A STUDY OF DISPROPORTIONALITY IN DISCIPLINE FOR BLACK GIRLS IN TEXAS: DOES DISTRICT TYPE MATTER?

by

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ABSTRACT

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The number of African American girls that experience exclusionary discipline in Texas schools is an area of concern that needs to be addressed. In the Southern States, African American female students are five times more likely to receive out-of-school suspension than White female students. The research surrounding the topic of school discipline outlines the disparities concerning students of color and the likelihood of students of color receiving discipline more often and more severe than their counterparts (Fenning & Rose, 2007, Fowler, 2007, Townsend, 2000). Directly related to this concern is the makeup representation of the discipline committee members that decide the type and length of placement for African American students.

This experimental design describes the impact of disciplinary committee representation on DAEP placement in school districts in Texas. Archival data were collected from the Texas Education Agency database for 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016, and 2016-2017 school years through a Public Information Release request. The population includes all African American female students in major suburban and major urban school districts who were placed in a District

Alternative Educational Placement (DAEP) educational setting, the number of economically-disadvantaged students, the number of students served through special education, and the student-teacher ratio. School district location and committee member representation were analyzed to determine if major urban or major suburban school district location affects the number of exclusionary discipline placements that happen during the school year for African American female students.

This study was conducted to reveal potential patterns that may/may not exist between urban and suburban school districts and DAEP placements for African American female students in major urban and major suburban school districts in Texas. The study was conducted using secondary discipline data compiled through the Texas Education Agency. Data were analyzed from major urban school districts and major suburban school districts in the state of Texas.

Multiple regression analysis was used in analyzing the research question(s) about exclusionary discipline placements. Data from major suburban and major urban school districts in Texas were used in the study. African American female student data and teacher ethnicity representation data was analyzed to determine if urban or suburban school district locations have an impact on the number of DAEP placements.

The current field of study around exclusionary discipline practices gives much insight to exclusionary discipline practices involving African American males, Hispanic males, and even males served through Special Education. This research will attempt to address a lacuna in the research involving exclusionary discipline practices by addressing the potential patterns of major urban and major suburban school districts, teacher ethnicity representation, and exclusionary discipline for African American female students.

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He who began a good work in you will carry it on to completion until the day of Christ Jesus.
Philippians 1:6

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my parents,

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Thank you for providing an abundance of support throughout this journey.

This work is also dedicated to my Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

To God be ALL the glory!

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Discipline in public schools happens every day. However, discipline can be defined in several ways and can vary with context. Students can discipline themselves as they focus on their studies. Teachers establish rules in the classroom and discipline students who violate them. Teachers expect students to exhibit acceptable behavior inside and outside the classroom. Violating those norms can lead to disciplinary action by teachers, not necessarily the students' administrators. Most people are familiar with the word discipline and what it means or represents. What is discipline? Turner (2006) writes, "discipline is to bring about obedience through various forms of punishment; it is a means of correction" (p. 183). Children and adults alike will confront or have experienced discipline in the context of facing the consequences for their actions.

Teachers and administrators discipline students as a means to maintain order within individual classrooms as well as on the school campus, so student behaviors do not disrupt the learning process. For this reason, some view the value of discipline as a necessity to create an environment conducive to learning. Muldrow (2016) points out two purposes behind school discipline. "First, it should keep students and educators safe and maintain an environment conducive to learning" (p. 3). Muldrow goes on to say, "Second, it should help disruptive students change their behavior, resolve their issues, and return as productive contributors to the educational process" (p. 3). Is discipline necessary, and if it is, what purpose does it serve? In Muldrow's second purpose, there is an understood action of removal of a student from the learning environment since the purpose mentions the return of a student to the educational process.

School systems use a variety of discipline options when working with students. When students do not meet the expectation for appropriate behavior in the school setting, teachers and administrators can respond in a myriad of ways depending on the infraction. The policies in place limit the types of consequences teachers can administer when students misbehave in the classroom. If a student is disrupting the learning environment or cheating on an assignment, the teacher can assign the student detention before school, after school, or during lunch. In instances where cheating has occurred, the teacher can assign a student to Friday or Saturday school to make up the assignment or test.

When students consistently do not meet the expectations for appropriate behavior, teachers have the latitude to submit a discipline referral. Discipline referrals are sent directly to the assistant principals/administrators. Administrators use the student code of conduct to guide the types of consequences administered to the students, depending on where the infraction falls on the student code of conduct document. In Texas, the student code of conduct divides misconduct into three major categories: Campus Discipline Management Offenses, Discipline Alternative Education Placement Offenses, and Expulsion Offenses (Texas Education Code, 1995b). The three categories of the student code of conduct start with minor infractions managed at the campus level to moderate infractions managed at the DAEP level, and serious infractions managed at the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Placement (JJAEP) level.

At the campus level, administrators have a range of consequences that are administered depending on the infraction against the student code of conduct. For example, dress code infractions typically involve a parent phone call for a change of clothes. Handling being disrespectful is typically a parent phone call and a detention assignment. Fighting or stealing involves a parent phone call and out-of-school suspension.

In the state of Texas, within the student code of conduct, moderate infractions are under Discipline Alternative Education Placement offenses (DAEP). Offenses in this category of the student code of conduct fall into two categories: Mandatory DAEP offenses and Discretionary DAEP offenses. Mandatory offenses such as assault, sexual offenses, and selling, delivering, or using drugs result in a student's placement in the district's DAEP facility. Discretionary offenses such as gang activity, persistent misbehavior, bullying, and criminal mischief can result in possible placement in the district's DAEP facility. In either case, a Campus Intervention Team meeting determines if a placement is mandatory or discretionary and to determine the length of placement on a DAEP campus. The Campus Intervention Team is a committee of two administrators, one counselor, three to four teachers, the parent(s), and the student. Campus Intervention Team meetings allow the student to have a due process meeting for the student code of conduct offense.

Expulsion Offenses contain a list of severe infractions regarding a student's behavior. Offenses in this category of the student code of conduct fall into two categories: Mandatory Expellable Offenses and Discretionary Expellable Offenses. Mandatory offenses such as possession of a weapon, aggravated assault, indecency with a child, or murder result in a student's placement in a JJAEP facility.

When an administrator removes a student from regular classroom instruction, which is frequently a result of their behavior or actions, administrators take on the task of deciding the appropriate consequence for the student. When teachers or administrators remove a student from the regular classroom setting, the type of consequence assigned to the student could fall into the category of exclusionary discipline. In theory, any student breaking the rules, regardless of race, socioeconomic status, or gender, would be removed from the classroom; however, research

shows discipline is not equitable for all students (McFadden et al., 1992; Shaw & Braden, 1990; Skiba et al., 2011). There is a particular variety of demographics often on the receiving end of exclusionary discipline practices.

Four decades of research focused on the discriminatory way discipline impacts students. The Children's Defense Fund first brought discipline disparities to light by demonstrating African American students were twice as likely as White students to receive a suspension (Edelman et al., 1975). For this study, African American and Black will be used interchangeably regarding people of African descent residing in the United States. Not only do African American students receive harsher levels of punishment for less severe behavior than other students (McFadden et al., 1992; Shaw & Braden, 1990), Skiba et al. (2011) stated African American students receive referrals to the office for offenses that require a higher degree of subjectivity. Scholars have found teachers and administrators subjectively interpret disrespect, loitering, and defiance in a variety of ways. When offenses can be interpreted in various ways by a variety of people, levels of inconsistency can occur when administering disciplinary consequences. This type of inconsistency contributes to male and female Black students receiving referrals and suspensions at a rate two to three times greater than White students (Fabelo et al., 2011). The research clearly shows these disparities impact all African American students, male and female.

Exclusionary discipline mostly effects students of color as well as students served through special education making this type of consequence inequitable. There are several reasons related to exclusionary discipline and society's most underserved student populations. Some examples include teacher fear and anxiety and teacher referrals for subjective behavior (Fenning & Rose, 2007). Teacher fear and anxiety occurs when teachers analyze student behavior through a single lens of middle-class norms, not taking into consideration that the student may not have

had any exposure to middle-class norms (Payne, 2003). Additionally, subjective behavior is any conduct that teachers interpret in a myriad of ways for each student. For example, when students receive discipline referrals for a behavior such as "being disrespectful," how one teacher interprets being disrespectful may differ from how another teacher interprets that same behavior.

The current research provides evidence that students of color are disciplined differently than majority students but provides little evidence of the difference in their treatment. The contribution of this research is to provide a theoretical context to understand why disciplinary action varies across race/ethnicity and gender. The research question is what factors explain the variation in the use of discipline among students. The research focuses on the role that the demographic composition of the teachers affects the use of discipline on students of different demographic composition. Representative bureaucracy will be the theoretical context for this research.

Background

What is exclusionary discipline, and why does this fate seem to impact students of color, particularly African American students profoundly? In the past 10 years, researchers have concluded African American students disproportionately experience exclusionary discipline. Fenning and Rose (2007) found African Americans receive expulsions at four times the rate of their White counterparts. Per Fabelo et al., "Male and female Black students disproportionately receive discipline referrals and out-of-school suspension, most often at a rate two to three times greater than White students" (as cited in Gregory et al., 2017, p. 253). Similarly, African American girls find themselves leading all other ethnic groups for instances of exclusionary discipline practices (Morris & Perry, 2017). This research is particularly relevant as it pertains to

African American girls in urban and suburban school districts as they experience exclusionary discipline at six times the rate of their White counterparts.

School discipline research identifies clear disparities in the occurrence of the type of students who experience exclusionary discipline. Students of color receive suspensions at disproportionate rates and receive more severe punishment for the same infractions as their White counterparts (Fenning & Rose, 2007). Gregory et al. (2010) stated Black students were two to three times overrepresented in school suspensions compared with their enrollment rates in localities across the nation (Edelman et al., 1975). To understand how this occurs, one needs to understand the types of student management plans. This researcher concentrated on disproportionate rates of discipline for African American girls in the state of Texas. This researcher branches out from the wealth of research surrounding exclusionary discipline placements for African American boys and attempts to add to the body of knowledge surrounding exclusionary discipline for African American girls.

Students Impacted

Exclusionary discipline impacts children of poverty and children who experience academic problems more than other types of students (Fenning & Rose, 2007). Typically, those students who experience academic problems are students served through special education, and children of poverty are those who are labeled at-risk in the school system. The at-risk label or economically-disadvantaged label applies to students who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. These students tend to be minority students and the students that are most underserved in the public education system. Fenning and Rose (2007) stated underserved students suffer from the loss of instructional time because they are typically the students who bear the consequences of exclusionary discipline. When used, exclusionary discipline denies students access to learning

opportunities because they are not in school (Townsend, 2000). In turn, this increases the chance of students dropping out of school and widens the achievement gap between students of color and White students.

African American students receive suspensions two to three times more than students from other ethnic groups (Darensbourg et al., 2010). In addition to this information, African American students make up 17% of the population but 34% of suspensions. According to Townsend (2000), "Disciplinary measures that exclude African American students may create a "domino effect" that further widens the achievement gap" (p. 382). Cortez and Cortez (2009) report male students or Hispanic, African American, and special education students primarily make up DAEP enrollment. By using exclusionary discipline practices, one ultimately moves students out of the classroom and pushes them towards the route of the criminal justice system (Elias, 2013). When students experience exclusionary consequences from the school, they can engage in more deviant behaviors, which often have consequences that afford them the unfortunate opportunity of experiencing the justice system.

The following quote from the Texas Appleseed (Fowler, 2007) will lay the foundation of what the literature states regarding overrepresentation in exclusionary discipline for particular subgroups. Additionally, Texas Appleseed makes the connection between "where a child attends school—and . . . the "likelihood of a student's receiving a disciplinary referral" (Fowler, 2007, p. 99). This line of thought is related to the research, which supports the importance of the following quote. The Texas Appleseed research reports the following:

- High recidivism and dropout rates underscore the failure of Disciplinary Alternative Education Programs (DAEPs) to meet the needs of large numbers of students—a problem compounded by the lack of state oversight.

- Where a child attends school—and not the nature of the offense—is the greater predictor of the likelihood of a student's receiving a disciplinary referral.
- African American students—and to a lesser extent, Hispanic students—are significantly over-represented in schools' discretionary disciplinary decisions (suspensions and DAEP referrals) compared to their percentage in the overall student population.
- Special education students are significantly overrepresented in discretionary disciplinary referrals compared to their percentage in the overall school population.
- Texas school districts referred around 500 pre-K and kindergarten students and about 2,700 1st graders to DAEPs, between 2001 and 2006—even though Texas law restricts the referral of children under age 6 to those who bring a gun to school. (Fowler 2007, pp. 4-5)

Theoretical Framework Reference

Representative bureaucracy is the theoretical framework that helps one understand school discipline. Representative bureaucracy is discussed predominately in connection with government agencies (Kingsley, 1944; Krislov, 1974; Pitts, 2007), and although schools are not the political government agencies one usually thinks about, school systems are bureaucratic agencies. In the context of public schools, the teachers and administrators are the street-level bureaucrats, and the students (and their families) are the constituents.

Kingsley (1944) first discussed representative bureaucracy in terms of how it related to the British civil service system. Later Krislov (1974) discussed how elected officials who shared various characteristics, race, gender, and background would also share the values and norms of the constituents they represent. Lastly, Meier and Stewart (1992) discussed representative

bureaucracy as it relates to educational institutions where teachers are street-level bureaucrats (Lipsky, 1980), and their students are the clients they serve.

The theory of representative bureaucracy has found considerable support within a substantial body of literature examining education policy (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006). The leading proponents of representative bureaucracy in education are Meier, Wrinkle, and Polinard. Studies propose where there is an increase in minority teachers; there is also an academic improvement for both minority and White students (Meier et al., 1999). Their work with the Texas school districts and standardized testing demonstrates that as minority teachers increased in a particular school, there was an increase in academic performance for both minority and White students. The study concludes representative bureaucracies are more successful in achieving their goals than non-representative bureaucracies under similar circumstances. Accordingly, there are four unique ways in which minority teachers affect minority student test scores (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006). First, they can serve as appropriate role models. Minority teachers, both ethnically and by gender, give minority students many opportunities to witness other minorities in leadership positions. Second, as decision-makers, minority teachers are often in the position to act as a buffer against perceptible discriminatory practices and to assist in the selection of students for gifted and educational support programs. Third, minority teachers have insight into the educational experiences of students similar to themselves, as minority teachers were once minority students. Fourth, minority teachers lessen the racial barriers of any educational facility and, as such, the issue of race and perhaps gender is not a detriment to good educational policies (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006).

This research focused on identifying the type of school district, urban or suburban, and the representation of the teachers who serve on the decision-making committee impacts the

likelihood of African American girls and their experience with DAEP or JJAEP placements. Representative bureaucracy will serve as the theory to explain why there is inequity in the type of students who experience discipline consequences in schools and how the representative makeup of the decision-making committee members may/may not contribute to the exposure of African American girls to the DAEP system. In Chapter 2, the researcher outlines the various viewpoints of representative bureaucracy as part of the literature review.

Statement of the Problem

According to Darensbourg et al. (2010), "Many students who experience exclusionary discipline do so as a consequence of zero-tolerance policies. Zero-tolerance policies are discipline policies with predetermined consequences that are often severe and punitive" (p. 198). The authors cited zero-tolerance policies result in harsh consequences "regardless of the severity of the infraction, extenuating circumstances, or situation specificity surrounding the infraction" (pp. 198-199). Zero-tolerance policies in school districts do not always take into account all the facts involved in a disciplinary issue. Zero-tolerance policies are not a fool-proof method and undermine the parents and students that the schools are trying to serve because most people do not have a foundational understanding of these policies. Per the Texas Appleseed report, "The original goal of zero tolerance was to reduce the potential for violence on school campuses and to keep students and teachers safe" (Fowler, 2007, p. 13).

In addition to zero-tolerance policies being a problem in the public school system, terms used within the discipline management plans and the student code of conduct are often subject to the teacher or administrator's interpretation or subjectivity. The state of Texas defines persistent misbehavior as behavior that violates the student code of conduct. Behavior is a broad term, but can be summarized as the presentation of a continued behavior that signifies a major disruption

to the learning environment or a danger to safety and security (Texas Education Code, 1995b). In the researcher's professional experience as an assistant principal, persistent misbehavior is frequently used as a reason for using exclusionary discipline as a consequence for students. The flaw in these two reasons is no one set definition outlines what constitutes persistent misbehavior or what constitutes a classroom disruption. Teachers and administrators determine consequences on an individual basis, and when multiple people are administering discipline, they are working from multiple interpretations. This lack of specificity can lead to irregularities when administering discipline.

Fowler (2007), the primary author of the Texas Appleseed publication Texas' School-to-Prison Pipeline: Dropout to Incarceration, reported zero-tolerance policies function under two assumptions. The first assumption is removing students who violate school rules will create a school climate more conducive to learning for students who remain. The second assumption is the swift and specific punishments of zero-tolerance have a deterrent effect upon students, thus improving overall student behavior and discipline. Studies from the Texas Appleseed report found both of these assumptions to be incorrect. One study from a report by Mendez (2003) indicated, "Data gathered during a longitudinal study suggests frequent use of suspensions has no measurable positive deterrent or academic benefit to either the suspended students or to non-suspended students" (as cited in Fowler, 2007, p. 27). Typically, African American students receive discipline referrals that are tied to subjective behavior concerns and are less severe than their White counterparts. African American students receive referrals for more subjective behaviors, but they also experience harsher punishments for offenses that are not considered severe (Fowler, 2007).

Elias (2013) stated, “Policies that encourage police presence at schools, harsh tactics including physical restraint, and automatic punishments that result in suspensions and out of class time are huge contributors to the pipeline” (para. 7). Districts have the option to choose whether they use a police presence in schools. Some districts only reserve police presence at secondary campuses, while other districts employ a police presence throughout all grade levels—elementary and secondary. The best way to avoid the fate of the school-to-prison pipeline is to employ teachers with the tools they need, such as classroom management workshops, smaller class sizes, and a proactive approach to discipline instead of a reactive approach. Teachers are society’s best resource in breaking the chain of the school-to-prison pipeline if they are knowledgeable about the tools they need to have meaningful experiences with students instead of confrontational experiences. Teachers possess knowledge about their students that far surpasses the limited interactions students have with administrators. With the amount of time they spend with students, they would best know some of the strategies that would assist in keeping students in the classroom and engaged in the learning environment.

Purpose

In this study, the researcher analyzed the incidence of exclusionary discipline, as measured by DAEP placements, and the ethnic composition of the school staff in major urban and major suburban school districts. The ultimate goal of this study was to identify the type of school district setting and staff composition that allowed African American female students to be successful in the regular classroom environment. Using data and existing literature, the researcher explored the connection between school district setting and staff composition and the rate of occurrence of DAEP placements for African American female students. Additionally, by analyzing the representative makeup of the staff members, the researcher estimated the

connection between staff representation and the rate of DAEP placements for African American female students.

