

INEQUITIES IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS ASSIGNED TO AN EXCLUSIONARY
DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCE AS A FUNCTION OF ETHNICITY/RACE AND
ECONOMIC STATUS OF TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS: A MULTIYEAR,
STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my mom, Christine White. My lasting memory of her is when she came to see my induction into Cohort 36 of the doctorate program with my dad, Buzz White, and my fiancée, Jade Browning, whom my mom had just met and who I had only been dating a short while. I am forever grateful that we somehow managed to share that moment in The Woodlands Center together: Never in any of my prior relationships did I introduce my mom to someone with whom I just began a relationship—*except* for Jade. That night with my parents and girlfriend was the happiest I had been since I could last remember: For the first time, someone made me feel what it is like to be *happily* in love. Throughout the nine long, arduous semesters, Jade stuck by my side and tolerated every doctoral displeasure imaginable. Considering how much has changed for the both of us since induction night, it seems surreal to know that I will marry her in just a few months. I can hardly wait until she hits the bottom of those winding Kendall Plantation stairs, is cast against the light drawn over the bluebonnets that flood the hills of Boerne, because at that point, finally getting to see Jade in her wedding dress, my life with her can finally begin. I know my mom can hardly wait as well.

ABSTRACT

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Purpose

The purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to ascertain the extent to which differences were present in the number of days students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence as a function of their ethnicity/race and economic status. In the first investigation, the degree to which the number of days differed by consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on the ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) of boys was examined. In the second investigation, the degree to which the number of days differed for girls based on their ethnicity/race was addressed. In the third investigation, the degree to which differences existed in the number of days students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on their economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) was examined. As such, the relationship between the number of days students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence and their demographic characteristics was analyzed. By conducting these analyses, inequities in disciplinary days for students based on their ethnicity/race and economic status were determined.

Method

In this analysis, a causal-comparative research design was used. Archival data were obtained from the Texas Education Agency through a Public Information Request for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years.

Findings

Across all four school years, statistically significant differences were revealed in the number of days Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were assigned to an in-school suspension or to an out-of-school suspension as a function of their ethnicity/race and economic status. Black boys were assigned statistically significant more days to the two consequences than White and Hispanic boys in all three grade levels. Hispanic boys were also assigned to statistically significantly more days to the two disciplinary consequences than were White boys in all three grade levels. Similar results were present for girls. With respect to economic status, students in all three grade levels who were Poor were assigned statistically significant more days to the two consequences than their peers who were Not Poor. Results were congruent with the extant literature regarding the presence of statistically significant relationships between student demographic characteristics and exclusionary discipline assignments.

KEY WORDS: In-school suspension, Out-of-school suspension, Days, Ethnicity/Race, Black, Hispanic, White, Economic Status, Poor, Not Poor, Boys, Girls, Grades 6, 7, and 8, Texas

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hired by an educator who understands the demands of being a ‘working student.’ Thank you again for taking a chance on me back in the 2015-2016 school year.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

School discipline management systems are designed to create a safe and secure learning environment in which all students feel valued and included. As such, disciplinary action is taken against students whose behavior jeopardizes school safety and disrupts the learning environment. The processes and procedures for administering discipline for student misbehavior in Texas are outlined in the Texas Education Code (Texas Education Agency, 2010). In Texas, four major types of discipline consequences are present, with each consequence increasing in the level of severity of exclusionary punishment for the student. In-school suspension is first used by administrators and is assigned to a student whose violation of school rules is egregious enough that the student has to be removed from their routine learning environment. Out-of-school suspension is next used by administrators and is assigned to a student who chronically violates school rules and whose actions lead to consistent administrator removal of that student from their routine learning environment. For students whose violations of school rules are egregious enough that they also violate the law, assignment to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement or to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement may be required.

Regardless of the misbehavior, assignment to any of the four exclusionary discipline consequences results in the loss of instructional time in the regular classroom setting for students. Moreover, assignment to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for more than one day exacerbates the loss of instructional time. Given the discretionary framework that contains the Texas Education Code, school administrators

may operate under different interpretations of policy, enforce certain policies more than others, or arbitrarily assign students to a wide range of days for an exclusionary discipline consequence. A lack of equitable systems and discipline matrices for regulating and monitoring the number of days per assigned consequence intensifies the effects that missing classroom instruction has on overrepresented student groups (e.g., Black) and perpetuates achievement gaps between historically underserved student special populations (e.g., students who are economically disadvantaged). Because Black, Hispanic, and students who are Poor are more likely to be assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence than are their White and Not Poor counterparts (Khan & Slate, 2016), it would be incumbent upon school administrators to be cognizant of trends arising between the amount of time issued per consequence and student group. Further, school administrators should use disaggregated disciplinary data to track both the number of exclusionary discipline assignments and the number of days assigned to that consequence for each student group as well as monitor the academic, social, and behavioral effects within and between each student group. Accordingly, the presence of discriminatory discipline practices must be addressed.

Review of the Literature on Discipline Consequence Inequities by Ethnicity/Race for Boys

Serious causes for concern are present regarding the use of discipline policies and practices within the United States public school system (United States Department of Education, 2014, 2016). In an analysis of nationwide school discipline data collected by the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (2014), disproportionately high rates of exclusionary discipline consequences are present for

students of color, particularly boys. In the nationwide investigation, boys constituted 51% of public education enrollment in the United States, they received 67% of the in-school suspension assignments, 68% of the single out-of-school suspensions, 72% of the multiple out-of-school suspensions, and 74% of the expulsions that were assigned. Moreover, Black students were assigned to out-of-school suspensions or expelled at a rate three times greater than for White students. On average, Black boys are 20% more likely to be suspended than any of their peers. As noted by the Office for Civil Rights (2014), the continued widespread overuse of exclusionary discipline consequences has led to the intensification of ethnic/racial and gender disparities in the assignment of these consequences.

For the 2011-2012 school year, the Office for Civil Rights (2014, p. 1) reported that out of 49 million students who were enrolled in public schools in the United States, 3.5 million students received an in-school suspension, 3.45 million students received an out-of-school suspension, and 130,000 students were expelled from school. These statistics lend credence to the School-to-Prison pipeline, a well-documented phenomenon defined by American Civil Liberties Union (2016, p. 1) as the policies and practices that push students of color and students who are economically disadvantaged out of classrooms and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Of the total incarcerated population in the United States, 61% are Hispanic or Black (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 2015), even though these two ethnic/racial groups constitute only 29% of the population of the United States. Noted by the United States Department of Education (2016), state and local spending on prisons and jails between 1987 and 2007 increased at triple the rate of funding for PK-12 public education. This

established inverse relationship between the expenditure of money on corrections and public education gives pause and indicates a consistent and pervasive trend of inequity.

Concerning public schools in Texas, two major exclusionary discipline practices are assigned to students: (a) in-school suspension and (b) out-of-school suspension. The guidelines and procedures for managing these two disciplinary actions are contained within Chapter 37 of Texas Education Code and were last updated in November 2017. Through these guidelines and procedures, school district leaders are provided with a set of policies and practices for creating a safe and secure learning environment for all students. Because Texas school districts are required by law to adhere to the same disciplinary code, the sustained presence of ethnic/racial disproportionalities in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences is a serious cause for concern.

With respect to current empirical evidence regarding inequities in exclusionary disciplinary consequence assignment by student ethnicity/race in the state of Texas, numerous researchers (e.g., Henkel, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2016; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; Jones, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2014) have documented the clear presence of inequities. Hilberth and Slate (2014) analyzed data from the 2008-2009 school year to determine the degree to which racial/ethnic disproportionalities were present in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences for Texas middle school students. Texas statewide data on 172,551 Grade 6 Black and White students, 175,671 Grade 7 Black and White students, and 175,730 Grade 8 Black and White students were analyzed. With respect to in-school-suspension, Grade 6 Black students were assigned to 32% of in-school-suspensions although they constituted only 14.1% of Grade 6 students. In contrast, Grade 6 White students were assigned to 14.1% of in-school suspensions

whereas they constituted 34.7% of Grade 6 students. Hilberth and Slate (2014) established the presence of similar results for Grade 7 students: Black students were assigned to 35.6% of in-school-suspensions and White students were assigned to 16.2% of in-school suspensions, even though Black and White students constituted 14.2% and 35.2% of the Grade 7 student enrollment, respectively. Results for Grade 8 Black and White student assignment to in-school suspensions were congruent with Grade 6 and Grade 7 results.

