

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support for ALL Students

- Promote Positive Behavior
- Appropriate Incentives
- Personal praise
- Immediate responses
- Allow self-reflection/correction

Positive Behavioral Interventions and Support for ALL Students

- Repeated undesirable behavior (Tier 3)
- Appropriate Incentives
- Personal praise
- Immediate responses
- Allow self-reflection/correction
- Address undesirable behaviors early!
- Develop plan of action
- Be consistent!

Future Research

Now that we see results for predictors for OSS what are the next steps in research?

**DIG
DEEPER**

References

Castillo, J. (2014). Tolerance in Schools for Latino Students: Dismantling the School to Prison Pipeline. *Harvard Journal of Hispanic Policy*, 26, 43-58.

Iruka, I. U., Curenton, S. M., & Gardner, S. (2015). How changes in home and neighborhood environment factors are related to change in Black children's academic and social development from kindergarten to third grade. *The Journal of Negro Education*, 84(3), 282-297.

Layton, L. (2015, November 3). In Texas, elementary schools mete out more punishment to black students. *The Washington Post*. Retrieved from https://www.washingtonpost.com/local/education/in-texas-elementary-schools-mete-out-more-punishment-to-black-students/2015/11/03/3727b3aa-826b-11e5-9afb-0c971f713dfc_story.html

Lewin, T. (2012, March). Black students face more discipline, data suggests. *New York Times*. Retrieved from: <http://nyti.ms/18kiXp0>

References

Lewis, C. W., Bonner III, F. A., Butler, B. R., & Joubert, M. (2010). African American male discipline patterns and school district responses resulting impact on academic achievement: Implications for urban educators and policy makers. *Journal of African American Males in Education*, 1(1), 7-25.

Morris, E. W., & Perry, B. L. (2016). The punishment gap: School suspension and racial disparities in achievement. *Social Problems*, 63(1), 68-86.

Morris, M. (2012). *Race, gender, and the school-to-prison pipeline: Expanding our discussion to include Black girls*. New York, Los Angeles: African American Policy Forum.

Peguero, A. A., Shekarkhar, Z. (2011). Latino/a student misbehavior and school punishment. *Hispanic Journal of Behavioral Sciences*, 33(1), 54-70.

Rocque, M. (2010). Office discipline and student behavior: Does race matter? *American Journal of Education*, 116(4), 557-581.

References

Rudd, T. (2014). Racial disproportionality in school discipline: Implicit bias is heavily implicated. *Kirwan Institute Issue Brief*, 614, 1-8.

Skiba, R., Michael, R., Nardo, A. C., & Peterson, R. L. (2002). The color of discipline: Sources of racial and gender disproportionality in school punishment. *The Urban Review*, 34(4), 317-342.

Smith, E. J., & Harper, S. R. (2015). *Disproportionate impact of K-12 school suspension and expulsion on Black students in southern states*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania, Center for the Study of Race and Equity in Education.

Texas Education Agency. (2015). School district data set. Available from: <http://tea.texas.gov>
Wong, A. (2016, February 8). How school suspensions push black students behind. *The Atlantic*. Retrieved from <http://www.theatlantic.com/education/archive/2016/02/how-school-suspensions-push-black-students-behind/460305/>