This topic should be of great importance to school district administrators (campus and district level), teachers and administrators on DAEP campuses or JJAEP facilities, prison management officials, and the Texas Education Agency. This research will optimistically provide an avenue for a policy change that would minimize the disproportionate number of African American girls experiencing exclusionary discipline. This outcome would lead to fewer placements at DAEP and JJAEP facilities and, ultimately, lessen Black girls experiencing the prison system. Any policy change would start at the Texas Education Agency level, which would, in turn, pass down to the school district level. In addition to adults who work in the school or justice systems, parents should be concerned and informed about data. No parent wants their child to end up a product of the juvenile justice system or the prison system. The startling reality is schoolwide discipline numbers mirror juvenile justice and prison overrepresentation, which connects to the school-to-prison pipeline theory (Fenning & Rose, 2007).

The goal for each of these groups would be to decrease the number of minority students served through alternative educational placement programs. The reduction of minority students served in discipline placements has the potential to create positive externalities for society. If one can keep students on the regular campus and prevent them from starting down the path of alternative school or juvenile justice, the outcome would be more students would finish high school. More education for these students creates better options and opportunities for them in society.

The Texas Education Agency is already looking at the number of minority students served through alternative education placements and addressing the issue with each district

whose numbers already show an overrepresentation of minority students (Fowler, 2007). Overrepresentation occurs when the percentage of students receiving a particular action exceeds 10% of the actual percentage of students in that group (Fenning & Rose, 2007). The Texas Education Agency works with districts that have an overrepresentation of students from various subgroups. Once the agency identifies a school district with discipline data showing an overrepresentation, the agency has that district submit a plan of action to reduce the number of students that are over-identified in the discipline data. The Texas Education Agency periodically checks back with the district to see if they are making progress towards their plan; however, if the overrepresentation continues to occur, the school district's accountability rating is impacted as a result of the overrepresentation. The accountability rating is a rating system for all public schools and charter schools (Texas Education Agency, 2020c). The school report card which is part of the rating system for accountability examines a variety of domains which include student achievement, school progress, and efforts to close the achievement gap. Additionally, the school report card also examines the type of distinctions a school can receive which include science, English language arts/reading, mathematics, social studies, comparative academic growth, comparative closing the gaps, and postsecondary readiness (Texas Education Agency, 2019).

Significance

This study is vital to parents and educators who can use this research to make informed decisions regarding the school districts' location and staff composition that best serve African American female students in the regular classroom. The present study contributes to the literature by introducing how district location and staff member representation may or may not impact the occurrence of exclusionary discipline as experienced by African American female students. Researchers have studied African American female students and the disproportionate numbers in

which they experience exclusionary discipline (Morris & Perry, 2017), however; researchers have not yet tapped into whether or not school district location or staff member representation is instrumental in the occurrence of exclusionary discipline for African American female students. This researcher examined the relationship between exclusionary discipline occurrence, school district location, and staff member representation.

Research Questions

In this study, the researcher addressed the reasons African American female students experience exclusionary discipline practices at relatively higher rates and how school district location and staff member representation affect exclusionary discipline practices for African American girls. As a result, the following research questions served as the foundation for this study.

1. Why are African American female students more likely to face exclusionary discipline as it relates to DAEP placements?
2. Do suburban school districts have a higher incidence than urban schools of placing African American girls in alternative school programs?
3. Does the sociodemographic composition of the staff members at the campus level impact the likelihood of African American girls experiencing alternative school programs?

Expected Contributions

This research is an original contribution to the body of knowledge that addresses exclusionary discipline, but specifically some causes for the differential rates of occurrence for African American girls by looking at district location and socioeconomic composition of the campus. Additionally, this research adds information by exploring the connection between the

representation of the staff members and the likelihood of student referrals to alternative school programs. This research is different from previous studies that addressed exclusionary discipline methods used in school because it tested if the type of school district setting and the representative staff makeup contributes to using exclusionary discipline options relatively more for African American girls. The researcher hopes to make parents more aware and help them make more informed choices about their school district. The research may make them aware of the importance of the representative makeup of their child's staff members. Additionally, the researcher hopes to add awareness to school district administrators to help them address schools within the district that over-identify African American girls for exclusionary discipline placements. Also, this researcher aims to inform district administrators so they can focus on ways to serve African American girls best and make informed decisions that guide changes in policy that will significantly reduce disproportionate numbers.

This research does not take into account the implicit biases of discipline committee members and administrators that administer the discipline consequence for students. Administering discipline is subjective, and the administrator's understanding of the student code of conduct determines consequences for students. Additionally, this study relies on self-reported data from school districts to the Texas Education Agency and does not consider the designation between discretionary and mandatory alternative educational placements.

Definition of Key Terms

Exclusionary discipline–Exclusionary discipline describes any school disciplinary action that removes or excludes a student from his or her usual educational setting. Two of the most common exclusionary discipline practices at schools include suspension and expulsion (School Discipline Support Initiative, 2020).

District Alternative Education Program (DAEP)–An educational and self-discipline alternative instructional program, adopted by local policy, is for students in elementary through high school grades who are removed from their regular classes for mandatory or discretionary reasons (Texas Education Code, 1995b).

Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP)–Programming assigned to a student as a result of violating Texas Education Code (1995b), Chapter 37 listed offenses, which include a) mandatory expulsion from their home school for severe infractions of the Student Code of Conduct, b) discretionary expulsions for serious infractions that occur off-campus as well as other infractions of the Student Code of Conduct, or c) are court-ordered due to Title V offenses or probation conditions (Texas Juvenile Justice Department, 2017).

Texas Education Agency–"The Texas Education Agency is the state agency that oversees primary and secondary public education. It is headed by the commissioner of education" (Texas Education Agency, 2020a, para. 1).

In-school suspension–removal of a student from the regular classroom setting, but allowing the student to remain on campus), Placement can be from 1-5 days, depending on the school district (Legislative Budget Board, 2013).

Out-of-school suspension–removal of a student from the regular classroom setting and sending the student home. Placement can be from 1-5 days depending on the school district (U.S. Department of Education, 2020).

Expulsion–Discipline because of severe criminal offenses that violate the student code of conduct. Students who are expelled attend school at JJAEP. A judge decides which JJAEP program they will attend (Texas Education Code, 1995b).

Zero tolerance–A policy that assigns explicit, predetermined punishments to specific violations of school rules, regardless of the situation or context of the behavior (Boccanfuso & Kuhfeld, 2011).

Student code of conduct–A required document for each school district that outlines offenses that are subject to disciplinary action in one of three categories: campus discipline management, discipline alternative education placement, and expulsion (Texas Association of School Boards, 2021).

Major Urban–

A district is classified as major urban if: (a) it is located in a county with a population of at least 950,000; (b) its enrollment is the largest in the county or at least 70 percent of the largest district enrollment in the county; and (c) at least 35 percent of enrolled students are economically disadvantaged. A student is reported as economically disadvantaged if he or she is eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program (Texas Education Agency, 2015, para. 1).

Major Suburban–

A district is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is contiguous to a major urban district, and (c) its enrollment is at least 3 percent that of the largest contiguous major urban district or at least 4,500 students. A district also is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) it is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) it is located in the same county as a major urban district; and (d) its enrollment is at least 15 percent that of the largest major urban district in the county or at least 4,500 students (Texas Education Agency, 2015, para. 2).

Recommendations

Several recommendations communicate proactive ways to address discipline concerns at the campus level before using the reactive choice of exclusionary discipline. Fenning and Rose (2007) recommend campuses implement options such as positive behavior supports, establish collaborative discipline teams, teach expected behaviors, and implement schoolwide professional development for the staff. These options would present some *alternatives to punitive discipline* (Darensbourg et al., 2010; Fowler, 2007).

Teachers and administrators implemented positive behavior support systems with students that experience academic problems, and students served through special education. Positive behavior supports are a way for teachers to reward students for making good behavioral choices during the school day. A collaborative discipline team should be created and made up of a variety of members of the school community including administrators (district and campus), teachers, and parents. The main focus of this team would be to review the campus discipline data and analyze potential patterns of overrepresentation and make recommendations to the campus. Teaching expected behaviors is a practice carried out with the students at various points throughout the year to reinforce desired behaviors and expectations. Teaching behavioral expectations is not only the responsibility of the campus administrative team; it is also the classroom teacher's responsibility. Campuses that experience overrepresentation should implement schoolwide professional development that would inform and address areas of concern so staffs are more aware of the problem and potential impact of their decision to refer students for poor behavioral choices.

Expectantly, the recommendations outlined in this paper would nudge students to make better behavioral choices and nudge teachers to be more knowledgeable about their students

through exposure to professional development that involves cultural competency components and classroom management strategies. In turn, this type of professional development could reduce the escalation of behaviors in the classroom, meaning teachers would not have to remove students from the classroom. In addition to the recommendations outlined here, it would be beneficial if the Texas Education Agency implemented some guidelines and oversight of campuses that operate as a function of exclusionary discipline practices, such as DAEP and JJAEP programs.

Summary

Researchers tackle the problem of overrepresentation of students of color in discipline placements and have continued this research since the late 1970s. Unfortunately, the concerns of overrepresentation of students of color from the 1970s continue to be a concern for school districts. In an effort to try to break the chain of the school-to-prison pipeline through exclusionary discipline practices, more research is needed and possibly policies that make teachers aware of cultural and social differences across students when considering discipline. Additionally, there may be a potential need to create local or regional programs that will oversee the functions of DAEP and JJAEP placements. When the percentage of students of color on alternative campuses mirrors the same percentages one sees in the juvenile justice system and the prison system, the process is certainly in need of a significant overhaul to make any significant impact on this problem and save students from the dead-end road of being locked into the prison system (Fenning & Rose, 2007).

It is imperative to explore relevant literature to gain a deeper understanding of the research topic. Chapter 2 of this study provides an overview of the literature surrounding exclusionary discipline as well as lays the foundation for the theoretical framework of

representative bureaucracy. The theory of representative bureaucracy will attempt to explain the inequities in the types of students that experience exclusionary discipline. The overview of the literature will inform others about the issue of exclusionary discipline.

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter will synthesize the literature surrounding school discipline, the various positions surrounding school discipline, and the theoretical framework that attempts to explain inconsistencies in school discipline. First, the researcher tackles the theoretical framework that will situate school discipline concerns through a lens to garner some understanding as to why African American girls experience discipline at a higher rate than their White counterparts. Representative bureaucracy (Krislov, 1974) suggests when the bureaucrats' make-up mirrors the make-up of the clientele they serve, the policies created will mirror the concerns of those served by the bureaucrats. The assumption surrounding representative bureaucracy is grounded in the reasoning that public agencies are organized in a particular manner and exercise substantial political influence (Meier, 1975).

Theoretical Framework–Representative Bureaucracy

Kingsley (1944) initially introduced representative bureaucracy as a result of a study of the British public service. He argued the civil service should reflect the characteristics of the ruling social class and the civil service needed to be sympathetic to the ideals and concerns of the controlling political group to be effective (Kingsley, 1944). Kingsley originated the idea of representative bureaucracy. The foundational idea dates back to the spoils system that resulted in a civil service system that was dominated by those loyal to the dominant political party (Meier, 1975). This type of system leads to the perpetuation of the ideals of the major party leading to the risk of ineptitude, discrimination, and corruption.

The central principle of the theory is a bureaucracy reflecting the diversity of the community it serves is more likely to respond to the interests of all groups in making policy

decisions (Krislov, 1974; Selden, 1997). Therefore, when bureaucracies reflect and represent the community's diversity and concerns in the decision-making and the actions, then the idea is that the bureaucracy is representative. If bureaucracy is a representative organization, its long documented political role will accommodate fundamental democratic values as majority rule, minority rights, and equal representation. "Much of the work on representation of underserved groups' interests has focused on the policy decisions of elected officials" (Grissom et al., 2015, p. 185). However, in the public-school setting, teachers—unelected bureaucrats—yield a considerable amount of power over the students they serve as they are the bureaucrats that implement policy on the clients.

Street-level bureaucrats, as described by Lipsky (1980), are often decision-makers in individual instances that do not always reflect the overarching policy of the bureaucracy. In public schools, teachers are street-level bureaucrats—government employees implementing policy directly with a client population, for example, students and parents (Grissom et al., 2015). For example, no matter what the student code of conduct outlines as behavioral offenses, those offenses are determined by the individual teacher. The discretion to make on the spot decisions, which in turn are policy decisions, is going to be substantial.

For example, although a campus management plan governs each school about student behavioral expectations, the plan is interpreted and implemented by each teacher (Grissom et al., 2015). The campus management plan impacts the clients (students) at the discretion of the street-level bureaucrat (teacher). In essence, the teacher is implementing policy to guide and control student behavior.

While teachers are implementing policy as a means to guide and control behavior, the question is if they are making decisions regarding behavior based on full and relevant

information (Muldrow, 2016). Are teachers and administrators taking into account all possible factors that could impact the behavioral choices of students? Why is the student acting this way? Did the student have breakfast? Is the student a victim of abuse? Is the student tired from working a job to help support the family? The answer to any of these questions could be why a student has made a poor behavioral choice.

One primary assumption of representative bureaucracy is that the organization of bureaucracies is specific and intentional and that bureaucracies embody a substantial depth of political control. As Meier (1975) stated, "The theory of representative bureaucracy begins by recognizing the realities of politics. In a complex polity such as the United States, not all aspects of policy decisions are resolved in the 'political' branches of government" (p. 527). Scholars have consistently found minority representation in the civil service is related to policy generated that favors the minority group (Meier & Stewart, 1992; Meier et al., 1990; Meier et al., 1999).

Representative Bureaucracy and Education

The theory of representative bureaucracy has found considerable support within a substantial body of literature examining education policy (Meier et al., 2006). The leading proponents of representative bureaucracy in education are Meier, Wrinkle, and Polinard. Meier et al. (1999) found because of representative bureaucracy, an increase in minority teachers causes academic improvement for both minority and White students. Their work with the Texas school districts and standardized testing demonstrated as minority teachers increased in a particular school, there was an increase in academic performance for all students, minority and nonminority students. Meier et al. concluded representative bureaucracies are more successful in achieving their goals than non-representative bureaucracies under similar circumstances.

The hierarchy of a school district is complex and involves many layers (Texas Education Agency, 2020a). The school board and superintendent are the "think tank" for a new policy and policy change. Principals are the instructional leaders charged with the oversight of providing quality education for all students. Next, teachers are the street-level bureaucrats that implement policies from the local, state, and federal levels and deliver necessary curriculum to students (clients). Lastly, students (clients) are the receivers of public education, which will help them monopolize on the positive externalities education provides.

Accordingly, there are four unique ways in which minority teachers affect minority students' academic performance (Meier et al., 2006). First, they can serve as appropriate role models. Minority teachers, both ethnically and by gender, offer many opportunities for minority students to witness other minorities in leadership positions. Second, as decision-makers, minority teachers are often in the position to act as a buffer against perceptible discriminatory practices and to assist in the selection of students for gifted and educational support programs. Third, minority teachers have insight into the educational experiences of students similar to themselves, as minority teachers were once minority students. Fourth, minority teachers lessen the racial barriers of any educational facility and, as such, the issue of race and perhaps gender is not a detriment to good educational policies (Meier et al., 2006). Minority bureaucrats and clients often share values, experiences, and beliefs, which can induce consistency between minority bureaucrats' behavior and minority clients' interests (Grissom et al., 2015). There are two distinct components of representative bureaucracy: active and passive representation.

Active Representation

Active representation refers to when "individuals (or administrators) press for the interests and desires of those they are presumed to represent, whether they are the whole people

or some segment of the people" (Mosher, 1982, p. 14). If active representation occurs, client populations benefit substantively from having public services delivered by people who share characteristics with them (Grissom et al., 2015). Active representation in a bureaucracy produces outcomes that benefit the represented individuals. For example, if active representation takes place in the school setting, the idea is that students benefit significantly from having teachers, counselors, administrators who share their same interests. In an effort for all students to benefit in public schools, they should see that members of that organization reflect the student population's diversity of interests (Grissom et al., 2015). This type of representation addresses and ensures diverse interests and ideas in the day-to-day decisions of the school. Therefore, if active representation plays a role in the committee members that determine potential placement at DAEP facilities, the outcome could potentially address the needs or interests of the client (student). To meet the diverse needs and interests of the students served in public education, schools must employ a diverse group of individuals: paraprofessionals, teachers, counselors, and administrators.

In any arena, education, corporate, and other organizations, the assumption is that bureaucrats are individuals interested in maximizing their utility (Kingsley, 1944). With that in mind, bureaucrats in the position to make policy recommendations for the clients they serve will likely make decisions based on their interests and desires, which may or may not mirror the interests and desires of the clients they represent.

Passive Representation

If descriptive/passive representation occurs, the clients (students) and bureaucrats (teachers) share the same descriptive characteristics. For example, if the racial composition of the school's student population is 40% White, 25% Hispanic, 20% Asian, and 15% African

American, then the populations of the bureaucrats should mirror those same percentages. “The presence of minority bureaucrats may lead minority clients to demand more or better services because they identify with and feel more comfortable with those providing the services (Meier & Nicholson-Crotty, 2006; Grissom et al., 2015). For example, if the bureaucrats’ demographic makeup (committee members) who determine potential placement at DAEP facilities reflects the demographic makeup of the clients (students), then descriptive representation is present.

In the education setting, research exists that makes connections between bureaucrat representation and discipline as it relates to passive representation. Nichols et al. reported, “frustration with White teachers who have more negative perceptions of minority students’ behavior than did minority teachers” (as cited in Grissom et al., 2015, p. 188). Additional research reports “more racially representative teaching faculties choose less sanction-oriented and more learning-oriented discipline policies” (Roch et al., 2010 as cited in Grissom et al., 2015, p. 188). This type of research lends itself to significant implications for disciplinary consequences for students of color and, in turn, would be beneficial in shaping the makeup of the committees determining consequences for students.

Active Versus Passive Representation

The difference in active and passive representation is with active representation, any teacher (bureaucrat) possessing the same interests and desires as the student (client) would be sympathetic to accounting for the needs of those students with similar interests and desires (Andersen, 2017). For example, a White bureaucrat can advocate for a Black student if a commonality exists between shared interests and desires.

Passive representation states that there is a commonality not only between the interests and desires of the bureaucrat and the client but also commonality between the race and gender

between the bureaucrat and the client (Andersen, 2017). The similarities between active and passive representation lie in the fact that both types of representative bureaucracy result in meeting the desires and interests of the client. In respect to education, when active or passive representation manifests, an enhanced understanding can occur between bureaucrats and clients concerning the dynamics surrounding the multiple variables of each client, i.e., race, gender, ethnicity, and socio-economic status.

Public education is a policy setting in which street-level bureaucrats enjoy a significant amount of discretion (Pitts, 2007). Thus, it makes sense that the effect of representation would be more substantial at the street level than among managers because street-level bureaucrats use discretion every day in ways that no doubt reflect their ethnic heritage (Pitts, 2007).

School Discipline

School disciplinary interventions intend to preserve order and safety by removing students who break school rules, disrupt the school learning environment, and set an example of those punished students, to deter other students from committing future rule infractions (Gregory et al., 2010). Characterizations of what constitutes disobedience or defiance are often biased and defined by the adults (Chesney-Lind & Irwin, 2008). Behaviors considered subjective in nature fall within the narratives of attitude, smart mouth, and talking back (Wun, 2016).