With respect to out-of-school suspension, Hilberth and Slate (2014) documented results comparable to the results revealed for in-school suspension. The most disparate findings were with Grade 8 Black and White students. Grade 8 Black students received 23.2% of out-of-school suspensions despite representing only 14.4% of the overall Grade 8 population. Grade 8 White students received only 5.4% of out-of-school suspensions despite totaling 35.3% of the Grade 8 student enrollment. This clear lack of equity was also present for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. When compared to Grade 6, 7, and 8 White students, Grade 6 Black students received an overall placement rate of 4.1% compared to a placement rate of only 1.1% for Grade 6 White students; Grade 7 Black students received an overall placement rate of 5.8% compared to a placement rate of only 1.8% for Grade 7 White students; and Grade 8 Black students received an overall placement rate of 7.0% compared to a placement rate of only 2.6% for Grade 8 White students. The overrepresentation of Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black students assigned to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements must be addressed to ensure equitable learning opportunities are being created and fostered for all students.

Despite the availability of literature regarding inequities in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences by student ethnicity/race and by gender, little is known about the relationship between the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence and student special populations. An exhaustive review of the literature revealed a two decades old journal article in which Skiba, Peterson, and Williams (1997) examined the number of office referrals and suspensions by the demographic characteristics of the students referred and by the relationship between the type of referrals and administrative actions for over 11,000 middle school students in a Midwestern city public school district. Although the relationship between type of referral and administrative action revealed no inconsistent findings, clear ethnic/racial differences were present. Not only were Black boys more likely to receive a referral and to be suspended as a result of that referral, but Black boys were more likely to receive additional referrals and to be suspended for a longer duration of time than their White peers.

The concern of the overrepresentation of Black boys in regard to exclusionary discipline consequences is exacerbated by their assignment to a higher number of days for that consequence. Examined by White and Slate (2018) in a recent journal article was the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences as a function of student economic status for Texas middle school students. White and Slate (2018) documented the presence of statistically significant differences in the actual number of days students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on student economic status. Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were economically disadvantaged spent an average of one more day in in-

school suspension than their same grade level peers who were not economically disadvantaged. Similar results were repeated for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were economically disadvantaged and who were assigned to out-of-school suspension. Of particular note for Texas students in the 2015-2016 school year, 71.4% of Black students and 75.8% of Hispanic students met the federal criteria for the free and/or reduced-price lunch program and, as such, were economically disadvantaged (Texas Education Agency, 2016a). With the majority of Black and Hispanic Texas students living in poverty, it is imperative for school administrators to address this clear lack of discipline equity by student ethnicity/race.

Review of the Literature on Discipline Consequence Inequities by Ethnicity/Race for Girls

The United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2014) data snapshot on school discipline reported that “boys receive more than two out of three suspensions” and that “Black girls are suspended at higher rates (12%) than girls of any other race or ethnicity” (para 3). The disproportionate suspensions of girls by ethnicity/race was corroborated in a recent report by the National Women’s Law Center (2017) in which Black girls, in every state, were 5.5 times more likely to be suspended than were White girls and Hispanic girls. Additionally, in their report, Black girls received more days assigned to both in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than boys and other ethnic/racial groups of students. With respect to inequalities in exclusionary discipline and girls of color, a paucity of research has been documented. The information that is available has only recently been published.

In partnership with the Columbia Law School Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies, the African American Policy Forum (2014) released a study in which a review of national data from Boston and New York confirmed the presence of discipline disproportionality for Black girls. According to their report, *Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Overpoliced, and Underprotected*, Black girls are most at risk of being assigned to a disciplinary action and are, on average, suspended six times more than White girls (Crenshaw, Ocen, & Nanda, 2015). During the 2011-2012 school year, Black girls in New York City and Boston schools were 10 and 11 times more likely to receive an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than White girls, respectively. During the 2014-2015 school year, Black girls in the Texas major urban cities of Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin schools were, on average, almost seven times more likely to receive an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than White girls (National Women's Law Center, 2017).

As disparities continue to be documented in reports for Black girls, Cavanaugh (2009) sought to determine the extent to which social factors, like family structure and parental involvement, could predict the likelihood of middle school Black girls being assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence. Of the known social factors, seven were determined to be statistically significant: observed violence at school, gang membership, school suspension, attitude toward violence, grade level, drug use, and active parental monitoring were predictors of a student more likely to be assigned to an exclusionary consequence. Cavanaugh (2009) indicated that the student group with the most predictors was Black girls. A complex and intricate relationship was revealed between disparities in exclusionary discipline assignment and ethnicity/race. In a similar

study, Harper (2015) documented such predictors to have damaging, lasting effects on Black males. With respect to the effects of these predictors and Black girls, Cavanaugh (2009) urged administrators to implement safeguards for decreasing the amount of violence students and, in particular, Black girls are exposed to on campus and to create parental involvement plans that are more engaging, collaborative, and relevant to the cultural bond between Black girls and their parents.

Additionally, Wun (2014) examined the implications of discipline disparities on the social and emotional development of a select group of Black girls at a secondary suburban school in California. After conducting 12 months of participant observations and interviewing 15 Black girls with exclusionary discipline records during the 2013-2014 school year, Wun (2014) determined that Black girls were most susceptible to formal and informal “racialized and gendered forms of discipline and punishment” (p. 2). With respect to formal discipline consequences, Black girls constituted 9% of the total student enrollment despite 26% of Black girls having an official exclusionary discipline consequence on their record. With respect to informal discipline consequences, Black girls were exposed to higher rates of cognitive biases and anti-Black racism from teachers and administrators. Wun (2014) contended that social and contextual implications have as much of an effect on exclusionary discipline assignment as does the behavioral infraction itself. As such, future researchers ought to focus on recognizing such biases as a problem to be corrected and not ignored.

To expand upon the school discipline literature for Black girls, Blake, Butler, Lewis, and Darensbourg (2010) analyzed the types of behavioral infractions being committed by Black girls and if their assignment to an exclusionary discipline

consequence was disproportionately different from White and Hispanic girls. Unique to this investigation was their examination of the relationship between exclusionary discipline participation and Black girls, independent and separate from Black boys. The specific types of misbehavior in which White, Hispanic, and Black girls differed were analyzed. Blake et al. (2010) documented that Black girls were overrepresented in all behavioral infractions and mirrored the same overrepresentation patterns that have been extensively documented for Black boys (e.g., Henkel, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2015; Hilberth & Slate, 2012, 2014). Concerning exclusionary discipline consequences and Hispanic girls, Black girls were twice as likely to receive an in-school suspension and were slightly overrepresented in out-of-school suspensions. Regarding exclusionary discipline consequences and White girls, Black girls were four times as likely to receive an in-school suspension and were twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension.

In a recently published article, Slate, Gray, and Jones (2016) examined the extent to which inequities were revealed in the assignment of an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement to Black, Hispanic, and White girls in Texas Grades 4 through 11. Of the grade levels examined, Black girls were assigned to a statistically significantly higher percentage of out-of-school suspensions than were White girls in all eight grades. Of the eight grades examined, Grade 6 and Grade 9 yielded the highest percentage of out-of-school suspensions for Texas Black girls. A clear lack of equity was determined to be present in exclusionary discipline assignments for Black girls, particularly in Grade 6 and Grade 9. These years are important because they are regarded as pivotal years of school transition for elementary and middle school students, respectively. Slate et al. (2016) recommended

that school administrators perform routine checks for fidelity with regard to campus discipline practices and Black girls and to implement more robust Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems to support Black girls during their Grade 6 transition to middle school and Grade 9 transition to high school.

