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

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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).
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

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
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.

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.

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.
### Results

**Answers to Research Questions**

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

Found that ethnicity and gender were predictors (statistical significance) for out of school suspensions.
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

behavior (Tier 3)
Appropriate Incentives
Personal praise
Immediate responses
Allow self-reflection/correction
Address undesirable behaviors early!
Develop plan of action
Be consistent!
Now that we see results for predictors for OSS what are the next steps in research?

References


References