Persistent and severe punishment creates a wide range of adverse effects. High school suspension levels are linked to lower academic achievement at the individual and school levels (Morris & Perry, 2017). Punishment also establishes risk factors of lessening the efficacy of school suspensions, weakening the school bond, and increasing adverse outcomes such as poor academic performance, school dropout, and involvement in the juvenile justice system (Skiba et al., 2011). “It must be concluded that ubiquitous differential removal from the opportunity to

learn for African American and Latino students represents a violation of the civil rights protections that have developed in this country since *Brown v. Board of Education*" (Skiba et al., 2011, p. 104).

> In a sample of 82 urban school districts, Meier (1984) finds lower suspension rates for Black students in schools with more Black teachers. Using administrative data from Florida, Meier and Stewart (1992) show that a higher proportion of Black teachers in schools are associated with lower rates of corporal punishment, suspension, expulsion, and other disciplinary measures among Black students. (Grissom et al., 2015, p. 187).

School Discipline and African American Girls

Blake et al. (2011) proposed a connection between Black girls' elevated discipline risk and gendered racial bias. Educators inequitably discipline Black girls for deviating from gender-prescribed norms of decorum that are rooted in White middle-class standards of femininity. Additionally, teachers may subconsciously use stereotypical images of Black females to interpret Black girls' behaviors and respond more harshly to Black girls who display behaviors that do not alight with traditional standards of femininity to which teachers expect girls to be docile, diffident, and selfless (Collins, 2004; Blake et al., 2011).

Black girls are three times more likely than White girls to receive an office referral, and they receive disproportionate referrals for infractions such as disruptive behavior, dress code violations, disobedience, and aggressive behavior (Morris & Perry, 2017). Whereas Black males are theorized to be inequitably disciplined because they are perceived as threatening (Blake et al., 2010), Black females' discipline risk is attributed to their violation of racialized gender norms, which dictate how respectable young ladies should behave (Blake et al., 2011; Blake et al., 2016;

Morris, 2007). Wallace et al. (2008) reported Black girls are more than twice as likely to be sent to the office as their White counterparts and are five times as likely to be suspended or expelled.

Much work has addressed the types of infractions and hypothesized the behavior that warranted discipline, but little work has addressed the role of the faculty who make disciplinary decisions (Meier et al., 1989; Skiba et al., 2002). This research attempts to fill this gap. The faculty is responsible for interpreting behavior as inappropriate and then determining the level of sanction. Assumptions are that faculty who have social norms or backgrounds similar to that of the student body would interpret behavior differently than faculty who have distinctly different social norms or backgrounds than the student body. The conceptual theory of representative bureaucracy has contributed much to understanding the effectiveness of public policy and service.

A fundamental contention of representative bureaucracy is public organizations operate more equitably when the traits of the street-level bureaucrats of the organization reflect the clients they serve (Kingsley, 1944; Lipsky, 1980). Workforce representative of the school's student population will yield disciplinary outputs favorable towards the students they represent. Street-level bureaucrats house a large amount of influence in the lives of the students they serve. The intersection of discipline and representative bureaucracy would manifest in education with a reduction in disciplinary outcomes for African American students.

Where there is an absence of representative bureaucracy, African American students will continue to experience discipline practices that criminalize their behavior (Wun, 2016). School districts with low levels of Black representation are associated with an increase in the rates at which Black students were punished (Meier et al., 1990). Disproportionate disciplinary

consequences occur when behaviors of African American girls do not fall within the standards of what society deems is appropriate behavior, which situates in the norms of White standards.

> Blake and colleagues (2011) propose that African American girls' elevated discipline risk might be attributed to a gendered racial bias whereby educators inequitably discipline African American girls for deviating from gender-prescribed norms of decorum that are rooted in White-middle-class standards of femininity. (Blake et al., 2016, p. 121)

Possible Solutions

Due to the overrepresentation of students of color experiencing exclusionary discipline at a higher rate than their White counterparts, a variety of ways have surfaced to combat exclusionary discipline for students. Skiba (2013) lists some possible program options to ensure school safety, including schoolwide behavioral planning and improved classroom management, social-emotional learning, parent and community involvement, early screening for mental health issues, school, and district data systems, and productive ongoing collaborations.

Given the teaching force in the United States is predominately White and female (Bitterman et al., 2013), educators need to ensure that they have an awareness of the social and emotional experiences of students of color in an intentional manner (Gregory et al., 2017). This type of intentionality creates supportive relationships within the school environment. Also, increasing problem-solving approaches to discipline, such as implementing restorative practices, has resulted in reductions of exclusionary discipline (Anyon et al., 2014; International Institute for Restorative Practices, 2014). Researchers explain "that educators who represent their students by race and ethnicity will choose policy tools that are particularly beneficial for those students" (Roch et al., 2010, p. 44). This connection leads to the assumption that a disciplinary committee that is representative of the student enrollment of the school will make decisions that benefit the

student. According to Grissom et al. (2015), “A large body of empirical work has found evidence for those connections, linking the presence of minority (or female) bureaucrats to benefits for minority (or female) clients across diverse sectors of the public service” (p. 185). Research shows a relationship between lower suspension rates for African American students when the bureaucratic workforce has higher numbers of Black teachers (Grissom et al., 2015). Additional studies show Black students benefit from an increase in a minority workforce, but Anglo students benefit as well (Pitts, 2007).

Summary

This literature’s critical contribution is to address the lacuna in the literature as it relates to African American girls and exclusionary discipline rates. This literature review synthesizes literature from representative bureaucracy, school discipline, and education and sheds light on possible implications of decreasing exclusionary discipline placements through the lens of representative bureaucracy. While there is a surplus of information regarding exclusionary discipline placements for students of color, special education students, African American boys, and Hispanic boys, there is a lack of literature surrounding exclusionary discipline for African American girls.

Current literature provides information regarding the representative bureaucracy in education, school discipline, its effects on Black girls, zero-tolerance policies, and possible solutions to combat the high numbers of Black students who experience exclusionary discipline. As a result of this literature review, the study drew on research by looking at the impact of representative bureaucracy and how all students benefit from education professionals that mirror the student body makeup. This researcher looked exclusively at school discipline in the state of

Texas to provide more information on school discipline, which the researcher discusses in Chapter 3.

The school discipline literature leads to questions about current discipline policies such as zero-tolerance policies and the implementation of consequences and school discipline as it relates to Black girls. Lastly, the literature highlighted some possible solutions for reducing the number of students who experience exclusionary discipline practices.

While current literature helps to lay the foundations for representative bureaucracy in education, school discipline, zero-tolerance policies, and possible solutions, this research does not discuss implicit bias of those working on school campuses and other types of students and how exclusionary discipline practices impact them. This study will begin to fill the current gap in the literature about African American girls and their experience with exclusionary discipline practices, especially as it relates to their experience with DAEP placements. Ultimately, this study will add to the growing body of knowledge surrounding exclusionary discipline for African American girls by adding another layer of the connection between their experience and school district location and staff representation.

CHAPTER 3

DISCIPLINE IN TEXAS

This chapter will branch out from Chapters 1 and 2 by specifically looking into the governing documents surrounding discipline. First, the researcher will introduce the foundation for governing documents for discipline laws and regulations. Next, the researcher will address discipline in Texas by discussing the documents at the state and local levels that guide individual campuses on consequences for behavioral choices.

Discipline in public schools happens across the nation, and school districts establish guidelines that govern each state concerning school discipline. A comprehensive list of state guidelines for school discipline is available through the U.S. Department of Education website (www.ed.gov). The title of each document consists of the state name plus compilation of school discipline laws and regulations. For example, if a researcher wants to access the California Compilation guidelines, they would search the California Compilation of School Discipline Laws and Regulations. This U.S. Department of Education document lays the foundation that each state has an accessible document outlining the laws and regulations concerning school discipline (National Center on Safe Support Learning Environments, 2021).

School Discipline in Texas

In the state of Texas, there are two forms of student management plans, the student code of conduct, and the campus management plan. The first form is the district student code of conduct falls under Chapter 37 (Texas Education Code, 1995b). Each school district adopts a student code of conduct, which sets a precedent for student behavior in schools. Texas law requires the student code of conduct be adopted each school year and that parents and students have access to this document. Additionally, school boards require the student code of conduct be

posted on each campus or made available for review. Each student code of conduct has three major sections: Campus Discipline Management Offenses, Discipline Alternative Education Placement Offenses, and Expulsion Offenses. When determining appropriate disciplinary consequences for a student, the discipline committee must consider the following: self-defense, intent, or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct, and the student's disciplinary history. The considerations mentioned above apply to the three categories of the student code of conduct: campus management offenses, placement at an alternative campus (DAEP), or expulsion (JJAEP). The discipline committee, sometimes referred to as the Campus Intervention Team is the committee that facilitates the due process meeting for the student. The committee members are the student, parent(s), two administrators, a counselor, a substance abuse specialist (for drug offenses), and three to four teachers. The student and parents are allowed to share with the committee their version of the events that took place. One administrator presents the school's version of the events, and the other committee members are allowed to ask questions for clarification. When the administrator presents the facts, clarifies remaining questions, and allows additional comments, then the student and parent(s) leave the room. The committee decides appropriate consequences with the guidance of the student code of conduct. The voting members of the committee are the teacher members. Once a decision has been made, the student and parent(s) join the rest of the committee for the committee's decision. If the parent does not agree with the committee's decision, the parent(s) can appeal to the building principal within 5 days in writing.

The second document is the campus management plan (Texas Education Code, 1995b). Each campus creates its student management system that aligns with the district student code of conduct. Typically, this plan outlines undesirable behaviors and possible consequences for those

behaviors. Although these two documents address the same behavioral concerns, the school district's student code of conduct governs the campus document. The campus is not allowed to create any additional measures that would undermine the school district's student code of conduct. The school district's student code of conduct document should support the campus management plan.

The individual campus management plans go into specifics of possible consequences for the most frequent behaviors such as attendance concerns, classroom disruption, and fighting (Texas Education Code, 1995b). The parents and the students receive a copy of the campus management plan at the beginning of the school year. In addition to the students receiving a hard copy, the document is also available as a handout on the school campus and the school's website. Some campuses go a step further and have their administrative team give an interactive presentation to the students about campus expectations.

Texas Statute

DAEPs have established curriculum and teacher requirements as outlined in Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code (1995b). The following are the required guidelines that each DAEP must follow:

- Be provided in a setting other than a student's regular classroom;
- Separate students assigned to the program from those not assigned to the program;
- Focus academically on English language arts, mathematics, science, history, and self-discipline;
- Provide for the educational and behavioral needs of students;
- Provide supervision and counseling;

- Require each teacher in the program to be certified under Texas Education Code Chapter 21, (1995a) Subchapter B; Certification of Educators,

  (a) The State Board for Educator Certification is established to recognize public school educators as professionals and to grant educators the authority to govern the standards of their profession. The board shall regulate and oversee all aspects of the certification, continuing education, and standards of conduct of public-school educators.

  (b) In proposing rules under this subchapter, the board shall ensure that all candidates for certification or renewal of certification demonstrate the knowledge and skills necessary to improve the performance of the diverse student population of this state. (Sec. 21.031)
- Require each teacher in the program with a special education assignment to be appropriately certified or permitted.

Campus Procedures

Discretionary offenses such as breach of computer security of district computers, selling, delivering, possessing drugs, or off-campus felonies result in possible placement in a JJAEP facility (Texas Education Code, 1995b). Mandatory expellable offenses are heard by a judge who ultimately determines the length of placement for a student, not to exceed 180 school days. The Campus Intervention Team hears discretionary expellable offenses, so the student is allowed the opportunity to have due process for the student code of conduct offense. The Campus Intervention Team determines the length of placement on the JJAEP campus. Exclusionary discipline is any disciplinary measure that removes a student from the regular classroom

(Fenning & Rose 2007). Some examples of exclusionary discipline are in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, alternative campus placement, and expulsion.

Some offenses listed on the student code of conduct result in predetermined consequences. For example, fighting on campus or being in possession of an electronic cigarette automatically results in an out-of-school suspension for the student (Texas Education Code, 1995b). Skiba (2014) writes, "fear for the welfare of our children has led us down a 'no-nonsense' path of increased punishment and school exclusion in responding to school and community disruption through an approach that has come to be known as zero tolerance" (p. 27). Zero-tolerance policies are rooted in the thought that a substantial consequence of an undesirable action would deter other students from engaging in the same conduct (Skiba, 2014). Additionally, zero-tolerance policies are a contributing factor in explaining the disproportionate use of exclusionary discipline with students of color.

Summary

School discipline, as it relates to the state of Texas, is a multistep process with statutes that outline student conduct offenses as either discretionary or mandatory. The purpose of this chapter was to provide insight into the governing documents for discipline in the state of Texas. Additionally, it is crucial to understand that while each state has governing documents surrounding school discipline, those documents vary from state to state. Also, it is essential to understand the purpose of the student code of conduct and its role in assisting the Campus Intervention Team with guidelines for appropriate consequences for code of conduct violations.

CHAPTER 4

METHODOLOGY

In previous chapters, the researcher presented an introduction to the area of research. The research included a description of the study's research problem, research purpose, two hypotheses that will serve to direct the data analysis, and identification of several terms key to the study. These types of research questions have been studied extensively concerning African American male students but have not addressed African American female students. This research is an effort to examine the relationship between urban and suburban school districts, discipline committee representation, and DAEP placements for African American girls. This section intends to describe the methodology for such a research effort. Included in the section is an introduction, a description of the subjects, instrumentation, procedures, and expectations.

Introduction

This study's primary purpose was to analyze whether African American girls in suburban school districts experience exclusionary discipline at a higher rate than African American girls in urban school districts. This study also analyzes if socio-demographic representation impacts the occurrences of exclusionary discipline for AA girls. This researcher employed a quantitative data research design using archival data with variables such as ethnicity, sex, discipline committee representation, and community type as identifiers. The data obtained through this quantitative research will help construct policy development.

Subjects

The study subjects were major urban and major suburban school districts in the state of Texas and the incidence of district alternative educational placements (DAEP) for African American female students. The researcher analyzed alternative student placements across all

grade levels, Grades K–12, within major urban and major suburban public-school districts in Texas.

Instrumentation

The Texas Education Agency (2007) gathers discipline data from school districts across the state of Texas. The goal is to ensure there are no school districts with overrepresented subgroups in disciplinary actions. The Texas Education Agency provides school districts identified as having particular subgroups that are overrepresented a chance to correct the actions that lead to the overrepresentation before it begins to impact the school district's accountability rating. The researcher analyzed 90 school districts, 11 school districts classified as major urban school districts and 79 school districts classified as major suburban school districts.

Procedures

The researcher sent an e-mail request to the public information division of the Texas Education Agency. The agency prepared the requested data in the spreadsheet format and e-mailed the requested data to the researcher. The data requested allowed the researcher to examine disciplinary actions and DAEP placements for all ethnic subgroups in major urban and major suburban school districts across the state of Texas. The researcher examined teacher ethnic groups in major urban and major suburban school districts across Texas. The purpose of analyzing the data was to determine if faculties, which closely mirror the demographics of their respective student body, discipline students differently than those who do not mirror the demographics of their student body. That is, do school districts characterized as bureaucratically representative use disciplinary placements for African American girls at rates different from those not characterized. For data collection purposes, this researcher analyzed data from classified major urban and major suburban school districts in Texas. The most recent data

available through the Texas Education Agency website was discipline data and professional ethnic representation data from the 2014-2017 school years for each district included. The request for this data and the analysis of this data helped find an answer that supports the researcher's research questions as valid or invalid.

Additionally, analyzing the data helped to determine the connection between representative bureaucracy and exclusionary discipline placements. An area of concern that the researcher addressed was the lack of representative bureaucracy of the Campus Intervention Team members that influence the disproportionate number of exclusionary discipline placements for African American female students. The researcher analyzed the data using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS, version 25.0) software.

Variables

Dependent Variables

The dependent variables look at the number of African American female students placed in District Alternative Education Placement (DAEP) settings. Only the districts that recorded their numbers had data to analyze. The total number of school districts involved in the analysis was 90; however, some of the districts had a year where there was no data for these subgroups. The analysis still accounted for all 90 school districts.

Independent Variables

The independent variable of district type categorizes districts as major urban school districts or as major suburban school districts. For this study, the researcher included all major urban and major suburban school districts in Texas, totaling 90 school districts. Lastly, data for the ethnic make-up of the professional teaching personnel were analyzed. It was essential to include this information as the members of the Campus Intervention Team are the voting

members that determine DAEP placements for students. Studies have proposed where there is an increase in minority teachers, there is also an academic improvement for both minority and White students (Meier et al., 1999).

As stated in Chapter 2, in an effort for all students to benefit in public schools, they should see members of that organization reflect the diversity of interests of the student population (Grissom et al., 2015). Diverse representation addresses diverse interests and ideas in the day-to-day decisions of the school leaders. Therefore, if active representation plays a role in the committee members that determine potential placement at DAEP facilities, the outcome could potentially address the needs or interests of the client (student). To meet the diverse needs and interests of the students served in public education, schools must employ a diverse group of individuals: paraprofessionals, teachers, counselors, and administrators.

Control Variables

The control variables for this research, which may impact school discipline rates/actions, are the number of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, number of students receiving special education services, and student body population. The control variables specific to the students would be the number of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch and the number of students receiving special education services. Cortez and Cortez (2009) reported Hispanic, African American, male, and special education students primarily populate the DAEP enrollment. Children of poverty and children who experience academic problems are the students most impacted by exclusionary discipline (Fenning & Rose, 2007). Typically, those students who experience academic problems are students served through special education, and children of poverty are those who are labeled at-risk in the school system. The at-risk label applies to students who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. These students tend to be minority

students and students that are most underserved in the public education system. Fenning and Rose (2007) stated underserved students suffer from the loss of instructional time because they are typically the students who bear the consequences of exclusionary discipline. An outside factor that may impact student discipline rates would be student body population. While the researcher was unable to find data from previous researchers concerning the student-teacher ratio variable and its connection to discipline referral rates, the researcher will continue to search to find research on the impact of student-teacher ratio on Black girls' exclusionary discipline rates. The researcher anticipated the data to show the larger the student-teacher ratio, the higher the incidence of discipline referral.

The equation below explores the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 x_1 + \beta_2 x_2 + \beta_3 x_3 + \beta_4 x_4 + \beta_5 x_5$$

Where Y = the number of Black girls placed in DAEP/JJAEP (dependent variable)

x_1 = the school district location (dummy variable)

x_2= the percent of professional staff identified as non-white (dummy variable)

x_3 = control variable (Free/reduced lunch participants)

x_4 = control variable (Special Education participants)

x_5 = control variable (Student-teacher ratio)

Expectations

As referenced in Chapter 1, African American students are often disproportionately referred more frequently for offenses that require a higher degree of subjectivity (Skiba et al., 2011). Scholars have found teachers and administrators subjectively interpret disrespect, loitering, and defiance in a variety of ways. When offenses can be interpreted in various ways by

a variety of people, levels of inconsistency can occur when administering disciplinary consequences. The researcher expects this contributes to male and female Black students receiving referrals and suspensions at a rate two to three times greater than White students (Fabelo et al., 2011). The research clearly shows these disparities impact all African American students, male and female. Each teacher brings their lens of understanding of what constitutes "being disrespectful" or "persistent misbehavior" or "dress code violations." The multiple lenses of understanding are why it is important to take into consideration the report of the teacher and the report of the student before administering consequences for behavior choices that are in direct violation of the student code of conduct. The researcher expects to find that major suburban districts send African American female students to alternative educational placement settings at a higher rate than major urban school districts because major suburban school districts may not be as representative of the student body population as major urban school districts.