Review of the Literature on Discipline Consequence Inequities by Student Economic Status

An emergence of researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; White & Slate, 2018) have established direct links between the inequitable assignment of punitive disciplinary consequences and ethnicity/race. In each of their investigations, Butler, Lewis, Moore, and Scott (2012), Hemphill et al. (2010), and Skiba et al. (2014) have revealed additional inequities for students who are economically disadvantaged and receive discipline consequences by their ethnicity/race. Because economic status is widely used to predict the educational outcomes of students, researchers investigating the current effects of poverty on student achievement have augmented the debate on the degree to which ethnicity/race is responsible for widening the discipline gap between White, Hispanic, and Black students who are economically disadvantaged. Due to removal from the classroom and subsequent loss of instructional time, Grade 10 Black students who were suspended at least one time ended up costing taxpayers more than \$35 billion in 2016 (Rumberger & Losen, 2016). As the rate of students who are economically disadvantaged increases steadily throughout Texas, Black students who are poor will be most vulnerable to experiencing inequitable educational outcomes. Clearly, the ramifications of exclusionary discipline assignment are far-reaching and warrant further investigation.

In Texas, 58.7% of students were identified as being economically disadvantaged in the 2017-2018 school year, an increase of 6% from the 2007-2008 school year (Texas Education Agency, 2018). Such an increase in the rate of students who are poor has shifted the student discipline paradigm and fostered urgency among school administrators to replace punitive disciplinary practices with restorative methods. As the state increases achievement standards for Hispanic and Black students, and for students in poverty, schools can no longer risk the instructional time lost for these students. Recently, select researchers (Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016) have documented the extent to which disparities are present in the assignment of an exclusionary discipline consequence for students who are poor. Only one report (White & Slate, 2017) in the extant literature has documented the degree to which the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence has on students who are poor. Overall, the body of literature covering discipline disparities by student economic status is lacking and needs expanding. Investigations that reveal disparities in educational attainment between similar students who are assigned to the same consequence but are removed from the classroom for less days may spur school officials to change how schools are instructionally designed, managed, and operated.

Of the documented inequities in exclusionary discipline consequences for non-White, non-poor students, Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement by student economic status was the singular focus of Eckford and Slate (2016). In their investigation, Texas statewide discipline data were analyzed for Grades 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black boys by their economic status. Eckford and Slate (2016) revealed inequities in the placement to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education for

White, Hispanic, and Black boys who were poor compared to their peers who were not poor. As such, researchers are encouraged to ascertain whether such discipline disparities by student economic status are present in girls, high school students, and for each exclusionary discipline consequence.

To determine the extent to which economic status influenced the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences within White, Hispanic, and Black student groups, Khan and Slate (2016) analyzed suspension and alternative school placement data for Grade 6 students in Texas. In their investigation, statistically significant differences were revealed in the assignment of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement within each ethnic/racial group by economic status. Students who were poor received a disparate number of exclusionary discipline consequences when compared to their same ethnic/racial peers who were not poor. The most important finding was for Grade 6 students because they received the highest number of assignments for each disciplinary consequence. To address these inequities, Khan and Slate (2016) proposed that school officials prioritize diversity when hiring faculty and staff members as well as develop disciplinary methods that aim to improve the depreciation of cultural capital evidenced in students who are poor.

In another investigation, Lopez and Slate (2016) examined the degree to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Texas Grade 7 and 8 White students on the basis of their economic status. In each grade level, Lopez and Slate (2016) documented the presence of statistically significant disparities in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for White students who were poor compared to White students who were not poor. Grade 7 White students

who were poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement at four times the rate of Grade 7 White students who were not poor. Grade 8 White students who were poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement at three times the rate of Grade 8 White students who were not poor.

Concerned with discipline disparities in regard to student level of poverty, Barnes, Slate, Martinez-Garcia, and Moore (2017) examined the degree to which assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence by economic status differed for students who were Extremely Poor (i.e., qualified for the federal free lunch program), students who were Moderately Poor (i.e., qualified for the federal reduce-price lunch), and students who were Not Poor (i.e., did not qualify for either federal lunch program). Texas statewide in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension data were analyzed for all Grade 6, 7, and 8 middle school students during the 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. A consistent stair-step effect in the assignment to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension as a function of student economic status was evident during all three school years, across all three grade levels, and for both exclusionary discipline consequences. Moreover, the level of student economic disadvantage was directly related to higher rates of assignment to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for all students, regardless of the school years or their grade level. As a result, students who were Extremely Poor received exclusionary discipline consequences at statistically significant higher rates than students who were Moderately Poor and students who were Not Poor. Students who were Moderately Poor received exclusionary discipline consequences at statistically significant higher rates than students who were Not Poor. Based on their results, Barnes et al. (2017) suggested that

researchers expand this investigation to include multiple student socioeconomic characteristics like at-risk status and grade levels like high school.

With respect to the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence as a degree of student poverty, the body of literature is limited to one recently published article by White and Slate (2017). In their investigation, the extent to which inequities were present in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence for Texas middle school students by their economic status was examined for the 2015-2016 school year. In addition to the punitive disciplinary assignment disparities reported by Barnes et al. (2017) for the same grade level students during the same school year, White and Slate (2017) revealed statistically significant differences in the number of days assigned to students who were economically disadvantaged. Concerning the average number of days assigned to an in-school suspension, middle school students who were poor spent a day more assigned to in-school suspension when compared to their peers who were not poor. Regarding the average number of days assigned to an out-of-school suspension, middle school students who were poor spent half a day more assigned to out-of-school suspension when compared to their peers who were not poor. Overall, students who were economically disadvantaged not only were assigned to exclusionary disciplinary consequences at an inequitable rate, but they spent more time removed from the classroom as well. To understand the complexity of each discipline disparity, White and Slate (2017) contended that future investigations should differentiate between ethnicity/race and gender in elementary and high school grade levels across multiple school years and in other states.

Statement of the Problem

The assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences in relation to student ethnicity/race and student economic status has been thoroughly documented by numerous researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; Hilberth & Slate, 2012, 2014; Lopez & Slate, 2016; Slate et al., 2016). Cavanaugh (2009) and Harper (2015) suggested that social, cultural, and racial biases are inextricably linked to the assignment of exclusionary discipline for students based on student demographic characteristics. In conjunction with such findings are concerns from researchers (Burney & Beilke, 2008; Ryan & Goodram, 2013) over the widening of the achievement gap for specific student groups and the loss of instructional time that results in being assigned to multiple exclusionary discipline consequences for these students. Moreover, inequities in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences for boys have been consistently documented for decades, even though researchers (e.g., Henkel et al., 2015; Hilberth & Slate, 2012, 2014) have just now started to document these phenomena in girls. Expanding the body of literature on discipline disparities in girls by their ethnicity/race is needed so that these inequities can be corrected and do not impede the educational progress made by girls in academic achievement and graduation rates when compared to boys (Reilly, Neumann, & Andrews, 2018).

Similar findings for girls have also been documented in more punitive exclusionary discipline consequences. Slate et al. (2016) revealed the presence of inequities in the assignment of in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension and when placed in a Discipline Alternative Education Program placement for Hispanic and Black girls in comparison to White girls. Investigations have been conducted on the

presence of disparate disciplinary assignments of Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements based on student economic status but are currently limited to boys (Eckford et al., 2018). Very few researchers (White & Slate, 2017, 2018) have documented the degree to which inequities in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on student demographics have on loss of instructional time and whether or not such time loss intensifies the achievement gap for select students. As public schools become more integrated and diverse, school administrators are pressed with developing discipline practices that are fair and equitable across all student groups.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to ascertain the extent to which differences were present in the number of days Texas middle school students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence by their ethnicity/race and economic status. In the first investigation, the degree to which the number of days differed by consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on the ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) of Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys was examined. In the second investigation, the degree to which the number of days differed for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls based on their ethnicity/race were addressed. In the third investigation, the degree to which differences existed in the number of days Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on their economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) was examined.

Significance of the Study

Inequities in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences have been extensively documented by many researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; White & Slate, 2018) with respect to ethnicity/race and economic status. The majority of these investigations have been conducted on boys. Few researchers (e.g., Henkel et al., 2015; Hilberth & Slate, 2012, 2014) have examined the extent to which exclusionary discipline disparities are present for girls. Even fewer researchers (White & Slate, 2017, 2018) have examined data on the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on student ethnicity/race and economic status. In this journal-ready dissertation, the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on the ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) of boys and girls and economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) of students will be addressed. As such, findings from this journal-ready dissertation may aid school officials seeking to establish equitable discipline practices for students.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are used in this journal-ready dissertation and are defined to assist the reader in understanding the context of the three articles that are written herein.

Black

The Texas Education Agency (2013) defined Black as “students having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa” (p. 2).

Disproportionality

Discretion is given to each state to define what constitutes significant disproportionality. Each state is obligated to collect and examine data to determine whether significant disproportionality exists based on race or ethnicity in their state or local education agencies with respect to the following: (a) special services identification for students with disabilities or partial impairments, (b) placement of student in particular educational settings and (c) the incidence, duration, and type of disciplinary actions including suspensions and expulsions (Texas Education Agency, 2016a).

Economically Disadvantaged

The Texas Education Agency (2013) defined economically disadvantaged as “students in Texas who are eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program”. Eligibility for the federal free and reduced-price program is determined by family income. Students from families with an income of 130% or less of the federal poverty line are eligible for free-lunch (Burney & Beilke, 2008). For the purpose of this study, students who were eligible for the free lunch program will be referred to as Poor and students who were not eligible for the reduced lunch program will be referred to as Not Poor.

Ethnicity

The Texas Education Agency (2014) defined ethnicity as students in Texas being classified of, or not of, Hispanic or Latin descent.

Hispanic

The term Hispanic is used to describe students who are of Hispanic origin (Texas Education Agency, 2014a). A person of Hispanic ethnicity is an individual of Cuban,

Mexican, Puerto Rican, South or Central American descent, other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race (Texas Education Agency, Appendix F, 2009, p. 9).

Inequity

The term inequity will be used in a manner similar to that of disparate impact. As noted in legal doctrine under the Fair Housing Act, disparate impact may be considered discriminatory if it has a disproportionate “adverse impact” against any group based on race, national origin, color, religion, sex, familial status, or disability when there is no legitimate, non-discriminatory business need for the policy (National Fairing Housing, 2015 p.1). Specifically in reference to this journal-ready dissertation, inequities will be determined to exist when a statistically significant difference is present among ethnic/racial groups in the number of days assigned to any of the two exclusionary discipline consequences (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension).

In-school Suspension

The Texas Education Agency (2010) described in-school suspension as the first method of disciplinary consequence for students. An in-school suspension is the removal of a student from the regular classroom as a disciplinary consequence by placing the student into a separate classroom. Assignment to an in-school suspension cannot exceed 10 consecutive days.

Not Poor

The term Not Poor will be used to describe students who are not eligible for the federal reduced-price or free lunch program.

Out-of-school Suspension

The Texas Education Agency (2010) described out-of-school suspension as the second method of disciplinary consequence, following in-school suspension. More punitive than an in-school suspension, an out-of-school suspension is the removal of a student from the regular classroom as a disciplinary consequence that prohibits the student from attending school for a full day. An out-of-school suspension assignment is not to exceed three consecutive days.

Poor

The term Poor will be used to describe students who are eligible to receive free school meals.

Public Education Information Management System

The Public Education Information Management System encompasses all data requested and received by Texas Education Agency about public education, including student demographic and academic performance, personnel, financial, and organizational information (Texas Education Agency, 2016b).

Race

The Texas Education Agency (2014) defined race as students in Texas being classified as American Indian, Alaska Native, Asian, Black or African American, Native Hawaiian/Other Pacific Islander, or White.

Texas Academic Performance Report

The Texas Academic Performance Reports have replaced Academic Excellence Indicator System Reports for the Texas Education Agency in the 2013-2014 school year and are described as follows:

The Texas Academic Performance Reports (TAPR) pull together a wide range of information on the performance of students in each school and district in Texas every year. Performance is shown disaggregated by student groups, including ethnicity and low-income status. The reports also provide extensive information on school and district staff, programs, and student demographics. (Texas Education Agency, 2014a, para. 1)

Texas Education Agency

The Texas Education Agency (2016a) is the state agency responsible for overseeing primary and secondary public education in state of Texas. The mission of the agency is to provide leadership, guidance and resources to help schools meet the educational needs of all students and prepare them for success in the global economy.

Texas Education Code

Established by the Texas Legislature, the Texas Education Code is a set of state statutes governing public education in Texas. Unless specifically excluded by the code, it is applicable to all educational institutions supported solely or in part by Texas tax funds (Texas Education Agency, 2016a).

White

The Texas Education Agency (2014) defined White as “students having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa” (p. 2).

Literature Review Search Procedures

For the purpose of this journal-ready dissertation, the literature regarding exclusionary discipline consequences (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) by the ethnicity/race and economic status of students was examined. The

following phrases were used in the search for relevant literature: middle school, student, exclusionary discipline, discipline consequences, economic status, economically disadvantaged, Poor, Not Poor, ethnicity/race, Black, Hispanic, and White, gender, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension. Searches were conducted through the following databases: EBSCO Host, Educational Resources Information Center (ERIC), *Journal of Educational Leadership* academic journals, and the American Psychological Association (Psych NET).

Delimitations

The three studies contained in this journal-ready dissertation were delimited to traditionally configured Grades 6, 7, and 8 Texas public middle schools. Data on students who were enrolled in a charter school or private school were not used in this journal-ready dissertation. Only data for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White students in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years were analyzed. Data were previously obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years. A Public Information Request form was submitted to the Texas Education Agency for the four latest school years of data. The exclusionary discipline consequences of interest in this journal-ready dissertation are in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension.

Limitations

In this journal-ready dissertation, the relationship of student ethnicity/race and economic status with in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension was addressed. As a result, key limitations are present. Data analyses were limited to only Grade 6, 7,

and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White students in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years who were enrolled in a traditionally configured public middle school. Data were not analyzed for students who were enrolled in a charter school or private school. Only quantitative data were analyzed in the three empirical studies in this journal-ready dissertation. Accordingly, the degree to which results are generalizable beyond the students whose data were analyzed herein is unknown. Because archival data were used, the research design constitutes a casual-comparative study in which cause-effect relationships cannot be established.

Assumptions

The major assumption made in this journal-ready dissertation was that the data provided to the Texas Education Agency through the Public Education Information Management System were accurately reported. More specifically, any errors that are present with respect to the reporting of student ethnicity/race, gender, and economic status and exclusionary discipline consequences could negatively affect results.

Procedures

Following approval of the journal-ready dissertation by the dissertation committee, an application was submitted to the Institutional Review Board at Sam Houston State University. Once approval was received from the Institutional Review Board at Sam Houston State University, archival data for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were analyzed.

Organization of the Study

In this journal-ready dissertation, three empirical manuscripts are generated. In the first journal-ready dissertation article, the degree to which inequities in the number of

days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White boys for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years was examined. In the second article, the degree to which inequities were present in the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White girls for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years was investigated. Lastly, in the third article, the degree to which inequities were present in the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension by the economic status of Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White students for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years was addressed.