Based on the research, if the data support the theory of representative bureaucracy, districts that do not have staff representative of the student population demographics may implement policy initiatives that embrace professional development to reflect a cultural competency initiative to educate the faculty about the environment/culture/community from which the students live. Another reasonable expectation of the research is that it will unveil specific factors that contribute to the disproportionate representation of Black girls in DAEP placements, so detailed policy is developed to address each identified factor.

Summary

The researcher expects to see reoccurring patterns that support or reject the hypothesis. As a Black female and a Black female researcher, the researcher cannot affirm that this dissertation is void of bias as there are issues that occur on the school campus that would

influence the researcher's opinion on how African American female students experience discipline. Since this research depends on data obtained from the Texas Education Agency, there is no avenue for the researcher's personal, professional experiences to influence the data received from the Texas Education Agency.

CHAPTER 5

DATA ANALYSIS

This chapter contains the results of the data analysis for this study. It begins with a short description of the data source and the organization of the data. The next section of the chapter compares the characteristics of major urban to major suburban districts. The third section reports the results of the regression analysis that tests the primary research hypothesis that suburban districts assign African American girls to DAEP more than urban districts.

Data Source

The unit of analysis for this research is Texas school districts. Texas Education Agency maintains a comprehensive database of the multi-faceted activities and responsibilities of Texas public school districts. The database includes financial, human resources, enrollment, and academic achievement information relevant to primary and secondary Texas public schools. Texas Education Agency is the depository for collecting, maintaining, and providing the public a vast amount of data.

School districts are required annually to report school discipline incidents (in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, DAEP placements, and JJAEP placements) to the Texas Education Agency. Given that the agency has a comprehensive database of reported discipline incidents for all public schools in Texas, the agency was the source for much of the data. Unless otherwise noted, Texas Education Agency is the source of the data for this research.

Only the districts that recorded their numbers had data to analyze. The total number of cases involved in the analysis was $N = 90$. Ninety school districts were a part of the analysis; however, some of the districts had a year where there was no data for these subgroups. The analysis still accounted for all 90 school districts.

The Texas Education Agency classifies school districts in nine categories: major urban, major suburban, other central city, other central city-suburban, independent town, non-metropolitan: fast-growing, non-metropolitan: stable, rural, and charter. This research focuses exclusively on major suburban (79) and major urban (11) districts from 2013-2014 through 2016-2017 (see Table 1). Major urban and major suburban districts are classified by the Texas Education Agency as follows:

> **Major Urban**. A major urban district is (a) located in a county with a population of at least 985,000; (b) has the largest enrollment in the county or at least 70 percent of the largest district enrollment in the county, and (c) at least 35 percent of enrolled students are economically disadvantaged. A student is reported as economically disadvantaged if he or she is eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program. (Texas Education Agency, 2015, para. 1)
>
> **Major Suburban**. A major suburban district (a) does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) is contiguous to a major urban district, and (c) has enrollment at least 3 percent that of the largest contiguous major urban district or at least 4,500 students. A district also is classified as major suburban if: (a) it does not meet the criteria for classification as major urban; (b) is not contiguous to a major urban district; (c) is located in the same county as a major urban district; and (d) has enrollment at least 15 percent that of the largest major urban district in the county or at least 4,500 students. (Texas Education Agency, 2015, para. 2)

All districts included in this study are independent school districts except two. Goose Creek is a consolidated independent school district and Stafford is a municipal school district.

Table 1

Major Suburban and Major Urban School Districts in this Study

Major Suburban School Districts				
Alamo Heights	Aldine	Aledo	Alief	Alvin
Azle	Bandera	Birdville	Boerne	Canutillo
Carroll	Carrollton-Farmers Branch	Castleberry	Cedar Hill	Channelview
Clear Creek	Clint	Comal	Coppell	Crandall
Crosby	Crowley	Cypress-Fairbanks	Deer Park	Del Valle
Desoto	Dripping Springs	Duncanville	Eagle Mt-Saginaw	Eanes
East Central	Edgewood	Everman	Ferris	Forney
Fort Bend	Galena Park	Garland	Godley	Goose Creek
Grand Prairie	Grapevine-Colleyville	Harlandale	Hays	Highland Park
Humble	Hurst-Euless-Bedford	Irving	Judson	Katy
Keller	Kennedale	Klein	La Porte	Lake Travis
Lake Worth	Lancaster	Leander	Lewisville	Manor
Mansfield	Medina Valley	Mesquite	Pasadena	Pearland
Pflugerville	Plano	Richardson	Round Rock	San Elizario
Sheldon	South San Antonio	Southside	Southwest	Spring Branch
Spring	Stafford	Tomball	White Settlement	
Major Urban School Districts				
Arlington	Austin	Dallas	El Paso	Fort Worth
Houston	North East	Northside	San Antonio	Socorro
Ysleta				

Note. *District type, 2016-2017* by Texas Education Agency, 2016. (https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/school-data/district-type-data-search/district-type-2016-17)

Research Design

Although, as literature has shown, it is widely known that African American girls are disciplined at rates higher than non-African American girls. This study investigated factors that contribute to the increased risk of discipline for African American girls. The objective of this study was to identify the school district type and staff compositions that impact Black girls experience with DAEP placements. The research questions addressed in this research highlight the reasons African American female students experience exclusionary discipline practices at relatively higher rates and how school district location and staff member representation affect exclusionary discipline practices for African American girls. As a result, the following research questions served as the foundation for this study.

RQ1: Why are African American female students more likely to face exclusionary discipline as it relates to DAEP placements?

RQ2: Do suburban school districts have a higher incidence than urban schools of placing African American girls in alternative school programs?

RQ3: Does the sociodemographic composition of the staff members at the campus level impact the likelihood of African American girls experiencing alternative school programs?

Three hypotheses are tested:

H1: African American girls are disciplined at higher rates than non-African American girls, as has been found in earlier research.

H2: Urban districts discipline African American girls at rates different than suburban districts due to unobserved heterogeneity across the district types.

H3: The difference of discipline rates of African American girls and non-African American girls is expected to be explained by the socio-demographic characteristics of the faculty and staff. It is hypothesized that the more diverse the faculty and staff, the less the difference in the rates of discipline.

Instrumentation

Archival data were collected through a Public Information Request from the Texas Education Agency for data in the state of Texas for major urban and major suburban school districts. Data included the ethnic breakdown for all students, female students, ethnic breakdown for teachers, special education numbers, economically disadvantaged numbers, and student teacher ratio. In addition to this information, DAEP information was also requested for all female ethnic subgroups.

This study's research design was a quantitative panel data regression analysis. The unit of analysis for this research was independent school districts in Texas, specifically major suburban and major urban. The researcher analyzed DAEP placements for African American, Hispanic, and White female students in all 90 districts over a period of 4 school years, starting with the 2013-2014 school year and concluding with the 2016-2017 school year. Of the three research questions that were asked for this research, one question specifically relates to the theory of representative bureaucracy and that is, does the socio-demographic composition of the staff members at the campus level impact the likelihood of African American girls experiencing alternative school programs (DAEP)?

The dependent variables used for this research were African American female DAEP, African American female risk, and African American female relative risk. Some of the variables are log transformations for ease of interpreting coefficients. The independent variable was

district type with districts being classified as either major suburban or major urban. The control variables were students classified as economically disadvantaged, students served through special education, and student body population.

Dependent Variables

The general concept of interest in this study is the incidence of disciplinary action on African American female students. Discipline can occur in many forms and at numerous levels of the school bureaucracy. A teacher may issue a detention in the classroom to discipline a student who is talking during class, being disrespectful, or not paying attention. A staff member who does not know a student may discipline him or her in the hallway for inappropriate behavior, violating dress code, and so forth. A Campus Intervention Team may assign a student to an alternative school, after a due process hearing, because of serious infractions to the student code of conduct. These actions, and many other kinds of disciplinary action, occur throughout the school year. This study operationalizes the concept of discipline with the district annual number of African American female students who are placed in DAEP settings. The variety of disciplinary actions that can occur at the campus level are detention, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension. DAEP and expulsions occur at the district level. DAEP and expulsions are more serious disciplinary placements because they involve the removal from a campus for a determined period of time.

DAEP placements are the disciplinary action for this research because previous research has noted that exclusionary discipline practices oftentimes are the beginning actions that lead to the school-to-prison pipeline. Berlowitz et al. (2017) stated exclusionary discipline practices "manifests patterns of institutional racism, . . . this contributes to the disproportionate incarceration of African American males popularly referred to as the school to prison pipeline"

(p. 15). Exclusionary discipline practices disproportionately impact Black and Brown students of color as well as students served through special education programs. DAEP placements and expulsion placements oftentimes lead students to drop out of school (Berlowitz et al., 2017).

The dependent variable allows for the exploration of differences between district type, major suburban and major urban, and to determine if the disciplinary process for DAEP placements for African American girls is uniform between district types. The following descriptive tables provide data that show that urban school districts have a teaching staff that is more representative than suburban school districts. Therefore, it is important to look at the district type to determine if a relationship exists between district type and the use of DAEP assignments for African American female students.

The measure of disproportionate actions creates the need for other variables to be analyzed to determine the possible impact it would have on the number of African American girls assigned to DAEP. For example, it is important to look at the sociodemographic make-up of the teachers. Nichols et al. reported, "frustration with White teachers who have more negative perceptions of minority students' behavior than did minority teachers" (as cited in Grissom et al., 2015, p. 188). Additional research by Roch et al. reported "more racially representative teaching faculties choose less sanction-oriented and more learning-oriented discipline policies" (as cited in Grissom et al., 2015, p. 188). This type of research lends itself to significant implications for disciplinary consequences for students of color and, in turn, would be beneficial in shaping the makeup of the committees determining consequences for students.

The enrollment percentage for African American female students across suburban and urban districts remains relatively constant over the 4 years of data. Each district type averages approximately 15% enrollment for African American female students. The percentage of DAEP

placements that are African American female students in suburban and urban districts differ. The percentage of DAEP placements for African American female students in suburban districts is approximately two times the percentage enrollment for African American female students. The percentage of DAEP placements for African American female students in urban districts is a little less than two times the percentage enrollment for African American female students (see Table 2).

Over time suburban districts have experienced approximately a 1% increase in total enrollment over the 4 school years while urban districts have remained stable with a minimal decrease of approximately 0.10%. The growth in female enrollment mirrors the growth in total enrollment for suburban districts. There is approximately a 1% growth in total female enrollment in suburban districts, while urban districts have remained stable with a minimal decrease of approximately 0.20% (see Table 2).

Over time the percentage of Black female students in suburban districts that experience DAEP placements remains constant between 33%–35%. The same is true for Black female students in urban districts. The percentage of Black female students in urban districts that experience DAEP placements remains constant between 29%–31% (see Table 2).

Independent Variables

The independent variable of district type categorizes districts as major urban school districts or as major suburban school districts (see Figure 1). For this study, the researcher included all major urban and major suburban school districts in Texas, totaling 90 school districts. When viewing Figure 1, the major urban districts are the red areas on the map. These areas are consistent with the major cities in the state of Texas: Dallas, Fort Worth, Houston, Austin, San Antonio, and El Paso.

Table 2

Descriptive Data Over Time 2014-2017

	2014		2015		2016		2017	
Descriptive Data	Suburban	Urban	Suburban	Urban	Suburban	Urban	Suburban	Urban
Total Enrollment	1,676,816	979,304	1,704,017	983,127	1,726,031	981,709	1,742,508	979,745
Mean Enrollment	21,226	89,028	21,570	89,375	21,848	89,246	22,057	89,068
Total Girl Enrollment	813,987	478,402	827,056	481,011	837,883	479,842	846,402	478,989
% Girl Enroll AA	15.64	15.48	15.55	15.38	15.57	15.27	15.62	15.16
Total Girl DAEP	6,593	5,021	6,520	4,669	7,130	4,598	7,127	4,597
Mean Girl DAEP	83	456	83	424	90	418	90	418
% of DAEP AA Girls	34.66	30.95	35.40	30.65	34.53	31.49	33.00	29.95

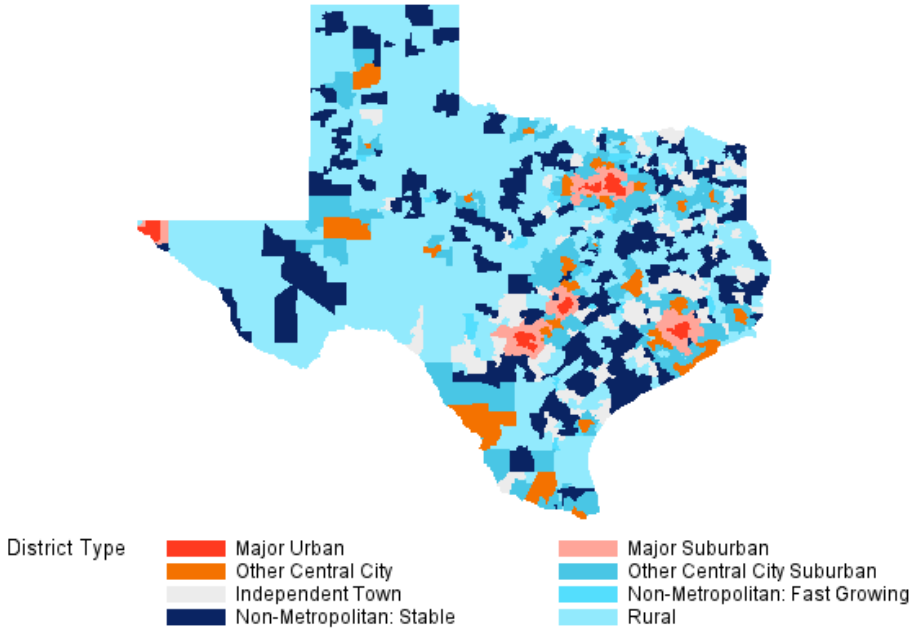
Note. Suburban – *N* = 79; Urban – *N* = 11. AA = African American

The major suburban districts are the pink areas on the map and those areas are clustered around the major urban districts in Texas. This map is consistent with the 79 major suburban school districts and the 11 major urban school districts, included in this research, in Texas through the 2017-2018 school year.

Lastly, data for the ethnic make-up of the professional teaching personnel were analyzed. It is essential to include this information as the members of the Campus Intervention Team are the voting members that determine DAEP placements for students. Meier et al. (1999) suggested where there is an increase in minority teachers; there is also an academic improvement for both minority and White students.

Figure 1

2018-2019 Texas Education Agency District Types



Note. The Charter School District category was not included in the map.

Note. In *District Type, 2018-19: Overview*, by Texas Education Agency, 2020b, para. 1 (https://tea.texas.gov/reports-and-data/school-data/district-type-data-search/district-type-2018-19)

As stated in Chapter 2, in an effort for all students to benefit in public schools, they should see members of that organization reflect the diversity of interests of the student population (Grissom et al., 2015). Diverse representation addresses diverse interests and ideas in the day-to-day decisions of the school leaders. Therefore, if active representation plays a role in the committee members that determine potential placement at DAEP facilities, the outcome could potentially address the needs or interests of the client (student). To meet the diverse needs and interests of the students served in public education, schools must employ a diverse group of individuals: paraprofessionals, teachers, counselors, and administrators.

Unobserved Heterogeneity Factors

The unobserved heterogeneity that explains the occurrence of African American female experience with DAEP placements that cannot be measured are institutional racism, implicit bias, and the intentionality to figure out what is going on and how to combat those incidents. McFadden et al. (1992) and Shaw and Braden (1990) stated oftentimes African American students are punished harsher than their White counterparts for the same disciplinary infractions. When looking with intention at the behavioral infractions, teachers and administrators must look with introspection as to why the same infractions are more offensive coming from African American students than it is coming from White students. Additionally, the role of family dynamics cannot be measured without more of a qualitative analysis of the home/family dynamics.

Control Variables

The control variables for this research, which may impact school discipline rates/actions, are the number of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch, number of students receiving special education services, and student body population. The control variables specific to the

students would be the number of students qualifying for free or reduced lunch and the number of students receiving special education services. Cortez and Cortez (2009) reported Hispanic, African American, male, and special education students primarily make up DAEP enrollment. Children of poverty and children who experience academic problems are the students most impacted by exclusionary discipline (Fenning & Rose, 2007). Typically, those students who experience academic problems are students served through special education, and children of poverty who are labeled at-risk in the school system. The at-risk label applies to students who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. These students tend to be minority students and students that are most underserved in the public education system. Fenning and Rose (2007) stated underserved students suffer from the loss of instructional time because they are typically the students who bear the consequences of exclusionary discipline. An outside factor that may impact student discipline rates would be student body population. While the researcher was unable to find data from previous researchers concerning the student-teacher ratio variable and its connection to discipline referral rates, the researcher continues to search to find research on the impact of student-teacher ratio on Black girls' exclusionary discipline rates. The researcher anticipates the data to show that the larger the student-teacher ratio, the higher the incidence of discipline referral.

Descriptive Statistics

As part of the analysis, the researcher explored the relationship between district type (suburban and urban) and female DAEP African American placements. The district-level data on ethnic representation of teaching staff, economically disadvantaged, special education, and the student-teacher ratio was also analyzed along with the category of the district type.

The ethnic representation of teaching staff is essential to this research because, in the education setting, the researcher explored making connections between bureaucrat representation and discipline concerning passive representation. Nichols et al. reported, "frustration with White teachers who have more negative perceptions of minority students' behavior than did minority teachers" (as cited in Grissom et al., 2015, p. 188). Additional research by Roch et al. showed "more racially representative teaching faculties choose less sanction-oriented and more learning-oriented discipline policies" (as cited in Grissom et al., 2015, p. 188). This type of research lends itself to significant implications for disciplinary consequences for students of color and, in turn, would be beneficial in shaping the make-up of the committees determining consequences for students. As reported in Chapter 3, minority bureaucrats and clients often share similar values, experiences, and beliefs, which can induce consistency between minority bureaucrats' behavior and minority clients' interests (Grissom et al., 2015).

Scholars have tested the relationship between students' economic well-being and the incidence of disciplinary actions (Skiba et al., 2002; Skiba et al., 1997; Wu et al.,1982). Some researchers have argued that schools with higher economically disadvantaged student populations also experience greater disciplinary incidences. The researcher measured the status of the economic well-being of the district by the percentage of students who are economically disadvantaged. The Texas Education Agency (2018) defines economically disadvantaged as a student who is eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program. Once the percentage of economically disadvantaged students reaches 40%, a school district receives additional monies as a result of Title I funding. The U.S. Department of Education (2018) defines Title I as a program that provides supplemental funding to state and local educational agencies to acquire additional education resources at schools

serving high concentrations of students from low-income homes. School districts use the additional funding to improve the quality of education programs and ensure students from low-income families have opportunities to meet challenging state assessments. Additional funding for Title I schools may be related to the common student-teacher ratio between suburban and urban school districts.