Five chapters compose this journal-ready dissertation. Chapter I includes the background of the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, significance of the study, theoretical framework, definition of terms, assumptions, delimitations, and limitations of the three research investigations. In Chapter II, readers are provided with the framework for the first journal-ready dissertation investigation into the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for middle school boys by their ethnicity/race. In Chapter III, the second journal-ready dissertation investigation into the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for middle school girls by their ethnicity/race was discussed. In Chapter IV, the third journal-ready dissertation investigation into the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension by student economic status for Black, Hispanic, and White middle school students was presented. Finally, in Chapter V, the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension and their

influence on the academic outcomes of Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 students was discussed.

CHAPTER II

INEQUITIES IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS ASSIGNED TO AN EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCE AS A FUNCTION OF THE ETHNICITY/RACE OF TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS: A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE INVESTIGATION

This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

Abstract

Ascertained in this investigation was the extent to which inequities were present in the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White boys in Texas for the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years. Inferential statistical procedures yielded statistically significant differences in all four school years and at all three grade levels, with one exception. At every grade level and school year, Black boys were assigned to an in-school suspension statistically significantly more days than were Hispanic boys and White boys. Hispanic boys were assigned statistically significantly more days than White boys. Similar results were repeated for out-of-school suspension, with the exception of Grade 7 Black and Hispanic boys who were assigned a similar number of days to this consequence in the 2012-2013 school year.

Keywords: In-school suspension, Out-of-school suspension, Ethnicity/Race, Texas, Middle School, Black, Hispanic, White, Boys

INEQUITIES IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS ASSIGNED TO AN EXCLUSIONARY
DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCE AS A FUNCTION OF THE ETHNICITY/RACE OF
TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL BOYS: A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE
INVESTIGATION

Serious causes for concern are present regarding the use of discipline policies and practices within the United States public school system (United States Department of Education, 2014, 2016). In an analysis of nationwide school discipline data collected by the United States Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (2014), disproportionately high rates of exclusionary discipline consequences are present for students of color, particularly boys. In the nationwide investigation, boys constituted 51% of public education enrollment in the United States, they received 67% of the in-school suspension assignments, 68% of the single out-of-school suspensions, 72% of the multiple out-of-school suspensions, and 74% of the expulsions that were assigned. Moreover, Black students were assigned to out-of-school suspensions or expelled at a rate three times greater than for White students. On average, Black boys are 20% more likely to be suspended than any of their peers. As noted by Lunenburg (2012), the continued widespread overuse of exclusionary discipline consequences has led to the intensification of ethnic/racial and gender disparities in the assignment of these consequences.

For the 2011-2012 school year, the Office for Civil Rights (2014, p. 1) reported that out of 49 million students who were enrolled in public schools in the United States, 3.5 million students received an in-school suspension, 3.45 million students received an out-of-school suspension, and 130,000 students were expelled from school. These

statistics lend credence to the School-to-Prison pipeline, a well-documented phenomenon defined by American Civil Liberties Union (2016, p. 1) as the policies and practices that push students of color and students who are economically disadvantaged out of classrooms and into the juvenile and criminal justice systems. Of the total incarcerated population in the United States, 61% are Hispanic or Black (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, 2015), even though these two ethnic/racial groups constitute only 29% of the population of the United States. Noted by the United States Department of Education (2016), state and local spending on prisons and jails between 1987 and 2007 increased at triple the rate of funding for PK-12 public education. This established inverse relationship between the expenditure of money on corrections and public education gives pause and indicates a consistent and pervasive trend of inequity.

Concerning public schools in Texas, two major exclusionary discipline practices are assigned to students: (a) in-school suspension and (b) out-of-school suspension. The guidelines and procedures for managing these two disciplinary actions are contained within Chapter 37 of Texas Education Code and were last updated in November 2017. Through these guidelines and procedures, school district leaders are provided with a set of policies and practices for creating a safe and secure learning environment for all students. Because Texas school districts are required by law to adhere to the same disciplinary code, the sustained presence of ethnic/racial disproportionalities in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences is a serious cause for concern.

With respect to current empirical evidence regarding inequities in exclusionary disciplinary consequence assignment by student ethnicity/race in the state of Texas, numerous researchers (e.g., Henkel, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2016; Hilberth & Slate,

2014; Jones, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2014, Lunenburg, 2013) have documented the clear presence of inequities. Hilberth and Slate (2014) analyzed data from the 2008-2009 school year to determine the degree to which racial/ethnic disproportionalities were present in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences for Texas middle school students. Texas statewide data on 172,551 Grade 6 Black and White students, 175,671 Grade 7 Black and White students, and 175,730 Grade 8 Black and White students were analyzed. With respect to in-school-suspension, Grade 6 Black students were assigned to 32% of in-school-suspensions although they constituted only 14.1% of Grade 6 students. In contrast, Grade 6 White students were assigned to 14.1% of in-school suspensions whereas they constituted 34.7% of Grade 6 students. Hilberth and Slate (2014) established the presence of similar results for Grade 7 students: Black students were assigned to 35.6% of in-school-suspensions and White students were assigned to 16.2% of in-school suspensions, even though Black and White students constituted 14.2% and 35.2% of the Grade 7 student enrollment, respectively. Results for Grade 8 Black and White student assignment to in-school suspensions were congruent with Grade 6 and Grade 7 results.

With respect to out-of-school suspension, Hilberth and Slate (2014) documented results comparable to the results revealed for in-school suspension. The most disparate findings were with Grade 8 Black and White students. Grade 8 Black students received 23.2% of out-of-school suspensions despite representing only 14.4% of the overall Grade 8 population. Grade 8 White students received only 5.4% of out-of-school suspensions despite totaling 35.3% of the Grade 8 student enrollment. This clear lack of equity was also present for Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements. When compared

to Grade 6, 7, and 8 White students, Grade 6 Black students received an overall placement rate of 4.1% compared to a placement rate of only 1.1% for Grade 6 White students; Grade 7 Black students received an overall placement rate of 5.8% compared to a placement rate of only 1.8% for Grade 7 White students; and Grade 8 Black students received an overall placement rate of 7.0% compared to a placement rate of only 2.6% for Grade 8 White students. The overrepresentation of Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black students assigned to in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements must be addressed to ensure equitable learning opportunities are being created and fostered for all students.

Despite the availability of literature regarding inequities in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences by student ethnicity/race and by gender, little is known about the relationship between the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence and student special populations. An exhaustive review of the literature revealed a two decades old journal article in which Skiba, Peterson, and Williams (1997) examined the number of office referrals and suspensions by the demographic characteristics of the students referred and by the relationship between the type of referrals and administrative actions for over 11,000 middle school students in a Midwestern city public school district. Although the relationship between type of referral and administrative action revealed no inconsistent findings, clear ethnic/racial differences were present. Not only were Black boys more likely to receive a referral and to be suspended as a result of that referral, but Black boys were more likely to receive additional referrals and to be suspended for a longer duration of time than their White peers.

The concern of the overrepresentation of Black boys in regard to exclusionary discipline consequences is exacerbated by their assignment to a higher number of days for that consequence. Examined by White and Slate (2018) in a recent journal article was the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences as a function of student economic status for Texas middle school students. White and Slate (2018) documented the presence of statistically significant differences in the actual number of days students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on student economic status. Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were economically disadvantaged spent an average of one more day in in-school suspension than their same grade level peers who were not economically disadvantaged. Similar results were repeated for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were economically disadvantaged and who were assigned to out-of-school suspension. Of particular note for Texas students in the 2015-2016 school year, 71.4% of Black students and 75.8% of Hispanic students met the federal criteria for the free and/or reduced-price lunch program and, as such, were economically disadvantaged (Texas Education Agency, 2016a). With the majority of Black and Hispanic Texas students living in poverty, it is imperative for school administrators to address this clear lack of discipline equity by student ethnicity/race.

Statement of the Problem

The relationship between the assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence and the School Dropout to Jail Pipeline (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; White & Slate, 2018) for students based on their ethnicity/race has been well documented. However, only one published article

was located in which the number of days students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence was addressed (White & Slate, 2018). Moreover, no information was located in the extant literature regarding the relationship between student ethnicity/race and the number of days they were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence. Because Hispanic and Black students are assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence at statistically significantly higher rates than their White counterparts (Ryan & Goodram, 2013), examining the number of days assigned to such a consequence is needed to ascertain the degree to which inequities might also exist in the time they are assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence. Such information is essential for school administrators if they want to begin implementing and establishing equitable behavior management systems for students.

Significance of the Study

In this study, the degree to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on the ethnicity/race of boys was examined for four school years (i.e., 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016). In addition, the extent to which inequities existed in the number of days assigned to either exclusionary discipline consequence was addressed for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White boys. As Texas middle schools continue to experience increases in the diversification of their populations (Sullivan, Klingbeil, & Van Norman, 2013), school leaders are morally bound to provide all students, regardless of their ethnicity/race, every opportunity at an equitable learning environment. Accordingly, the focus of this investigation was on the

degree to which student ethnicity/race was related to the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which differences were present in the number of days Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White). A second purpose was to determine the degree to which trends existed in the relationship between the number of days boys were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence and their ethnicity/race. By conducting these analyses, the degree to which inequities were present in days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on the ethnicity/race of Texas middle school boys was determined.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this empirical investigation:

(a) For Grade 6 boys who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension), what is the effect of their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (b) For Grade 7 boys who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence, what is the effect of their ethnicity/race on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (c) For Grade 8 boys who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence, what is the effect of their ethnicity/race on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (d) For Grade 6 boys, what trend is present in the relationship between student ethnicity/race and number of days

they were assigned to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension?; (e) For Grade 7 boys, what trend is present in the relationship between student ethnicity/race and number of days they were assigned to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension?; and (f) For Grade 8 boys, what trend is present in the relationship between student ethnicity/race and number of days they were assigned to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension? The first three research questions were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years whereas the last three research questions involved comparisons of data across the four school years.

Method

Research Design

A causal comparative research design was used in this study. Examined in a causal comparative method is the “relationship between one or more categorical independent variables and one or more quantitative dependent variables” (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 44). Statewide archival data that were previously obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed. As such, the independent and dependent variables had already occurred and could not be manipulated. For these reasons, the research design used herein was a causal comparative research design (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The data included Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their ethnicity/race, assignment to an in-school suspension, assignment to an out-of-school suspension, and the number of days received for that assigned exclusionary discipline consequence. Thus, the independent variable of ethnicity/race for boys consisted of three groups: (a) Black, (b) Hispanic, and (c) White. For each school year (i.e., 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016), the dependent variables were

the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension and to an out-of-school suspension.

Participants

Participants in this study were Black, Hispanic, and White Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys in Texas who received an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. With respect to total in-school suspension assignments, the Grade 6 sample was 172,535 boys, of which 39,257 were Black, 90,466 were Hispanic, and 42,812 were White; Grade 7 sample was 185,975 boys, of which 41,559 were Black, 85,975 were Hispanic, and 58,411 were White; and Grade 8 sample was 185,714, of which 40,409 were Black, 98,412 were Hispanic, and 46,893 were White. With respect to total out-of-school suspension assignments, the Grade 6 sample was 79,975 for boys, of which 25,817 were Black, 44,742 were Hispanic, and 12,583 were White; Grade 7 sample was 85,167 boys, of which 26,982 were Black, 50,476 were Hispanic, and 14,199 were White; and Grade 8 sample was 97,692 boys, of which 33,740 were Black, 35,542 were Hispanic, and 16,323 were White.

Instrumentation and Procedures

The Texas Education Code §37.001 (2002) outlined the rules and procedures for enacting an exclusionary discipline consequence. In-school suspension is established under Texas Education Code §37.002 and is an action taken by an administrator that removes a student from their assigned classroom. Assignment to this consequence may not exceed 10 school days. Out-of-school suspension is established under Texas Education Code §37.005 and is an action taken by an administrator that temporarily

removes a student from their home campus. Assignment to this consequence may not exceed 3 school days.

Discipline data for each school year are submitted by school districts to the Public Education Information Management System. Data were requested from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System through a Public Information Request form for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Once obtained, the data were then imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software program. Then, the data were analyzed separately for Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys by their ethnicity/race status. Because school districts submit their discipline data directly to the Texas Education Agency via standardized computer files, minimal errors in the data are assumed to be present.

Results

In this study, the extent to which the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence related to the ethnicity/race of boys was examined. Data were analyzed for Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys who had been assigned to an in-school suspension and to an out-of-school suspension in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Separate statistical analyses were conducted for in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension at each grade level and by each school year. Prior to conducting inferential statistical procedures to answer the aforementioned research questions, checks for normality of data and for homogeneity of variance were conducted. Although the majority of the underlying assumptions of a parametric Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were not met, Field (2009) contends that these violations can be withstood due to the robustness of this procedure. Starting with Grade 6, results are listed

by ascending order of punishment severity (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) for Black, Hispanic, and White boys, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year and through the end of the 2015-2016 school year. Results are then repeated for Grade 7 and Grade 8 boys.

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 6 Boys

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year for the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension as a function of ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) for Grade 6 boys, the parametric ANOVA yielded a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 46832) = 114.89, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .005$. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). Scheffe' post hoc procedures revealed that comparisons between all three ethnic/racial groups were statistically significant different. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned an average of 1.17 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys and an average of 0.87 more days than Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.43 more days than were Grade 6 White boys. Presented in Table 2.1 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 2.1 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 42944) = 70.22, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .003$, in the number of days Grade 6 boys were assigned to an in-school suspension based on their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). Scheffe'

post hoc tests revealed that all three ethnic/racial groups of boys had a statistically significant different number of days assigned to this consequence. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned an average of almost one day more, 0.95, to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys and 0.52 more days than Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.45 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are delineated in Table 2.1.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(2, 41539) = 71.15, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .003$, in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 6 boys as a function of their ethnicity/race. A below small effect size was yielded for this finding (Cohen, 1998). Scheffe' post hoc tests revealed the presence of a statistically significant difference between all pairwise comparisons. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned an average of 0.91 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys and an average of 0.58 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.34 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys. Contained in Table 2.1 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis in the 2014-2015 school year.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 41208) = 58.58, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .003$, in the number of days spent in in-school suspension for Grade 6 boys based on their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). Scheffe' post hoc comparisons revealed that all pairwise comparisons were statistically significantly different. On average, Grade 6 Black boys were assigned 0.81 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6

White boys and an average of 0.51 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.46 more days to this consequence than were Grade 6 White Boys. The descriptive statistics for this analysis are revealed in Table 2.1

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 7 Boys

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year for the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension as a function of ethnicity/race for Grade 7 boys, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 49505) = 52.65, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .002$. This finding represented a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were revealed between all three ethnic/racial groups. As delineated in Table 2.2, Grade 7 Black boys were assigned an average of 0.83 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7 White boys and an average of 0.32 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.43 more days than were Grade 7 White boys.

 Insert Table 2.2 about here

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 47568) = 91.00, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .004$, in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 7 boys as a function of their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this difference was below small (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons were statistically significantly different. As revealed in Table 2.2, Grade 7 Black boys were assigned, on average, 1.1 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7

White boys and 0.64 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.45 more days than were Grade 7 White boys.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, the parametric ANOVA yielded a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 44972) = 62.00, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .003$. This finding was a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). A statistically significant difference was yielded between all pairwise comparisons. As delineated in Table 2.2, Grade 7 Black boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.93 more days than Grade 7 White boys and an average of 0.48 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.44 more days than were Grade 7 White boys.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 43921) = 67.97, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .003$, a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). A statistically significant difference was yielded between all pairwise comparisons. As presented in Table 2.2, Grade 7 Black boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.93 more day than Grade 7 White boys and an average of 0.50 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned, on average, 0.60 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7 White boys.