Previous research has indicated that exclusionary discipline placements involve a disproportionate number of students of color. While not all students of color are economically disadvantaged, I test the hypothesis that the number of economically disadvantaged students is not an indicator of whether a student may experience exclusionary discipline. According to Lyons and Drew, "schools and districts with greater levels of disadvantage have higher rates of student misbehavior" (as cited in Ramey, 2015, p. 5). Higher rates of student misbehavior increase the likelihood of discipline consequences. Skiba et al. (2002) reported, "studies of school suspension have consistently documented the overrepresentation of low-socioeconomic status (SES) students" (p. 318). Skiba et al. (1997) and Wu et al. (1982) report economically-disadvantaged students are more likely to experience suspensions as a consequence for their actions.

Ramey (2015) connects economically disadvantaged students and discipline with historical events as first brought to light by Bowles and Gintis in 1976. Bowles and Gintis point out, "the reproduction of class inequalities involves the perpetuation of a compliant, accountable, and easily controlled workforce" (as cited in Ramey, 2015, p. 185). Ramey reported schools accomplish control "through deterrence and exclusion," which happens through disciplinary consequences, for example, exclusion from the classroom and school (p. 185).

Scholars have also found the number of special education students and the student-teacher ratio for suburban and urban school districts contribute to DAEP placements (Cortez & Cortez, 2009; Fenning & Rose, 2007; Finn, 1988). Previous research has noted a disproportionate number of special education students that experience exclusionary discipline. Cortez and Cortez (2009) report Hispanic, African American, male, and special education students primarily make up DAEP enrollment. Typically, those students who experience academic problems are students served through special education, and children of poverty are those who are labeled at-risk in the school system (Fenning & Rose, 2007). The at-risk label applies to students who qualify for the free or reduced lunch program. These students tend to be minority students and students who are most underserved in the public education system. Heretofore, little research connects student-teacher ratio and exclusionary discipline placements. This research includes student-teacher ratio and exclusionary discipline placements to discover whether it has any impact on exclusionary discipline placements for African American girls. Smaller class sizes result in teachers spending more time delivering the curriculum and less time managing student discipline (Finn, 1998).

2014 Descriptive Statistics

Table 3 contains descriptive statistics for the variables discussed previously for 2014. The first section of the table compares the racial/ethnic composition of total enrollment for suburban and urban districts. The Texas Education Agency identifies 79 school districts as major suburban and 11 school districts as major urban. Dividing the total enrollment for each type of district by the number of districts produces a mean suburban district enrollment of 21,226 and a mean urban district enrollment of 89,028. In terms of total enrollment, urban districts are, on average, four times larger than suburban districts.

Table 3

2014 Percentage Descriptive Statistics by District Type

	Suburban District (*N* = 79)		Urban District (*N* = 11)	
Descriptive Statistics	*N*	%	N	%
Total Enrollment				
African American	262,850	15.68	151,031	15.42
Hispanic	755,869	45.08	664,747	67.88
White	492,523	29.37	121,607	12.42
Other	165,574	9.87	41,919	4.28
Total	1,676,816	100	979,304	100
Female Enrollment				
African American	127,306	15.64	74,076	15.48
Hispanic	368,355	45.25	324,666	67.87
White	237,745	29.21	58,926	12.32
Other	80,581	9.90	20,734	4.33
Total	813,987	100	478,402	100
DAEP Placement by Ethnicity (Female)				
African American	2,285	34.65	1,554	30.95
Hispanic	3,295	49.98	2,988	59.51
White	909	13.79	413	8.23
Other	104	1.58	66	1.31
Total	6,593	100	5,021	100
Teachers by Ethnicity				
African American	12,788	11.89	10,902	17.89
Hispanic	19,469	18.11	22,298	36.59
White	71,276	66.28	25,563	41.95
Other	3,998	3.72	2,178	3.57
Total	107,531	100	60,941	100
Economically Disadvantaged	870,620	51.92	718,904	73.40
Special Education Students	143,281	8.54	85,578	8.74
Student-Teacher Ratio	--	15.71*	--	15.90*

Note. *Student-Teacher Ratio is a ratio, not a percentage.

Suburban districts, as a group, have no majority racial/ethnic group, but Hispanics comprise the largest group (45.08%). Hispanics also dominate urban districts and are the majority group (67.88%). Non-Hispanic Whites comprise nearly 30% in suburban districts but only 12% in urban districts. Interestingly, African Americans comprise nearly the same proportion in both district types (15%).

The second part of Table 3 compares the racial/ethnic compositions of exclusively female students across district types. Girls comprise approximately 48% of all students in suburban and urban districts. The racial/ethnic proportions for the girls mirror the proportions of the total student bodies. Hispanic girls comprise a plurality of female students in suburban districts (45.25%) and a majority in urban districts (67.87%). African American girls are approximately the same proportion of girl students (15%) across district types, similar to the proportion of African American students in general across district types. The percentages for female student populations for each subgroup mirror the percentages for total subgroup populations.

Regarding discipline, Hispanics in urban districts comprise the majority of female students assigned to DAEP and nearly 50% in suburban districts. It is important to look deeper into this portion of the table. While Hispanic females have the highest proportion for female enrollment in suburban (45.25%) and urban (67.87%) school districts, they comprise DAEP placement at 49.98% and 59.51% respectively. This is approximately a 1:1 ratio of enrollment proportion to DAEP proportion. African American girls comprise approximately 15% of female student enrollment in suburban and urban schools. In suburban and urban districts, African American girls are twice as likely to experience DAEP placements as any other subgroup; 34.65% in suburban districts and 30.95% in urban school districts. White girls comprise 29.21% of female enrollment in suburban districts and 12.32% of urban districts. White female students

in suburban and urban school districts experience DAEP placements at half the White female enrollment rate—13.79% in suburban districts and 8.23% in urban districts. Female students categorized as "Other" comprises 9.90% of the female enrollment in suburban districts and 4.33% in urban districts. "Other" female students in suburban and urban school districts experience DAEP placements at roughly a quarter of the rate of the "Other" female enrollment; approximately 1.50% in both suburban and urban districts. In summation, when reviewing the data presented in Table 3, African American female students are twice as likely to be assigned for DAEP placements across both district types.

The primary hypothesis of this research is African American female students are disproportionately assigned DAEP placement. Table 3 offers preliminary evidence supporting the hypothesis. African American female enrollment accounts for 15.64% of the total female enrollment in suburban districts, yet they account for 34.65% of DAEP placements for females in suburban districts. African American female enrollment accounts for 15.48% of the total female enrollment in urban districts, though they account for 30.95% of DAEP placements for females in urban districts. In both suburban and urban districts, the preliminary data show African American females are twice as likely to experience DAEP placements than their Hispanic female counterparts, four times as likely to experience DAEP placements than their White female counterparts, and eight times as likely to experience DAEP placements than their Other counterparts.

Teachers primarily serve on discipline management committees that assign students to DAEP. Discipline management committees provide the opportunity for the student to have due process in relation to the discipline incident. Once all parties, the student and the school, have had an opportunity to share the details of the student code of conduct infraction, the discipline

management committee members determine whether DAEP placement is in line with the student code of conduct. In the context of representative bureaucracy, teachers are the street-level bureaucrats, and the racial/ethnic composition of the teachers matter.

There are four unique ways in which minority teachers affect minority student academic performance. First, they can serve as appropriate role models. Minority teachers, both ethnically and by gender, offer many opportunities for minority students to witness other minorities in leadership positions. Second, as decision makers, minority teachers are often in the position to act as a buffer against perceptible discriminatory practices and to assist in the selection of students for gifted and educational support programs. Third, minority teachers have insight into the educational experiences of students similar to themselves, as minority teachers were once minority students. Fourth, minority teachers lessen the racial barriers of any educational facility and, as such, the issue of race and perhaps gender is not a detriment to good educational policies (Meier et al., 2006). Minority bureaucrats and clients often share values, experiences, and beliefs, which can induce consistency between minority bureaucrats' behavior and minority clients' interests (Grissom et al., 2015).

In comparison to total female enrollment, when looking at teachers by ethnicity, urban school districts do not have a clear majority of teachers, meaning no subgroup measures greater than 50% of teachers' total in the school district. White teachers comprise a clear majority of teachers in suburban (66.28%) districts and comprise the highest percentage in urban (41.95%) districts. White female student enrollment is the second-largest subgroup in suburban schools (29.21%) and the third largest in urban schools (12.32%). Hispanic teachers are the second largest percentage of teachers in suburban and urban districts, 18.11% and 36.59% respectively. Hispanic female students are the largest proportion of students in suburban (45.25%) and urban

(67.87%) districts. African American teachers are the third largest percentage of teachers in both suburban (11.89%) and urban (17.89%) districts. African American female students are approximately (15%) of the student population in suburban and urban schools. Lastly, teachers in the "Other" subgroup make up about (4.0%) in the suburban and urban districts, while female students in the "Other" subgroup make up (9.90%) in suburban districts and (4.33%) in urban districts. In the big picture of representative bureaucracy, the proportions that exists between the street level bureaucrats and clients are not in alignment. Passive representation does not exist within the socio-demographic make-up of teachers and students.

The Texas Education Agency (2018) defines an economically-disadvantaged student as one who is eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program. The later part of Table 3 gives the total number as well as the percentage of economically-disadvantaged students in suburban and urban school districts. The proportion of students classified as economically disadvantaged is higher for urban school districts as compared to suburban school districts.

The next part of Table 3 displays the total number and percentage of students receiving special education services. The proportions for students receiving special education services in suburban and urban school districts at 8.54% and 8.74% respectively are relatively similar. It is typical that a school district's special education population is less than or equal to 10% of the total student enrollment.

Student-teacher ratio for suburban and urban districts is listed last in Table 3. The Texas Education Agency reports student-teacher ratio not as a percentage but as a ratio of the number of students per teacher; however, the student-teacher ratio for suburban and urban school districts are both 16:1 when rounded to the nearest whole number. Each major urban school district has a

higher number of Title I schools, which means more funding for schools with that identification. The extra funding can be spent on additional staff members, causing the student-teacher ratio in major urban school districts to be similar to that of major suburban school districts (Texas Education Agency, 2007-2018). Title I, Part A (Title I) of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act, as amended by the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA) provides financial assistance to local educational agencies (LEAs) and schools with high numbers or high percentages of children from low-income families to help ensure that all children meet challenging state academic standards (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). The U.S. Department of Education (2018) allocates federal funds through four statutory formulas based primarily on census poverty estimates and the cost of education in each state.

2015 Descriptive Statistics

The descriptive data for the school year ending 2015 (see Table 4), has some of the same characteristics as the 2014 school year. Just as with the 2014 descriptive data, suburban districts, as a group, have no majority racial/ethnic group, but Hispanics comprise the largest group (45.38%). Hispanics also dominate urban districts and are the majority group (67.98%). Non-Hispanic Whites comprise nearly 29% in suburban districts but only 12% in urban districts. Interestingly, African Americans comprise nearly the same proportion in both district types (15%).

Table 4

2015 Percentage Descriptive Statistics by District Type

	Suburban District (*N* = 79)		Urban District (*N* = 11)	
Descriptive Statistics	*N*	%	N	%
Total Enrollment				
African American	266,204	15.62	151,014	15.36
Hispanic	773,363	45.38	668,367	67.98
White	489,568	28.73	120,917	12.30
Other	174,882	10.26	42,829	4.36
Total	1,704,017	100	983,127	100
Female Enrollment				
African American	128,580	15.55	73,991	15.38
Hispanic	377,314	45.62	326,789	67.94
White	235,963	28.53	58,613	12.19
Other	85,199	10.30	21,618	4.49
Total	827,056	100	481,011	100
DAEP Placement by Ethnicity (Female)				
African American	2,308	35.40	1,431	30.65
Hispanic	3,208	49.20	2,779	59.52
White	917	14.06	407	8.72
Other	87	1.33	52	1.11
Total	6,520	100	4,669	100
Teachers by Ethnicity				
African American	13,707	12.41	11,189	18.06
Hispanic	20,387	18.46	22,921	37.00
White	72,069	65.24	25,486	41.14
Other	4,301	3.89	2,353	3.80
Total	110,464	100	61,949	100
Economically Disadvantaged	875,368	51.37	697,447	70.94
Special Education Students	146,197	8.58	86,265	8.77
Student-Teacher Ratio	--	15.51*	--	15.73*

Note. *Student-Teacher Ratio is a ratio, not a percentage.

One finds for the 2015 year that many of the same patterns hold true, across district types, for Hispanic and Black female students. Regarding discipline, Hispanic females comprise the largest percentage of female DAEP placement in both suburban and urban districts. When comparing the proportion of percentages for Hispanic female enrollment and Hispanic female DAEP placement, again the pattern suggests about a 1:1 ratio. This comparison does not hold true for African American female students.

Table 4 also offers preliminary evidence supporting the hypothesis that African American female students are disproportionately assigned to DAEP placements. African American female enrollment accounts for 15.55% of the total female enrollment in suburban districts, however, they account for 35.40% of DAEP placements for females in suburban districts. African American female enrollment accounts for 15.36% of the total female enrollment in urban districts, however, they account for 30.65% of DAEP placements for females in urban districts. At this level of analysis, in both suburban and urban districts, the data shows that African American females are twice as likely to experience DAEP placements than their Hispanic female counterparts, four times as likely than their White female counterparts, and eight times as likely than their Other counterparts.

Since teachers serve on discipline management committees that assign students to DAEP, representation matters. In the context of representative bureaucracy, teachers are the street-level bureaucrats, and the racial/ethnic composition of teacher make a difference.

In comparison to total female enrollment, when looking at teachers by ethnicity, urban school districts do not have a clear majority of teachers, meaning no subgroup measures greater than 50% of teachers' total in the school district. White teachers comprise a majority of teachers in suburban (65.24%) districts and comprise the highest percentage in urban (41.14%) districts.

White female student enrollment is the second-largest subgroup in suburban schools (28.53%) and the third largest in urban schools (12.19%). Hispanic teachers are the second largest percentage of teachers in suburban and urban districts, 18.46% and 37.00% respectively. Hispanic female students are the largest proportion of students in suburban (45.62%) and urban (67.94%) districts. African American teachers are the third largest percentage of teachers in both suburban (12.41%) and urban (18.06%) districts. African American female students are about (15%) of the student population in suburban and urban schools. Lastly, teachers in the "Other" subgroup make up about 4.0% in the suburban and urban districts, while female students in the "Other" subgroup make up 10.30% in suburban districts and 4.49% in urban districts. In the big picture of representative bureaucracy, the proportions that exists between the street level bureaucrats and clients are not in alignment. Passive representation does not exist within the socio-demographic make-up of teachers and students.

The later part of Table 4 gives the total number as well as the percentage of economically-disadvantaged students in suburban and urban school districts. This pattern remains the same from the 2014 descriptive data. The percentage of students classified as economically disadvantaged is higher for urban school districts as compared to suburban school districts. The next part of Table 4 displays the total number and percentage of students receiving special education services. The proportions for students receiving special education services in suburban and urban school districts at 8.58% and 8.77% respectively are relatively similar. It is typical that a school district's special education population is less than or equal to 10% of the total student enrollment.

Student-teacher ratio for suburban and urban districts is listed last in Table 4. The Texas Education Agency reports student-teacher ratio not as a percentage but as a ratio of the number

of students per teacher; however, the student-teacher ratio for suburban and urban school districts are both 16 :1 when rounded to the nearest whole number. Each major urban school district has a higher number of Title I schools, which means more funding for schools with that identification (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). The extra funding can be spent on additional staff members, causing the student-teacher ratio in major urban school districts to be similar to major suburban school districts (Texas Education Agency, 2020d).

2016 Descriptive Statistics

For the 2016 school year (see Table 5), again one finds the same patterns that were exhibited in the previous two tables. When looking at total enrollment, suburban districts, as a group, have no majority racial/ethnic group, but Hispanics comprise the largest group (45.65%). Hispanics also monopolize urban districts and are the majority group (67.98%). Non-Hispanic Whites comprise approximately 28% in suburban districts but only 12% in urban districts. Just as in the previous two years, African Americans comprise nearly the same proportion in both district types (15%).

The second part of Table 5 compares across district types the racial/ethnic compositions of only female students. Girls comprise approximately 48% of all students in suburban and urban districts. The percentages for female student populations for each subgroup mirror the percentages for total subgroup populations.

Regarding discipline, Hispanics in urban districts comprise the majority of female students assigned to DAEP and nearly 50% in suburban districts. It is important to look deeper into this portion of the table. While Hispanic females have the highest proportion for female enrollment in suburban (45.90%) and urban (68.03%) school districts, they comprise DAEP placement at 49.94% and 59.50% respectively.

Table 5

2016 Percentage Descriptive Statistics by District Type

	Suburban District (*N* = 79)		Urban District (*N* = 11)	
Descriptive Statistics	*N*	%	N	%
Total Enrollment				
African American	270,031	15.64	149,520	15.23
Hispanic	788,004	45.65	667,386	67.98
White	485,036	28.10	120,809	12.31
Other	182,960	10.26	43,994	4.48
Total	1,726,031	100	981,709	100
Female Enrollment				
African American	130,500	15.57	73,251	15.27
Hispanic	384,554	45.90	326,431	68.03
White	233,714	27.89	58,542	12.20
Other	89,115	10.64	21,618	4.51
Total	837,883	100	479,842	100
DAEP Placement by Ethnicity (Female)				
African American	2,462	34.53	1,448	31.49
Hispanic	3,561	49.94	2,736	59.50
White	1,012	14.19	336	7.31
Other	95	1.33	78	1.70
Total	7,130	100	4,598	100
Teachers by Ethnicity				
African American	14,321	12.80	11,256	18.04
Hispanic	21,180	18.93	23,366	37.44
White	71,760	64.14	25,365	40.65
Other	4,616	4.13	2,416	3.87
Total	111,877	100	62,403	100
Economically Disadvantaged	887,614	51.43	700,991	71.41
Special Education Students	150,415	8.71	87,260	8.89
Student-Teacher Ratio	--	15.27*	--	15.66*

Note. *Student-Teacher Ratio is a ratio, not a percentage.

African American girls comprise approximately (15%) of female student enrollment in suburban and urban schools. In summation, when reviewing the data presented in Table 5, in both suburban and urban districts, the preliminary data shows African American females are twice as likely to experience DAEP placements.

In comparison to total female enrollment, when looking at teachers by ethnicity, the same patterns from the previous descriptive tables exist for the 2016 data. White teachers comprise the greatest percentage of teachers by ethnicity across both school district types, followed by Hispanic teachers and then Black teachers. The next sections of the 2016 descriptive tables adhere to the same patterns as the previous two years of data. Urban schools have a higher percentage of economically-disadvantaged students, special education percentages are relatively similar across district types, and the student teacher ratio is the same across district types.

2017 Descriptive Statistics

After looking through the descriptive data for the previous 3 years, one finds the same patterns exist for the 2017 school year for both suburban and urban school districts (see Table 6). When looking at total student enrollment, the Hispanic subgroup is the largest in both suburban and urban districts and constitutes the majority in urban districts.

The second part of Table 6 compares across district types the racial/ethnic compositions of only female students. The percentages for female student subgroups in suburban and urban districts, mirror the percentages for total enrollment for subgroups. Throughout the four years of data, the descriptive tables show the same ratio pattern that Hispanic females experience DAEP placements at about a 1:1 ratio, Black girls at about a 2:1 ratio, White girls at about a 0.5:1 ratio, and Other girls at about a 0.25:1 ratio.

Table 6

2017 Percentage Descriptive Statistics by District Type

	Suburban District (*N* = 79)		Urban District (*N* = 11)	
Descriptive Statistics	*N*	%	N	%
Total Enrollment				
African American	272,941	15.66	147,845	15.09
Hispanic	800,517	45.94	666,103	67.99
White	477,800	27.42	120,413	12.29
Other	191,250	10.98	45,384	4.63
Total	1,742,508	100	979,745	100
Female Enrollment				
African American	132,242	15.62	72,614	15.16
Hispanic	390,709	46.16	325,681	67.99
White	230,193	27.20	58,378	12.19
Other	93,258	11.02	22,316	4.66
Total	846,402	100	478,989	100
DAEP Placement by Ethnicity (Female)				
African American	2,352	33.00	1,377	26.13
Hispanic	3,699	51.90	2,841	61.80
White	996	13.98	311	6.77
Other	80	1.12	68	1.48
Total	7,127	100	4,597	100
Teachers by Ethnicity				
African American	15,190	13.31	11,170	17.81
Hispanic	22,331	19.56	24,293	38.74
White	71,703	62.81	24,763	39.49
Other	4,930	4.32	2,480	3.95
Total	114,154	100	62,706	100
Economically Disadvantaged	894,633	51.34	697,546	71.20
Special Education Students	155,110	8.90	87,981	8.98
Student-Teacher Ratio	--	15.44*	--	15.51*

Note. *Student-Teacher Ratio is a ratio, not a percentage.

Preliminarily these tables provide evidence supporting the hypothesis that Black girls experience DAEP placement at a higher rate in both types of school districts. In comparison to total female enrollment, when looking at teachers by ethnicity, one finds the patterns over the 4 years remain consistent. In both suburban and urban school districts, White teachers have the highest percentage, followed by Hispanic teachers, and then Black teachers. Additionally, economically disadvantaged percentages are higher in urban school districts over time, while special education percentages and student teacher ratios remain relatively equal between district types over time.

Summary of Descriptive Tables

The data in Tables 3-6 show the total enrollment, female enrollment, female DAEP placement, and teachers by ethnicity for the 2014-2017 school years. These figures provide a picture over time of the patterns that emerge when looking at data for suburban and urban school districts and the subgroups for each category mentioned previously.

When comparing suburban districts to urban districts' total enrollment over 4 school years: 2013-2014 through 2016-2017, on average Hispanics comprised 45.5% of the total enrollment in suburban districts compared to 67.96% in urban districts over the 4 years. While no racial/ethnic group has an absolute majority in suburban school districts, Hispanics, on average, are the majority in urban school districts. Suburban school districts are becoming majority-minority school districts. Over the 4 years of 2014-2017, the average proportion of African American students (15%) is virtually equal across district types.

Total enrollments proportions by ethnic groups for all female students in suburban and urban school districts displays suburban and urban school districts have similar female proportions (15%) for African American student enrollment. Hispanic female student enrollment

proportions are higher in urban (67%) districts as compared to suburban (45%) school districts. White female student enrollment proportions are higher in suburban (approximately 28%) school districts as compared to White female student enrollment proportions in urban (12%) school districts. The category "Other" includes female students identified as Asian, Native American, Pacific Islander, and two or more races. Student female enrollment proportions for "Other" are higher in suburban (approximately 10%) districts as compared to urban (4.0%) school districts.

The racial/ethnic composition of female DAEP placements remains relatively consistent over time for suburban and urban districts. The highest percentage of female students experiencing DAEP placements are Hispanic female students and is consistent across district types. The second highest percentage of female students experiencing DAEP placements are African American female students, and it is also consistent across district types. Percentage wise suburban districts, on average, have a higher percentage of DAEP placements for African Americans (34.4%) compared to urban districts (29.8%).

The racial/ethnic representation of teachers remains consistent over the 4 year period of this study for suburban and urban districts. Urban school districts have a higher percentage of African American (approximately 18%) and Hispanic (about 37%) teachers than suburban school districts, while suburban school districts have a higher rate of White (around 64%) teachers. Both suburban and urban school districts have similar percentages (about 4.0%) for teachers classified as "Other." Minority teachers are more concentrated in urban school districts.

Tables 3–6 contain data over four school years: 2013-2014 through 2016-2017. Suburban non-White students make up the majority of the student enrollment over the 4 school years. Urban school districts have a majority of Hispanic student enrollment over 4 years. During the 4 school years included in this research, African American and Hispanic female students comprise

the majority of female students that experience DAEP placements. The teacher by ethnicity figures shows White teachers in suburban districts with a majority over all other subgroups. White teachers have the highest percentage in urban schools, but they do not comprise the majority of teachers. Non-White teachers, for example African American, Hispanic, and Other teachers combined, in urban districts make up the majority of teachers by ethnicity. Campus committees make decisions regarding DAEP placement for students. The discipline committees are comprised of teachers with an administrator who serves as the facilitator and a counselor. According to the descriptive tables in this study, it is likely most of the teachers serving as committee members in suburban districts are White teachers. While White teachers in urban districts make up the highest percentage of teachers, the majority of teachers in urban districts are non-White and therefore it is possible that members of campus committees in urban districts could be majority minority.

Risk Index and Relative Risk Ratio

Risk Index

Tables 3–6 provided an introductory foundation to the information needed for this research. While the preliminary data allowed a look into the composition of district types in relation to total enrollment, female enrollment, female DAEP, teachers by ethnicity, economically disadvantaged, special education, and student teacher ratio, the upcoming risk index and relative risk ratio will allow a more robust level of analysis. Fergus (2017) stated, “the risk index identifies what rate, or percentage of risk, students have of having a particular outcome” (p. 81). For this research, the risk index determines the risk of females and of different ethnicities that experience DAEP placement in suburban and urban school districts. To determine the risk index for DAEP placement for African American females in suburban districts, the

number of African American females in DAEP is divided by the total African American female enrollment. The quotient is the risk index.

Example: Taken from Table 6–2017 Percentage Descriptive Statistics by District Type

$$\frac{\#AA\ Female\ DAEP}{\#Total\ Enrollment\ AA\ Female} = risk\ index\ for\ AA\ girls\ to\ experience\ DAEP$$

$$\frac{2{,}352}{132{,}242} = 0.01779 \text{ or } 1.78\%$$

Of the African American girls, about 2% are likely to be assigned to DAEP.

Table 7 displays the risk index over time for African American, Hispanic, and White females in suburban and urban districts. Over time in both suburban and urban districts, African American girls have about a 2% risk index of DAEP placement. Hispanic and White females in suburban and urban districts have less than a 1% risk index of DAEP placements. Although visual inspection indicated no difference in risk of DAEP for African American girls between district types, African American girls had a greater risk of DAEP relative to their counterparts over time regardless of district type.

Relative Risk Ratio

According to Fergus (2017), "The relative risk ratio gives a comparison of risk for classification of one group in relation to the risk for all other groups" (p. 81). Fergus also stated "a risk ratio of 1.0 indicates there is an equal risk. A risk ratio above 1.0 is indicative of increased risk. A risk below 1.0 indicates a decreased risk" (p. 81).

To determine the relative risk ratio for African American females in suburban districts, the risk ratio is divided by the quotient of the difference of total females in DAEP and African American female DAEP and the difference of total female enrollment and total African American female enrollment. The final quotient is the relative risk ratio.

Table 7

Risk Index 2014-2017

		Risk Index	
Year	Ethnicity	Suburban	Urban
2014	African American	0.01795	0.02098
	Hispanic	0.00895	0.00920
	White	0.00382	0.00701
2015	African American	0.01795	0.01934
	Hispanic	0.00850	0.00850
	White	0.00389	0.00694
2016	African American	0.01887	0.01977
	Hispanic	0.00926	0.00838
	White	0.00433	0.00574
2017	African American	0.01779	0.01896
	Hispanic	0.00947	0.00872
	White	0.00433	0.00533

Example: Taken from Table 6–2017 Percentage Descriptive Statistics by District Type

(AA risk ratio) ÷ [(Total Female DAEP – AA Female DAEP) ÷ (Total Female Enrollment – Total AA Female Enrollment)]

0.01779 ÷ [(7,127 – 2,352) ÷ (846,402 – 132,242)] = 2.66

A value of 2.66 indicates that the risk of being assigned to DAEP for African American girls is 2.66 times greater than the risk of being assigned to DAEP for the rest of the girls in the district.

African American females have an increased risk of DAEP placement according to the relative risk ratio. African American females in suburban districts on average are 2.8 times more

likely than Hispanic and White females in suburban districts to experience DAEP placement over time. While Hispanic females in suburban districts also have an increased risk of DAEP placement, their relative risk ratio is greater than White females, but less than African American females. When comparing the relative risk ratio of African American, Hispanic, and White female students in suburban districts, White females in suburban districts are the only subgroup with a decreased risk, over time, of DAEP placement across ethnic categories (see Table 8).

Table 8

Relative Risk Ratio 2014-2017

		Relative Risk Ratio	
Year	Ethnicity	Suburban	Urban
2014	African American	2.86	3.44
	Hispanic	1.21	0.70
	White	0.39	0.64
2015	African American	2.98	2.43
	Hispanic	1.15	0.69
	White	0.41	0.69
2016	African American	2.86	2.55
	Hispanic	1.18	0.69
	White	0.43	0.57
2017	African American	2.66	2.39
	Hispanic	1.26	0.76
	White	0.44	0.52

Looking at the relative risk ratio for African American, Hispanic, and White female students in urban districts, African American females also have an increased risk of DAEP placement. The 4-year relative risk ratio average in urban districts show African American females are 2.7 times more likely to experience DAEP placements than their White and Hispanic counterparts. Unlike suburban districts, Hispanic and White female students both have a decreased risk of DAEP placements over time (Table 8).

Comparison of Risk

A comparison of proportions for the two district types finds a difference in the risk index for each school year from 2014–2017 for African American females that experience DAEP placements in suburban districts or urban districts. Additionally, a comparison of proportions was conducted to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in the risk index for Hispanic and White females that experience DAEP placements in suburban or urban districts. Each school year, the comparison of proportions for African American females consistently found African American females in suburban districts have a lower risk index for DAEP placements than their counterparts in urban districts.

Over the course of the 4 years in this study, one finds Hispanic females in suburban districts have a lower risk index for DAEP placements than Hispanic females in urban districts. For the 2015 school year, Hispanic females in suburban and urban districts had an equal risk index for DAEP placements. The comparison of proportions for the 2016 and 2017 school years, measure a change in that Hispanic females in urban districts have a significantly lower risk index for DAEP placements than Hispanic females in suburban districts.

The comparison of proportions for White females consistently measured White females in suburban districts have a significantly lower risk index for DAEP placements than White

females in urban districts. A comparison of proportions was conducted to determine the difference in the risk index for DAEP placements between suburban and urban school districts for African American, Hispanic, and White females (Taylor, 2020).

Comparison of Proportions

Equation 5.1

$$z = \frac{(\hat{\rho}_1 - \hat{\rho}_2) - 0}{\sqrt{\hat{\rho}(1-\hat{\rho})(\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2})}}$$

Z-scores were calculated for raw scores in the discipline data set. The z-score tells one that anything greater than 1.96 or less than -1.96 provides evidence that the difference between the proportions is statistically significant. Any z-stat numbers that are statistically significant have been noted in Table 9 with an asterisk. H_o: $\hat{\rho}_1 - \hat{\rho}_2 = 0$ where $\hat{\rho}_1$ is the proportion of suburban female DAEP, and $\hat{\rho}_2$ is the proportion of urban female DAEP.

For the 2014 and 2015 school year the occurrence is significant at $p < 0.01$ level. The results suggest, for this research, the occurrence of African American DAEP placements for girls is higher in urban districts than in suburban districts. This is also true for the 2016 and 2017 school years however the results are not significant. When comparing proportions for Hispanic females, the 2014 school year results suggests the occurrence of Hispanic DAEP placements for girls is higher in urban districts than in suburban districts but is not significant. For the 2015 school year, the results were also not significant, but the comparison of proportions shows no difference between school district types for Hispanic female DAEP placements. For the 2016 and 2017 school year the occurrence is significant at $p < 0.01$ level. The results suggest the occurrence of Hispanic DAEP placements for girls is higher in suburban districts than in urban districts. The results for White female students paint a different picture than the results for Black

and Hispanic females. Over the course of the 4 years of data, the comparison of proportions is significant at $p < 0.01$ level. The results suggest the occurrence of White DAEP placements for girls is higher in urban districts than in suburban districts.

Table 9

Comparison of Proportions 2014-2017

Year	Female Ethnic Group	Z-Stat
2014	African American	-4.79486***
	Hispanic	-0.39562
	White	-10.4077***
2015	African American	-2.23799**
	Hispanic	0
	White	-9.87991***
2016	African American	-1.42093*
	Hispanic	3.94659***
	White	-4.5025***
2017	African American	-1.89485**
	Hispanic	3.323432***
	White	-3.2138***

Note. * significant at 0.10; ** significant at 0.05; *** significant at 0.01.

Table 9 displays the results of the comparison of proportions between suburban and urban female DAEP placements. The comparison of proportions provides a more robust level of analysis. In looking at the comparison of proportions for African American females from 2014-2017, one can conclude African American females in suburban districts have a significantly lower risk of DAEP placement than African American females in urban districts. One can see the

same pattern exists for White females. White females in suburban districts have a significantly lower risk of DAEP placement than White females in urban districts. The comparison of proportions for Hispanic females paints a different story. Initially, the 2014 comparison of proportions shows Hispanic females in suburban districts have a lower risk of DAEP placement than Hispanic girls in urban districts. For the 2015 school year, the comparison of proportions is 0 meaning Hispanic females in suburban and urban districts have an equal risk of DAEP placement. For the last 2 years included in this research, the comparison of proportions signifies a change in risk for Hispanic females, meaning Hispanic females in urban districts have a significantly lower risk of DAEP placement than Hispanic females in suburban districts.

Type of Data

Panel Data and Challenges Therein

The research contains data observations for 90 Texas school districts: 79 major suburban and 11 major urban districts. This longitudinal data set consists of time series data of 4 school years for each cross-sectional school district in the data set. This type of data is referred to as panel data (Wooldridge, 2020) and provides information on the same district types over time. Panel data differs from independently pooled cross-section data in that panel data follows the same district types over time. Independently pooled cross-section data randomly selects districts for each time period.

The advantage to using panel data, according to Wooldridge (2020), is that having multiple observations on the same school districts allows for more efficient estimates between district types. Additionally, panel data allows the researcher to test a wide range of hypotheses. This researcher identified commonalities within and across district types and considered the time order of occurrences between school districts. Additionally, individual trajectories can be studied

as well as cohort (district type) trajectories. It increases the number of observations and degrees of freedom over data that is exclusively cross-section or exclusively time-series. It also introduces the possibility of a time invariant unobserved variable that is represented as a component of the error term.

Panel data presents challenges to ordinary least squares (OLS) regression in that panel data observations are serially correlated within a district's panel and captures unobserved time invariant effects within districts that varies between districts. Hence, it contains the possibility of unobserved factors at the district level that do not change over time that may be correlated with independent variables of the model that do change over time. Relationships among variables from panel data are estimated either by fixed effect models or by random effects models. Wooldridge (2020) provides a general representation of a panel data model as:

$$y_{i,t} = \beta_1 x_{it1} + \cdots \beta_1 x_{itk} + a_i + u_{it}, t = 1 \ldots T$$

where the β_i are the parameters to estimate and a_i is the unobserved effect. It is typically assumed the unobserved effects are time invariant or fixed over time, which is why a_i has no time subscript and why this model is referred to as a fixed effects model.

The fixed effects method estimation accommodates the correlation to produce unbiased estimates of coefficients of time varying independent variables. OLS can estimate coefficients of simple serial data, but Wooldridge (2020) says unobserved factors unique to a district and that are invariant over time exclude OLS as an estimation technique.

Alternatively, random effects estimation is preferred if the assumption can be made that the unobserved factors are not correlated to included independent variables. Another reason to use random effects estimation is if the model contains time invariant independent or control variables.

OLS analysis will neglect the panel aspect of the data set so this type of analysis should be ruled out. Rather than OLS, fixed effects estimation procedures are necessary. Fixed effects estimation uses a differencing technique that eliminates the influence of the time invariant unobserved variable. The time invariant unobserved variable may not be correlated with any independent variables and fixed effects modeling is unnecessary. If that is the case, then the estimation procedure should be the random effects model. Unlike OLS, random effects accommodate the variables in the panel data that do not change over time.

It is difficult to test directly for the correlation between observed independent variables and an unobserved variable, but it is necessary to determine whether to use fixed effects specification or random effects specification. A common solution to determining whether to use the fixed effects or random effects is found with the Hausman test (Wooldridge, 2020). The Hausman tests the null hypothesis that the estimated coefficients of the random effects analysis equal the estimated coefficients of the fixed effect analysis. The Hausman statistic is distributed chi-square and failure to reject the null hypothesis implies random effects is the preferred analysis.

The time invariant unobserved variable in this case is the organizational culture that includes implicit bias of administrators toward African American girl students that is time invariant within the district but may vary across districts. A primary hypothesis is teachers and administrators of suburban districts discipline African American girls at higher rates than teachers and administrators of urban districts. Recall that discipline in this study is operationalized by assignment to DAEP. The theoretical reasoning is the more representative the demographic composition of the administration, faculty, and staff of urban districts is of the demographic composition of the student body the less likely students will be assigned

disproportionately to DAEP. Tables 3–6 revealed proportions of White teachers in suburban districts averaged approximately 65%, the proportion of African American girls in suburban districts averaged 15% and the proportion of DAEP girls who were African American averaged 34%. The standard method of testing this hypothesis is to use a dummy variable as an independent variable that equals zero for suburban districts and 1 for urban districts. The coefficient on the dummy variable measures the difference in the intercept of the regression between urban and suburban district.

A primary hypothesis in this research was urban districts discipline African American girl students differently than suburban districts. The model includes a dummy variable that indicates the observation is an urban or a suburban district. This dummy variable has the same value over time within each district. Applying fixed effects techniques would eliminate the dummy variable from the model and prevent the estimation of the difference of disciplinary actions between urban and suburban districts. It is because of this eventuality and the presence of other time invariant control variables that the model was estimated using random effects methods. The typical tests used to test hypotheses of statistical significance remain the same as with OLS results.

If the assumption of time invariant culture within a district holds, the dummy variable may be correlated with unobserved variable of the cultural attitude within the district and the OLS coefficient on the dummy may be inefficient. In addition, the presence of data that is constant over time, but varies across districts, will cause inefficient OLS estimates. This gives cause to consider either fixed effects estimation or random effects estimation. The choice depends on the result of the Hausman test. Each model was subjected to the Hausman test and in each case the null hypothesis was not rejected. The results presented below are estimated using

random effects estimation as directed by the results of the Hausman. The following variables will be analyzed to determine their impact on African American female DAEP placement: district type, total enrollment, teachers by ethnicity (White and Black), and each academic year included in the data set.

The district data set for this research have the same number of observations. While there are some cells that have missing data, the missing data is due to the Texas Education Agency not disclosing the numbers to protect the identity of students in cases where the number of occurrences is so small there is the likelihood that the student could be identified. These instances are random and totally dependent upon there being enough observations in the data set so students cannot be identified. The time period for this data set is small relative to the number of districts, so a dummy variable is needed for each time period to account for changes that are not modeled.