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 8 Boys

Concerning the 2012-2013 school year, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 48660) = 45.54, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). A statistically significant difference was revealed between all pairwise comparisons. Grade 8 Black boys were assigned an average of 0.73

more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 White boys and an average of 0.29 more days than were Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.50 more days to an in-school suspension than Grade 8 White boys.

Presented in Table 2.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Insert Table 2.3 about here

With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 46995) = 53.13, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were yielded for all pairwise combinations. Grade 8 Black boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.82 more days than were Grade 8 White boys and an average of 0.37 more days than were Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned, on average, 0.45 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 White boys. Contained in Table 2.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Regarding the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 45994) = 35.87, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons yielded statistically significant differences. Grade 8 Black boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.66 more days than were Grade 8 White boys and an average of 0.31 more days than were Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.35 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 White boys. Delineated in Table 2.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 44076) = 44.03, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons revealed statistically significant differences. Grade 8 Black boys were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.72 more days than were Grade 8 White boys and an average of 0.35 more days than were Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.37 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 White boys. Presented in Table 2.3 are the descriptive statistics for this school year.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 6 Boys

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(2, 21782) = 72.44, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .007$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned 1.10 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys and 0.30 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.89 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys. Delineated in Table 2.4 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 2.4 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 21190) = 85.98, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .008$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons.

Grade 6 Black boys were assigned 1.16 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys and 0.53 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.53 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys. Revealed in Table 2.4 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(2, 19859) = 115.00, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .011$, small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned 1.35 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys and 0.82 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.53 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys. Contained in Table 2.4 the descriptive statistics for this school year.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(2, 21190) = 85.98, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .008$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons were statistically significantly different. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned 0.99 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys and 0.53 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic boys. Grade 6 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.46 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White boys. Presented in Table 2.4 are the descriptive statistics for this school year.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 7 Boys

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 24172) = 62.16, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .005$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were revealed in two of the three ethnic/racial groups. Grade 7 Black boys were assigned, on average, 1.02 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned 0.89 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White boys. Grade 7 Black boys and Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned to an out-of-school suspension a similar number of days. Contained in Table 2.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 2.5 about here

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 24551) = 93.07, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .008$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons were statistically significantly different. Grade 7 Black boys were assigned an average of 1.42 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White boys and an average of 0.42 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned 1.00 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White boys. Presented in Table 2.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 24551) = 93.07, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .008$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons.

Grade 7 Black boys were assigned an average of 1.49 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White boys and an average of 0.70 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.79 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White boys. Delineated in Table 2.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 22572) = 64.88, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. Grade 7 Black boys were assigned an average of 1.13 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White boys and an average of 0.45 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned 0.68 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White boys. Revealed in Table 2.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 8 Boys

Regarding the 2012-2103 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 24995) = 72.81, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. As revealed in Table 2.6, Grade 8 Black boys were assigned an average of 1.08 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 White boys and an average of 0.28 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.80 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White boys.

Insert Table 2.6 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 24862) = 84.60, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .007$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. As delineated in Table 2.6, Grade 8 Black boys were assigned an average of 1.31 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 White boys and an average of 0.30 more days than Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 1.00 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White boys.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 24203) = 68.66, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. As revealed in Table 2.6, Grade 8 Black boys were assigned an average of 1.49 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 White boys and an average of 0.70 more days than Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.79 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White boys.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 23620) = 104.03, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .009$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. Grade 8 Black boys were assigned an average of 1.37 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 White boys and an average of 0.69 more days than Grade 8 Hispanic boys. Grade 8 Hispanic boys were assigned an average of 0.68 more days to an

out-of-school suspension than White boys. Contained in Table 2.6 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Discussion

In this investigation, the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension and an out-of-school suspension based on the ethnicity/race of Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys during the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years was addressed. Inferential statistical procedures were used to answer the aforementioned research questions. Results are summarized by grade level.

Across all four school years, the ethnicity/race of Grade 6 boys was statistically significantly related to a higher number of days they were assigned to an in-school suspension. In all analyses, Black boys were assigned the highest number of days in this consequence, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. These results are consistent with Hilberth and Slate (2014) and Jones et al. (2016) who established the presence of statistically significant relationships between the ethnicity/race of middle school boys and exclusionary discipline consequences. Contained in Table 2.7 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of the average number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences by the ethnicity/race of Grade 6 boys across the four school years.

Insert Table 2.7 about here

Across each school year, the ethnicity/race of Grade 7 boys was statistically significantly related to the number of days they were assigned to an in-school suspension.

In all analyses for all four school years, Grade 7 Black boys were assigned to the highest number of days, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. A clear stair-step effect was present with respect to student ethnicity/race. Black boys always had the highest average number of days assigned to an-school suspension; Hispanic boys always had the second highest average number of days assigned to an in-school suspension; and White boys always had the lowest average number of days assigned to this consequence. Delineated in Table 2.7 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

Across all four school years the ethnicity/race of Grade 8 boys was statistically significantly related to the number of days they were assigned to an in-school suspension. Regarding all analyses, Grade 8 Black boys were assigned to the highest number of days, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. Contained in Table 2.7 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

With respect to all four school years, the ethnicity/race of Grade 6 boys was statistically significantly related to the number of days they were assigned to an out-of-school suspension. Grade 6 Black boys were assigned to the highest number of days in this consequence, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. Revealed in Table 2.8 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

 Insert Table 2.8 about here

Concerning all four school years, the ethnicity/race of Grade 7 boys was statistically significantly related to the number of days assigned to an out-of-school

suspension. With respect to all analyses with one exception, Black boys were assigned to the highest number of days, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. The one exception was that Grade 7 Black boys and Grade 7 Hispanic boys were assigned a similar number of days in the 2012-2013 school year. Contained in Table 2.8 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

With respect to all four school years, the ethnicity/race Grade 8 of boys was statistically significantly related to the number of days they were assigned to an out-of-school suspension. Regarding all analyses, Black boys were assigned the highest number of days, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. Delineated in Table 2.8 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

Connections with Existing Literature

In this empirical investigation, results were commensurate with the findings from a multitude of researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016) who established the presence of statistically significant relationships between ethnicity/race and assignment to exclusionary discipline consequences. Furthermore, results were congruent with other researchers (e.g., White & Slate, 2018) in which statistically significant differences were revealed in the assignment to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension based on student ethnicity/race. In all four school years and at all three grade levels in this Texas investigation, Black boys received the highest number of days in an in-school suspension and an out-of-school suspension, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys.

Implications for Policy and for Practice

As evidenced in this study, several implications for policy and for practice can be asserted. First, school administrators are encouraged to evaluate their current campus student disciplinary management systems and structures to determine the degree to which student ethnicity/race is related to a higher number of days spent in an in-school and out-of-school suspension for boys. Such analyses could reveal the presence of disparities that could lead to implementing school discipline practices with a focus on behavioral correction instead of classroom exclusion. Creating fair and equitable policies helps restore trust between staff and students of various cultural backgrounds and remove barriers that prevent educators from meeting the needs of boys living through adversity.

Second, school officials must develop teacher capacity for identifying and addressing the presence of social and behavioral inequities in boys that lead to negative outcomes. Campus principals should target professional learning that provides teachers, and staff, with strategies for building better relationships with boys from diverse backgrounds, integrating social and emotional competencies into the core curriculum, and creating opportunities for family engagement in the school community. By fostering a learning environment in which students feel safe, valued, and included, teachers can recognize and respond to the cultural, emotional, and intellectual needs of boys from challenging upbringings. As educational leaders continue to prioritize the social and emotional readiness of students, a reduction in overall exclusionary discipline assignments by ethnicity/race for boys should be reflected in future discipline data.