Only the districts that recorded their numbers had data to analyze. The total number of cases involved in the analysis was $N = 90$. Ninety school districts were a part of the analysis; however, some of the districts had a year when there was no data for these subgroups. The analysis still accounted for all 90 school districts.

Analysis

Previous analyses laid the foundation for a richer analysis that will be discussed in this section. Before presenting the results of the deeper analysis, I explain in detail the dependent, independent, and control variables used in each of the upcoming regression models. Model 1, Model 2, and Model 3 are regression models that contain the same independent and control variables to explain their respective dependent variable. The expected relationship of each independent and control variable for each dependent variable follows.

Hypotheses

H1: African American girls are disciplined at higher rates than non-African American girls, as has been found in earlier research.

H2: Urban districts discipline African American girls at rates different than suburban districts due to unobserved heterogeneity across the district types.

H3: The difference of discipline rates of African American girls and non-African American girls is expected to be explained by the socio-demographic characteristics of the faculty and staff. It is hypothesized that the more diverse the faculty and staff, the less the difference in the rates of discipline.

The studies by Meier et al. (2006) and Grissom et al. (2015) posed a relationship between minority bureaucrats (teachers) and active and passive representation with the clients (students) they serve. Meier et al. (2006) also concluded representative bureaucracies are more successful in achieving their goals than non-representative bureaucracies under similar circumstances. This leads the researcher to assume that school districts with a socio-demographic teacher composition that is similar the socio-demographic student composition would send less African American students for DAEP placements. After analyzing the descriptive statistics for this research and finding that suburban districts have teacher ethnic compositions that are less diverse than urban districts, the data leads the researcher to also assume that suburban districts have a higher incident of sending Black girls to DAEP placements.

Model 1

Dependent Variables

The natural log of the number of African American female students placed in DAEP (*lnaafdaep*) setting, measures the absolute number of African American girls who were assigned

annually to DAEP in each district. The natural log transformation is used to simplify the interpretation of the estimated coefficients on the respective independent and control variables.

Independent Variables

DistTYPE represents district type; coded 0 for suburban districts and 1 for urban districts. For this study, the researcher included all major urban and major suburban school districts in Texas. The expectation was the number of African American female DAEP placements would be lower in urban districts because urban districts have teacher populations that are more representative (sociodemographic) of the student population. The hypothesized relationship between DistTYPE and *lnaafdaep* is that a negative coefficient on DistTYPE would indicate urban districts assigned a smaller percentage of African American girls to DAEP than suburban districts.

As stated in Chapter 2, in an effort for all students to benefit in public schools, they should see members of that organization reflect the diversity of interests of the student population (Grissom et al., 2015). Others also contend where there is an increase in minority teachers; there is also an academic improvement for both minority and White students (Meier et al., 1999). Diverse representation addresses diverse interests and ideas in the day-to-day decisions of the school. Therefore, if active representation plays a role in the committee members that determine potential placement at DAEP facilities, the outcome could potentially address the needs or interests of the client (student). To meet the diverse needs and interests of the students served in public education, schools must employ a diverse group of individuals: paraprofessionals, teachers, counselors, and administrators.

The percentage of faculty that is White, (PCT_WHITE_TEACHER) was included to estimate the relationship between faculty diversity and the disciplinary action imposed on

African American female students. It was essential to include this information as the members of the Campus Intervention Team are the voting members that determine DAEP placements for students. The hypothesized relationship between PCT_WHITE_TEACHER and *lnaafdaep* was that as the percentage of White teachers decreased in a district, and hence the percentage of minority teachers increased, the percentage of African American girls assigned to DAEP decreased.

Control Variables

The control variables for this research, which may impact school discipline rates/actions, are the number of students receiving special education services (PCT_SPED) and student body population (lnEnroll). The control variables specific to the students would be the number of students receiving special education services. It is hypothesized that the relationship between PCT_SPED and *lnaafdaep* would result in a positive coefficient indicating that PCT_SPED increases the percentage of African American girls experiencing DAEP placements increases or decreases. Cortez and Cortez (2009) reported Hispanic, African American, male, and special education students primarily make up DAEP enrollment. Children of poverty and children who experience academic problems are the students most impacted by exclusionary discipline (Fenning & Rose, 2007). Typically, those students who experience academic problems are students served through special education. The hypothesized relationship between lnEnroll and *lnaafdaep* is that a positive coefficient of lnEnroll increases the percentage of African American girls experiencing DAEP. Using Equation 5.2, the researcher explored the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

Equation 5.2

$$lnaafdaep = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * DistTYPE + \beta_2 * PCTWHITETEACHER + \beta_3 * PCT\_FAAEnroll + \beta_4 * lnEnroll + \beta_5 * PCTSPED + \beta_6 * bigsub + \beta_7 * AY1415 + \beta_8 * AY1516 + \beta_9 * AY1617$$

$lnaafdaep$ = the natural log of the number of African American Female DAEP placements. Using the natural logs means that interpreting coefficients indicate a change in the independent variable causing a percentage change in the dependent variable. Using this transformation, one is stating this independent variable causes a change in the dependent variable.

Model 2

Dependent Variables

The dependent variable (*aafrisk*) measures the rate of African American girls experiencing DAEP placements in each district.

Independent Variables

The hypothesized relationship between DistTYPE and *aafrisk* was that a negative coefficient on DistTYPE would indicate African American girls in urban districts have a lower risk of DAEP placement than African American girls in suburban districts.

Data for the ethnic make-up of the professional teaching personnel were analyzed (PCT_WHITE_TEACHER). The hypothesized relationship between PCT_WHITE_TEACHER and *aafrisk* was that a negative coefficient on PCT_WHITE_TEACHER would indicate White teacher in urban districts assigned a smaller percentage of African American girls to DAEP, meaning African American girls in urban districts have a lower risk of DAEP placement than African American girls in suburban districts.

Control Variables

The control variables for this research, which may impact school discipline rates/actions, are the number of students receiving special education services (PCT_SPED) and student body population (lnEnroll). It is hypothesized that the relationship between PCT_SPED and *aafrisk* would result in a positive coefficient indicating that as PCT_SPED increases the risk of African American girls experiencing DAEP placements would increase. The hypothesized relationship between lnEnroll and *aafrisk* is as a positive coefficient of lnEnroll increases the risk of African American girls in suburban districts experiencing DAEP increases.

With the equation below the researcher explored the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Equation 5.3

$$aafrisk = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * DistTYPE + \beta_2 * PCTWHITETEACHER + \beta_3 * PCT\_FAAEnroll + \beta_4 * lnEnroll + \beta_5 * PCTSPED + \beta_6 * bigsub + \beta_7 * AY1415 + \beta_8 * AY1516 + \beta_9 * AY1617$$

$lnaafdaep$ = the natural log of the number of African American Female DAEP placements. Using the natural logs means that interpreting coefficients indicate a change in the independent variable causing a percentage change in the dependent variable. Using this transformation, one is stating this independent variable causes a change in the dependent variable.

Model 3

Dependent Variables

The dependent variable (*aafrelrisk*) measures the risk of African American girls experiencing DAEP placements compared to all other female ethnic groups.

Independent Variables

The hypothesized relationship between DistTYPE and *aafrelrisk* was that a negative coefficient on DistTYPE would indicate African American girls have a lower relative risk of DAEP placement than White, Hispanic, and Other girls.

Data for the ethnic make-up of the professional teaching personnel were analyzed (PCT_WHITE_TEACHER). The hypothesized relationship between PCT_WHITE_TEACHER and *aafrelrisk* was that a negative coefficient on PCT_WHITE_TEACHER would indicate White teacher in urban districts assigned a smaller percentage of African American girls to DAEP, meaning African American girls in urban districts have a lower relative risk of DAEP placement than White, Hispanic, and Other girls.

Control Variables

The control variables for this research, which may impact school discipline rates/actions, are the number of students receiving special education services (PCT_SPED) and student body population (lnEnroll). It is hypothesized that the relationship between PCT_SPED and *aafrelrisk* would result in a positive coefficient indicating that as PCT_SPED increases the relative risk of African American girls experiencing DAEP placements increases. The hypothesized relationship between lnEnroll and *aafrelrisk* is that as a positive coefficient of lnEnroll increases the relative risk of African American girls in suburban districts experiencing DAEP increases.

With the equation below, the researcher explored the relationship between the independent variable and the dependent variable.

Equation 5.4

$$aafrelrisk = \beta_0 + \beta_1 * DistTYPE + \beta_2 * PCTWHITETEACHER + \beta_3 * PCT\_FAAEnroll + \beta_4 * lnEnroll + \beta_5 * PCTSPED + \beta_6 * bigsub + \beta_7 * AY1415 + \beta_8 * AY1516 + \beta_9 * AY1617$$

$lnaafdaep$ = the natural log of the number of African American Female DAEP placements. Using the natural logs means that interpreting coefficients indicate a change in the independent variable causing a percentage change in the dependent variable. Using this transformation, one is stating this independent variable causes a change in the dependent variable.

PCTWHITETEACHER is the percentage of faculty comprised of White teachers and represents the sociodemographic make-up of teachers. The greater the percentage of White teachers is expected to cause a greater percentage of African American female DAEP placements. PCT_FAAEnroll represents the enrollment for African American female students. The expectation is the greater the enrollment of African American female students, the greater the percentage of African American female DAEP placements. The variable lnEnroll represents the natural log of enrollment for a school district. The expectation is the greater the total enrollment, the greater the percentage of African American female DAEP placements. The variable PCTSPED represents the percentage of students served through special education. The expectation is that as the percentage of students served through Special Education increases, the percentage of African American females in DAEP placements will increase. The variable bigsub represents if a suburban school district is located in or near one of the following major cities (Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, Fort Worth, Austin, or El Paso). The expectation is that suburban

schools in or near these large urban districts will have an increased percentage of African American female students in DAEP placements. The last three variables represent the academic school years represented in this research. This variable is used to see if a difference exists between AY1314 and AY1415, AY1516, AY1617 as it relates to the percentage of African American female DAEP placements.

Results

Table 10 contains the results of estimating the random effect model with the dependent variable as the natural log of the number of African American girls in DAEP (lnaafdaep). Holding all other variables constant, the number of African American girls in DAEP is 1.18% higher in urban districts that in suburban districts. This does not support the hypothesis that African American females in major suburban districts are more likely to be disciplined in this manner than African American females in major urban districts. The estimated coefficient is significant at the 0.10 level. While this finding does not support the hypothesis, when analyzing the data between suburban and urban districts, urban districts have a greater population of African American female students and therefore would have a higher percentage of African American female DAEP placements. For example, using data from Table 3, the African American female population for 11 urban districts is 74,076 and the African American female population for 79 suburban districts is 127,306. If these populations were equally shared between district types, urban districts would have approximately 6,734 African American females per district and suburban districts would have approximately 1,611 African American females per district.

Table 10

Random Effect Regression for DAEP Placements for African American Female Students

Random Effects GLS regression			No. of obs =	269
Group variable: DISTRICT			No. of groups =	82
R^2: within =	0.0145		Obs per group: min =	1
between =	0.7549		avg =	3.3
overall =	0.7990		max =	4
			Wald chi2(9) =	230.38
			Prob > chi2 =	0.0000
lnaafdaep	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|
Dist_TYPE	1.183312	.6683764	1.77	0.077
PCT_WHITE_TEACHER	-.0025473	.0038793	-0.66	0.511
PCT_FAAEnroll	.0441174	.0052826	8.35	0.000
lnEnroll	.6975767	.2168105	3.22	0.001
PCT_SPED	.0123069	.0593276	0.21	0.836
bigsub	.7451899	.4268883	1.75	0.081
AY1415	-.0643942	.0620594	-1.04	0.299
AY1516	-.0489058	.0587737	-0.83	0.405
AY1617	-.0045358	.0546499	-0.08	0.934
_cons	-5.212314	2.125311	-2.45	0.014

The racial composition of the White teachers in a school district does not cause a percentage change in the number of African American girls who are assigned to DAEP. It also has the unexpected positive sign. This also supports the reverse of the hypothesis and does not support the theory of representative bureaucracy. Street-level bureaucrats (teachers) house a

large amount of influence in the lives of the clients (students) they serve. The intersection of discipline and representative bureaucracy would manifest in education with a reduction in disciplinary outcomes for African American students. On the other hand, the racial composition of the student enrollment does cause a percentage change in the dependent variable. The result of 0.044 for the PCT_FAAEnroll indicates that a 10-percentage point increase in African American girls enrolled, ceteris paribus, increases the DAEP students who are African American females by 4.4%. This relationship is significant at the 0.01 level.

The size of the district also contributes to the number of African American girls assigned to DAEP. Larger enrollments, holding all other variables constant, generate percentage increases in districts. Districts that are 10% larger than their counterparts, equivalent on all factors except enrollment, typically have 6.98% more DAEP students who are African American girls than the district that is relatively smaller. An expected finding was as the percentage of students served in special education (PCT_SPED) increases by 1 percentage point, there is a 0.01% increase in the DAEP students who are African American females. This outcome is not significant. Districts located in the largest suburban cities (bigsub) of the state have approximately the same proportion of African American female DAEP as all other districts. This is significant at the 0.10 alpha level. These estimates provide no evidence of a serial trend of a percentage change in the DAEP students who are African American girls. Finally, AY1415 through AY1617 are dummy variables for the academic year with the comparison year being AY1314. This measures the difference in the dependent variable between AY1314 and the year indicated by the independent variable. Since the school years AY1415 through AY1617 are not significant, there is no particular school year that has an impact on African American female DAEP placement.

The overall R^2 indicates the model explains nearly 0.80 of the variation of the dependent variable. The Wald statistic allows one to reject the null hypothesis that this model is no better than assuming all coefficients are zero.

Table 10 shows some additional information. The minimum number of observations for group is 1 and the maximum observations is 4. The average number of observations is 3.3 meaning that most of the districts in this data set have 4 years of data; however, there is a district/districts with only 1 year of data. The chi-square test provides information that determines if the current model provides more information than no model at all.

Table 11 contains the results of estimating random effect model with the dependent variable as the risk of African American females being assigned to DAEP. This is found by dividing the number of African American females assigned to DAEP by the total number of African American females in the district (aafrisk). All the variables in this model are the same as the model used for Table 10, except the dependent variable (aafrisk). The risk of DAEP placement for students in major urban districts who are African American females is .02 percentage points more than in major suburban districts. This does not support the hypothesis that African American females in major suburban districts are at greater risk of being disciplined in this manner than African American females in major urban districts. The estimated coefficient is not significant. The racial composition of the teachers (PCT_WHITE_TEACHER) in a school district does not contribute to the risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American girls. It also has the unexpected positive sign. On the other hand, the racial composition of the female student enrollment (PCT_FAAEnroll) does contribute to the dependent variable. The result of 0.0006 for the PCT_FAAEnroll indicates that a 10 percentage point increase, controlling for all other variables, increases by less than 1 percentage point the

risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American females. This relationship is significant at the 0.01 level.

Table 11

Random Effect Regression for the Risk for African American Female Students Assigned to DAEP

Random Effects GLS regression			No. of obs =	264
Group variable: DISTRICT			No. of groups =	81
R^2: within =	0.0090		Obs per group: min =	1
between =	0.2312		avg =	3.3
overall =	0.1757		max =	4
			Wald chi2(9) =	27.68
			Prob > chi2 =	0.0011
aafrisk	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|
Dist_TYPE	.0202003	.0143204	1.41	0.158
PCT_WHITE_TEACHER	.0000436	.000106	0.41	0.681
PCT_FAAEnroll	.0006191	.0001374	4.50	0.000
lnEnroll	-.005981	.0047686	-1.25	0.210
PCT_SPED	.0007968	.0017909	0.44	0.656
bigsub	.0058817	.0093401	0.63	0.529
AY1415	-.0038436	.0036706	-1.05	0.295
AY1516	-.0025829	.0036021	-0.72	0.473
AY1617	.0017578	.0035053	0.50	0.616
_cons	.0540782	.0508281	1.06	0.287

On the other hand, the racial composition of the female student enrollment (PCT_FAAEnroll) does contribute to the dependent variable. The result of 0.0006 for the PCT_FAAEnroll indicates a 10 percentage point increase, controlling for all other variables, increases by less than 1 percentage point the risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American females. This relationship is significant at the 0.01 level. The size of the district (lnEnroll) also contributes to the risk of DAEP placements for students that are African American females. The larger the enrollment in the district, holding all other variables constant, the lesser the risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American females. The result of -0.006 indicates a 10 percentage point increase, controlling for all other variables, decreases by 0.06 percentage points the risk of DAEP placements for students who are African American females. The larger the percentage of students who are identified as special education increases the risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American females. This is not significant. Districts located in the largest suburban cities of the state have the same proportion of risk of DAEP placements for students who are African American females as all other districts. Again, these estimates provide no evidence of a serial trend in change in the proportion of risk of DAEP students who are African American girls. Finally, AY1415 through AY1617 are dummy variables for the academic year with the comparison year being AY1314. This measures the difference in the dependent variable between AY1314 and the year indicated by the independent variable. Since the school years AY1415 through AY1617 are not significant, there is no particular school year that has an impact on the risk of African American female DAEP placement.

The overall R^2 indicates the model explains over 0.18 of the variation of the dependent variable. The Wald statistic allows one to reject the null hypothesis that this model is no better than assuming all coefficients are zero.

Table 11 also shows some additional information. The minimum number of observations for group is 1 and the maximum observations is 4. The average number of observations is 3.3 meaning that most of the districts in this data set have 4 years of data; however, there is a district/districts with only 1 year of data. The chi-square test provides information that determines if the current model provides more information than no model at all.

Table 12 contains the results of estimating random effect model with the dependent variable as the relative risk of African American females being assigned to DAEP. This is found by dividing the risk for African American females being assigned to DAEP by the risk of all other females in the district being assigned to DAEP (aafrelrisk). All the variables in this model are the same as the model used for Table 10, except the dependent variable (aafrelrisk). The relative risk of DAEP placement for students in major urban districts who are African American females is 1.887 percentage points more than in major suburban districts. This supports the hypothesis that African American females in major suburban districts are at greater relative risk of being disciplined in this manner than African American females in major urban districts at the 0.10 level. The racial composition of the teachers (PCT_WHITE_TEACHER) in a school district does not contribute to the relative risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American girls. It also has the unexpected positive sign.

Table 12

Random Effect Regression for the Relative Risk for African American Female Students Assigned to DAEP

Random Effects GLS regression			No. of obs =	138
Group variable: DISTRICT			No. of groups =	46
R^2: within =	0.0042		Obs per group: min =	1
between =	0.1817		avg =	3.0
overall =	0.1080		max =	4
			Wald chi2(9) =	8.75
			Prob > chi2 =	0.4609
aafrelrisk	Coef.	Std. Err.	z	P>|z|
Dist_TYPE	1.887193	1.045097	1.81	0.071
PCT_WHITE_TEACHER	.0043698	.0115346	0.38	0.705
PCT_FAAEnroll	.0038954	.0102458	0.38	0.704
lnEnroll	-.3180927	.3625957	-0.88	0.380
PCT_SPED	-.1937789	.1311413	-1.48	0.140
bigsub	1.325684	.8000706	1.66	0.098
AY1415	-.1607423	.1573747	-1.02	0.307
AY1516	-.2428347	.152503	-1.59	0.111
AY1617	-.1421897	.1440396	-0.99	0.324
_cons	5.904903	3.992368	1.48	0.139

The coefficient on the racial composition of the female student enrollment has the expected sign but is not statistically significant. The result of 0.0039 for the PCT_FAAEnroll indicates a 10-percentage point increase, controlling for all other variables, increases by less than

1 percentage point the relative risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American females.

The size of the district does not contribute to the relative risk of DAEP placements for students that are African American females. The larger the enrollment in the district, holding all other variables constant, the lesser the relative risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American females. The result of -0.3181 indicates a 10-percentage point increase, controlling for all other variables, decreases by 3.181 percentage points the relative risk of DAEP placements for students who are African American females.

The coefficient for the percentage of students who are identified as special education is not statistically significant and has an unexpected sign in that the larger the percentage of special education the lower the relative risk of DAEP placement for students who are African American females.

The result of 1.3257 for the largest suburban cities (bigsub) indicates a 10-percentage point increase, increases by 13.257 percentage points the relative risk of DAEP placement for African American females. The estimated coefficient is significant at the 0.10 alpha level. African American girls are at a higher risk of DAEP assignment in large suburban districts than other districts.

Finally, AY1415 through AY1617 are dummy variables for the academic years with the comparison year being AY1314. This measures the difference in the dependent variable between AY1314 and the year indicated by the independent variable. Since the school years AY1415 through AY1617 are not significant, there is no particular school year whose relative risk is greater than AY1314; no trend was found in the relative risk of African American girls being assigned to DAEP.

The overall R^2 indicates the model explains over 0.10 of the variation of the dependent variable. The Wald statistic allows one to reject the null hypothesis that this model is no better than assuming all coefficients are zero.

Table 12 also shows some additional information. The minimum number of observations for group is 1 and the maximum observations is 4. The average number of observations is 3.0 meaning that most of the districts in this data set have 4 years of data; however, there is a district/districts with only 1 year of data. The chi-square test provides information that determines if the current model provides more information than no model at all.

The data from 90 school districts were analyzed and three models were used to test three hypotheses. The results were summarized in Chapter 5. The primary focus of the analyses in this chapter is the impact on African American female DAEP placements. Chapter 6 will provide more discussion, implications for policy, limitations, and future research.

CHAPTER 6

MAJOR FINDINGS

This chapter focuses on the major findings of this study into the relationship between African American girls DAEP placements and school district type. Representative bureaucracy theory is the lens used to analyze this relationship. The results of this research allow for discussion of the implications for policy, discussion of the limitations of the research, and suggestions for future research followed by a brief summary of the research.

Interpretation and Conclusion

This researcher hypothesized that urban school districts discipline African American female students differently than suburban districts. It tested the relationship between the type of school district and exclusionary discipline DAEP placements for African American female students. The theoretical underpinnings were provided by representative bureaucracy theory. Passive representation maintains a bureaucracy that mirrors the demographic composition of its clients will yield favorable outcomes through shared descriptive characteristics. For example, if the racial composition of the school's student population is 40% White, 25% Hispanic, 20% Asian, and 15% African American, then the racial/ethnic composition of the bureaucrats should mirror those same percentages. According to Meier and Nicholson-Crotty, "The presence of minority bureaucrats may lead minority clients to demand more or better services because they identify with and feel more comfortable with those providing the services (as cited in Grissom et al., 2015, p. 187). The presence of bureaucrats and clients from similar demographic backgrounds creates a foundational understanding of the challenges clients face in educational settings. This shared understanding could lessen the occurrence of punitive disciplinary measures

and possibly lead to more restorative measures. Restorative disciplinary measures lessen the clients experience with exclusionary discipline practices.

Active representation maintains that a bureaucracy that has shared interests between bureaucrats and clients will yield favorable outcomes through shared characteristics. For example, if active representation takes place in the school setting, the idea is that students benefit significantly from having teachers, counselors, administrators who share their same interests. In an effort for all students to benefit in public schools, they should see that members of that organization reflect the student population's diversity of interests (Grissom et al., 2015). This type of representation addresses and ensures diverse interests and ideas in the day-to-day decisions of the school. In the context of this research, the composition of the faculty in urban districts is expected to be more representative of the student body than in suburban districts. Urban school districts have more sociodemographic diversity in their teaching personnel than do suburban school districts and therefore may be better able to meet the needs of and satisfy the interests of diverse student populations. Teacher populations in suburban districts are considerably less representative than teacher populations in urban districts. The lack of socio-demographic diversity in suburban schools could possibly lead to responses towards Black and Hispanic female students that is based on White middle class norms rather than culturally responsive norms. Different responses to African American female students could be related to different attitudes towards those student groups. Student groups in urban schools are majority minority and suburban schools do not have a clear majority even though the highest percentage of their students are White.

It is hypothesized that the more faculty racial/ethnic composition aligns with the students' composition the more the student racial/ethnic composition of disciplined students will align

with the composition of the student body in general. The research outcomes are measured by district type, percentage of White teachers, percentage of African American females enrolled, total enrollment, and percentage of special education students. Grounded in relevant representative bureaucracy research, the study provided a measure of control for big suburban school districts and academic year. Control variables in each model will be discussed based on their impact on the outcome variables.

Restate the Hypothesis

The researcher posited suburban districts disciplined African American girls differently than urban districts. A number of dimensions were considered, all were based on the assignment of students to DAEP. The percentage of DAEP students in major urban districts who are African American females was 1.18 percentage points greater than in major suburban districts. This does not support the hypothesis that African American females in major suburban districts have a greater chance of being disciplined in this manner than African American females in major urban districts. The estimated coefficient is significant.

The researcher also questioned why African American female students were more likely to be disciplined, as measured by exclusionary discipline placements as it relates to DAEP placements. It is possible that there is a fundamental difference in the behavioral expectations for African American female students versus their White counterparts.

Lastly, the researcher questioned if the socio-demographic composition of the staff members at the district level impact the likelihood of African American girls experiencing alternative school programs. The racial composition of the teachers in a school district does not contribute to the percentage of DAEP students who are African American girls and was not found to be significant.

Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1 and Hypothesis 1

The study results answered Research Question 1: Do suburban school districts have a higher incidence than urban schools of placing African American females in alternative school programs? Hypothesis 1established the groundwork to determine if a relationship exists between suburban and urban school districts and African American female DAEP placements. The positive coefficient on the variable is statistically significant, indicating DAEP placements for African American females is higher in urban districts than suburban districts. Thereby, possibly laying the foundation that attitudes towards African American females in urban districts could contribute to the significance of their DAEP placements versus attitudes towards African American females in suburban school districts. While this finding does not support my hypothesis, urban districts have a greater population of African American females and therefore would have a higher percentage of African American female DAEP placements.

Research Question 2 and Hypothesis 2

The research did not answer Question 2: Why are African American female students more likely to face exclusionary discipline as it relates to DAEP placements? Hypothesis 2 formed the groundwork to determine if there is a distinction between African American female DAEP placements and non-Black female DAEP placements. Model 2 from Chapter 5 analyzed the risk of DAEP placement for African American female students. The risk is found by dividing the number of African American females assigned to DAEP by the total number of African American females in the district. When looking at the variable for district type, there is no statistically significant relationship between African American female DAEP placements in suburban and urban school districts. The risk of DAEP placement is essentially the same for

African American female students in urban and suburban districts. Of all the variables used in Model 2, only one was statistically significant. The other variables were not statistically significant in relation to risk of DAEP placement for African American females. Thereby, leading the researcher to believe the factors/variables that impact the risk of DAEP placement for African American females, are variables that cannot truly be measured, for example, expectations, attitudes.

Research Question 3 and Hypothesis 3

The study results did not answer Research Question 3: Does the socio-demographic composition of the staff members at the district level impact the likelihood of African American females experiencing alternative school programs? This hypothesis proposed a relationship between the socio-demographic composition of staff members and African American female DAEP placements. The coefficient had an unexpected positive sign and was not statistically significant which supported the reverse of my hypothesis and does not support the theory of representative bureaucracy. The analysis revealed districts with majority White teachers had a lower incidence of sending African American females for DAEP placements. None of the models used for this research were statistically significant for percentage of White teachers and DAEP placements for African American females.

Implications for Policy

The primary purpose of this research was to provide a better understanding of the processes and outcomes between school district types as it relates to African American females and exclusionary discipline placements, for example, DAEP placements. Policy evaluation necessitates public policies perform in a manner consistent with objectives and consequences. The ratio comparison of the number of Black girls experiencing DAEP placements in

comparison to their enrollment numbers far exceeded any other ethnic group represented in this study.

Unique to this research was the focus on Black girls and their experience with exclusionary discipline placements (DAEP) and the type of school district in which they are enrolled. The explicit focus was on the relationship between school district type and teacher ethnicity. The expectation leading into the research was the connection between DAEP placements for Black girls and school district location and teacher ethnicity would result in more occurrences in suburban school districts.

The findings from the study tell an impactful story on the relationship between DAEP placements for Black females and school district type. Although not statistically significant, the findings on the relationship between teacher ethnicity and African American female DAEP placements are no less important. From a policy perspective, suburban school districts should focus on hiring a workforce of educators that is representative of the population of students it serves. My results compliment the policy recommendations proposed by Texas Appleseed (Fowler, 2019), a justice center that focuses its efforts on public interest of Texans, (1) focus on prevention programs instead of relying on exclusionary discipline consequences, (2) expand Chapter 37 "mitigating factors" to include homeless/foster children, (3) expand student access to more community resources, for example, social workers, psychologists, restorative practice facilitators. Chapter 37 of the Texas Education Code (1995b) addresses, discipline, law and order, and alternative settings for behavior management.

Urban districts do not seem to operate in a manner consistent with representative bureaucracy even though urban schools have greater diversity in the socio-demographic make-up of teachers, however, they also send more African American female students to DAEP

placements. The data consistently shows that suburban school districts have favorable outcomes for African American female students as it relates to DAEP placements. From a policy perspective urban schools (1) should focus on a restorative approach to discipline rather than a punitive approach, (2) implement culturally responsive programs for teachers that will help keep students in the regular classroom setting, and (3) focus on providing options in disciplinary infractions that are not exclusionary in nature (DAEP). Increasing problem-solving approaches to discipline, such as implementing restorative practices, has resulted in reductions of exclusionary discipline (Anyon et al., 2014; International Institute for Restorative Practices, 2014). Based on the results from the random effects analysis, finding programs that address discipline in a culturally responsive manner would be beneficial to both types of districts since African American female students are disproportionately sent to DAEP placements.

Discussion

A second variable captures the percentage of White teachers. Intuitively, the relationship between percentage of White teachers and African American girls DAEP placements should be highlighted by a positive statistical association. As the percentage of White teachers increases, the number of DAEP placements for African American girls decreases slightly. Although it does not reach statistical significance, districts with teacher populations that is less representative of their student population overall send less African American females for DAEP placements. In this study, the researcher found that as African American female enrollment increases, there is an increased likelihood of African American females and their experience with DAEP placements. The conclusion drawn from this research outcome is since African American females disproportionately experience DAEP placements in both districts, an increase in African

American female populations would produce an increase in DAEP placements for this population of students.

These findings are perplexing for several reasons. First, the theory of representative bureaucracy posits districts with more representative teacher populations are likely to send fewer African American female students for DAEP placements. The results produced findings that did not align with that assumption of representative bureaucracy. In Model 1 when looking at teacher representation, the researcher controlled for district type.

In Models 1 and 2, district location is associated with African American females DAEP placements; with urban district sending more African American females for DAEP placements than suburban districts. This may imply that district location has a stronger influence on DAEP placements for African American female students. When district type was analyzed in Model 1, the researcher controlled for teacher representation.

Contributions and Limitations

This researcher sought to answer the question of whether a difference existed between suburban and urban school districts as it relates to African American female DAEP placements. The research conducted is unique for several reasons. To date no other research compares DAEP placement for Black females in the context of representative bureaucracy in relation to teacher ethnicity. Additionally, no study exists comparing suburban and urban school districts in the state of Texas.

One of the major contributions of this dissertation is to add to the body of literature regarding exclusionary discipline placements as it relates to African American female DAEP placements. Literature about exclusionary discipline placements for African American boys, Hispanic/Latino boys, and students served through special education is plentiful. The

exclusionary discipline experience of African American females and the reasons behind their exclusionary discipline placements is scarce. Also important in this research is highlighting the disparities that exist for African American females in urban and suburban districts. The analysis did show African American females in urban districts are more likely to experience DAEP placements than African American females in suburban districts, however, both districts reveal that DAEP placements for African American females are disproportionate when compared to their Hispanic and White counterparts. The research also revealed findings counter to the researcher's assumptions regarding representative bureaucracy and DAEP placements. African American females in suburban districts, which have majority White teachers, are less likely to experience DAEP placements. Also, another contribution of this dissertation is looking at the numbers of African American females that experience DAEP placement in comparison to their Hispanic and White counterparts.

While the findings produced by this research are impactful, they are not without some limitations. The overall quality of the findings could be improved with the inclusion of additional variables such as grade level data within districts, adding additional district types, or regional comparisons to the research. The biggest limitation of this research is the study was conducted at the district level instead of the school level. Additionally, the absence of an indicator of the subjectivity involved in disciplinary consequences, who administers the consequences, and how consequences are administered across all student groups is another limitation. Furthermore, there is no way to control for consistency in entering data across campuses. District level data is dependent on consistent data entry at the campus levels. Every adult charged with interpreting the student code of conduct brings their own lens of understanding to the table which has the

potential to create a wide variety of options for each student's experience with exclusionary discipline.

Taken from this research is the ability to provide policy makers with an understanding of how to implement structures in district that prevent overrepresentation from occurring. The unobserved heterogeneity that explains the occurrence of African American female experience with DAEP placements that cannot be measured are institutional racism, implicit bias, and the intentionality to figure out what is going on and how to combat those incidents. McFadden et al., (1992) and Shaw and Braden (1990) stated that oftentimes African American students are punished harsher than their White counterparts for the same disciplinary infractions. When looking with intention at the behavioral infractions, teachers and administrators must look with introspection as to why the same infractions are more offensive coming from African American students than it is coming from White students. Additionally, the role of family dynamics cannot be measured without more of a qualitative analysis of the home/family dynamics. Also, while there was no significant relationship between the sociodemographic make-up of faculty and African American female DAEP placements, from earlier descriptive data, urban schools are more diverse in their socio-demographic make-up of faculty and also send less African American female students for DAEP placements.

Suggestions for Future Research

Following from the previous discussion on limitations, future research on the relationship between DAEP placements for Black girls and school district location would benefit greatly from a more concentrated area of Texas, for instance North Texas school districts (focusing on school districts in the DFW area). Additionally, the current research was conducted on DAEP placements for Black girls in major suburban and major urban school districts in Texas. To

strengthen the ability to generalize the results to the larger population frame, future research should increase the scope and sample.

An unexpected finding was the relationship between teacher ethnicity and African American female DAEP placements. A significant relationship did not exist between teacher ethnicity and African American female DAEP placements. Also, this research did not explore the specific code of conduct violations that resulted in African American females experiencing DAEP placements.

Summary/Final Thoughts/Conclusion

Public schools lay the foundation for a solid education that hopefully prepares students for life after high school, whether it be college, military, or a vocational career. In the ideal school environment, all students would have equal access to an education that prepares them for a bright future and be treated equitably in response to disciplinary measures. A well-designed discipline management plan means nothing if particular populations of students are overrepresented.

Taken from this research is the ability to provide policy makers with an understanding of how to implement structures in districts that prevent overrepresentation from occurring. The unobserved heterogeneity that explains the occurrence of African American female experience with DAEP placements that cannot be measured are institutional racism, implicit bias, and the intentionality to figure out what is going on and how to combat those incidents. McFadden et al. (1992) and Shaw and Braden (1990) stated oftentimes African American students are punished harsher than their White counterparts for the same disciplinary infractions. When looking with intention at the behavioral infractions, teachers and administrators must look with introspection as to why the same infractions are more offensive coming from African American students than

it is coming from White students. “When active representation occurs, bureaucrats (teachers/administrators) press for the interests and desires of the clients (students), or those whom they represent” (Mosher, 1982, p. 14). When African American girls are punished harsher for the same infractions as their non-Black counterparts, active representation is not taking place. Additionally, the role of family dynamics cannot be measured without more of a qualitative analysis of the home/family dynamics. The research analysis did determine a significant relationship between district type and African American girls DAEP placement, however, the findings were urban districts have a higher incidence of sending African American girls to DAEP placement. Perhaps this is due to there being a greater population of African American girls in urban districts than suburban districts. The risk of African American girl DAEP placement was not significant in relation to district type which led the researcher to believe the factors that impact the risk of DAEP placement for Black girls are variables that cannot truly be measured i.e., expectations and attitudes towards Black girls. Also, while there was no significant relationship between the socio-demographic make-up of faculty and African American female DAEP placements, from earlier descriptive data, urban schools are more diverse in their socio-demographic make-up of faculty and also send less African American female students for DAEP placements. Based on the data analysis of this study, the connection between the socio-demographic make-up of faculty and less African American girls assigned to DAEP falls in line with passive representation of representative bureaucracy. When passive representation occurs, the clients (students) and bureaucrats (teachers) share the same descriptive characteristics. While none of the models used were statistically significant for percentage of White teacher and DAEP placements for Black girls, Meier and Nicholson-Crotty (2006) describe in earlier literature the

positive impact of an increase in minority teachers and the improvements that occur for both minority and White students.

The startling reality is school-wide discipline numbers mirror juvenile justice and prison overrepresentation, which connects to the school-to-prison pipeline theory (Fenning & Rose, 2007). The goal is to determine a way to decrease the number of African American females served through alternative educational placement programs. The problem of overrepresentation of students of color has been researched since the late 1970s. The discipline policy is established for all students; however, the manner in which it is implemented and by who implements it should be the focus if there is going to be progress made in reducing the overrepresentation of students of color and their contact with exclusionary discipline placements.

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BIOGRAPHICAL INFORMATION

Tonelli L. Hatley currently works as an administrator in a suburban district in North Texas. She has previously been an effective elementary and middle school teacher, academic specialist, and administrative intern. She is a passionate educator that is committed to the success of all students despite their backgrounds and previous educational challenges. She is currently working on her PhD from the College of Architecture, Planning, and Public Affairs (CAPPA) in Public Administration and Public Policy at the University of Texas, Arlington. Her research includes school discipline, exclusionary discipline, staff representation, and district location. Her dissertation is focused on understanding how district location and representative bureaucracy can impact exclusionary discipline placements for African American girls.

Originally from Arkadelphia, Arkansas she previously earned a Bachelor of Science in Education degree in Elementary Education from Henderson State University in Arkadelphia, Arkansas. Additionally, she earned two Master of Education degrees from the University of North Texas, Denton, Texas, the first in Secondary Education with a Mathematics emphasis and the second in Educational Administration. During her time at UTA she became a member of the Pi Alpha Alpha national honor society. Tonelli has a true desire of improving the lives of others through the field of education, which is exhibited through her work as a teacher and administrator. Upon graduation, Tonelli plans to continue her work in the field of education and pursue opportunities in higher education or at a state education agency.

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