In addition to a curriculum that educates the whole child, a third implication for practice would be to establish an advocacy period in which coping skills for managing

conflict are explicitly taught and assessed. Equipping boys with real life skills to monitor and regulate their behavior aims to increase their likelihood of resolving crises through restorative, instead of retributive, methods. When decisions are driven by logic, rather than emotion, boys are less likely to engage in fighting, verbal altercations, and other extreme forms of disrespect. As punitive disciplinary consequences are replaced with positive behavioral practices, outcomes for boys from disadvantaged backgrounds should improve.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this multiyear, statewide study, the relationship between student ethnicity/race and the number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences for boys in Grades 6, 7, and 8 was analyzed. Due to the nature and possible scope of the findings in this investigation, several recommendations for future research can be made. First, an investigation is merited to determine whether inequities in the number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences also exist for Texas middle school girls based on their ethnicity/race. Conducting such an analysis would reveal the extent to which results delineated herein on boys would be generalizable to girls. A second recommendation is for researchers to extend this study to Texas middle school boys based on their economic status. The degree to which findings of this study would be generalizable to other student special populations (e.g., boys who are English Language Learners, boys who are at-risk, and boys who receive special education services) has not been established. Given the higher number of days assigned to an in-school suspension and an out-of-school suspension for Texas middle school Black boys, a third recommendation is for researchers to extend this study into other grade levels. Determining if differences are

present at the elementary school level could provide useful information on the emergence of discipline disparities for these students. Finally, researchers are encouraged to extend this study to more punitive disciplinary assignments such as Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements. The extent to which inequities exist in the number of days assigned to more punitive discipline consequences for Texas middle school boys warrants further examination.

Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which inequities existed in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence for Texas middle school boys as a function of their ethnicity/race. Obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were statewide data on all Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White boys for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Inferential statistical procedures revealed the presence of statistically significant differences in the average number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension, with one exception. In all three grades across all four school years, Black boys were assigned to the highest number of days in an in-school suspension, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. A clear stair-step effect was present. With the exception of Grade 7 Black boys and Grade 7 Hispanic boys, similar results were repeated for out-of-school suspension. Overall, inequities in the number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences for Black boys were ascertained.

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Table 2.1

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 6 Boys as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	10,367	5.78	6.51
Hispanic	24,762	4.90	5.98
White	11,706	4.61	5.50
2013-2014			
Black	9,879	5.35	6.18
Hispanic	22,495	4.83	5.69
White	10,573	4.40	5.18
2014-2015			
Black	9,630	5.20	5.85
Hispanic	21,732	4.62	5.59
White	10,180	4.29	4.82
2015-2016			
Black	9,381	5.00	5.71
Hispanic	21,477	4.49	5.44
White	10,353	4.19	4.56

Table 2.2

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 7 Boys as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	11,063	5.69	6.44
Hispanic	26,144	5.37	6.53
White	12,301	4.86	5.62
2013-2014			
Black	10,703	5.77	6.45
Hispanic	25,479	5.13	6.20
White	11,389	4.67	5.29
2014-2015			
Black	10,004	5.55	6.53
Hispanic	23,997	5.07	6.07
White	10,974	4.62	5.22
2015-2016			
Black	9,789	5.41	6.11
Hispanic	23,408	4.91	5.79
White	10,724	4.48	5.18

Table 2.3

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 8 Boys as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	10,504	5.49	6.06
Hispanic	25,510	5.20	6.21
White	12,649	4.76	5.16
2013-2014			
Black	10,328	5.48	6.21
Hispanic	24,814	5.12	6.11
White	11,856	4.66	5.34
2014-2015			
Black	10,059	5.23	5.92
Hispanic	24,393	4.92	5.82
White	11,525	4.57	5.22
2015-2016			
Black	9,518	5.08	5.78
Hispanic	23,695	4.73	5.60
White	10,863	4.36	4.81

Table 2.4

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-School Suspension for Grade 6 Boys as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	6,639	4.44	4.50
Hispanic	11,837	4.15	4.47
White	3,309	3.35	3.14
2013-2014			
Black	6,639	4.67	4.63
Hispanic	11,327	4.03	4.37
White	3,227	3.50	3.79
2014-2015			
Black	6,243	4.74	4.88
Hispanic	10,645	3.92	4.21
White	2,974	3.39	3.77
2015-2016			
Black	6,296	4.47	4.59
Hispanic	10,933	3.94	4.17
White	3,073	3.48	3.59

Table 2.5

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-School Suspension for Grade 7 Boys as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	6,639	4.44	4.50
Hispanic	11,837	4.15	4.47
White	3,309	3.35	3.14
2013-2014			
Black	7,216	5.10	5.54
Hispanic	13,623	4.68	5.33
White	3,715	3.68	3.70
2014-2015			
Black	6,551	5.18	5.60
Hispanic	12,510	4.48	5.20
White	3,682	3.69	4.00
2015-2016			
Black	6,576	4.84	5.17
Hispanic	12,506	4.39	4.76
White	3,493	3.71	3.74

Table 2.6

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-School Suspension for Grade 8 Boys as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	13,662	4.91	4.92
Hispanic	7,021	4.63	4.83
White	4,315	3.82	3.99
2013-2014			
Black	6,898	5.17	5.56
Hispanic	13,820	4.87	5.38
White	4,147	3.87	4.07
2014-2015			
Black	6,691	5.09	5.55
Hispanic	13,531	4.83	5.38
White	3,984	3.90	3.85
2015-2016			
Black	6,398	5.16	5.37
Hispanic	13,348	4.47	4.70
White	3,877	3.79	3.79

Table 2.7

Summary of Results for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-school Suspension for Grades 6-8 Boys as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

Grade Level and School Year	Partial Eta Squared	Effect Size Range	Highest Number of Days
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.005	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.003	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.003	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.003	Below Small	Black
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.002	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.004	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.003	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.003	Below Small	Black
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.002	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.002	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.002	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.002	Below Small	Black

Table 2.8

Summary of Results for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-school Suspension for Grades 6-8 Boys as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

Grade Level and School Year	Partial Eta Squared	Effect Size Range	Highest Number of Days
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.007	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.008	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.011	Small	Black
2015-2016	.006	Below Small	Black
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.005	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.008	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.009	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.006	Below Small	Black
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.006	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.007	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.006	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.009	Below Small	Black

CHAPTER III

INEQUITIES IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS ASSIGNED TO AN EXCLUSIONARY
DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCE AS A FUNCTION OF THE ETHNICITY/RACE OF
TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL GIRLS: A MULTIYEAR, STATEWIDE
INVESTIGATION

This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

Abstract

In this investigation, the extent to which differences in days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White girls in Texas for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years was examined. Inferential statistical procedures revealed statistically significant differences in all four school years and at all three grade levels. In all school years and at each grade level, Black girls were assigned to statistically significantly more days of in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than were Hispanic girls and White girls. A clear stair-step effect was present. Black girls were assigned statistically significantly more days to each consequence, followed by Hispanic girls, and then by White girls.

Keywords: In-school suspension, Out-of-school suspension, Ethnicity/Race, Texas, Middle School, Black, Hispanic, White, Girls

INEQUITIES IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS ASSIGNED TO AN EXCLUSIONARY
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The United States Department of Education Office for Civil Rights (2014) data snapshot on school discipline reported that “boys receive more than two out of three suspensions” and that “Black girls are suspended at higher rates (12%) than girls of any other race or ethnicity” (para 3). The disproportionate suspensions of girls by ethnicity/race was corroborated in a recent report by the National Women’s Law Center (2017) in which Black girls, in every state, were 5.5 times more likely to be suspended than were White girls and Hispanic girls. Additionally, in their report, Black girls received more days assigned to both in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than boys and other ethnic/racial groups of students. With respect to inequalities in exclusionary discipline and girls of color, a paucity of research has been documented. The information that is available has only recently been published.

In partnership with the Columbia Law School Center for Intersectionality and Social Policy Studies, the African American Policy Forum (2014) released a study in which a review of national data from Boston and New York confirmed the presence of discipline disproportionality for Black girls. According to their report, *Black Girls Matter: Pushed Out, Overpoliced, and Underprotected*, Black girls are most at risk of being assigned to a disciplinary action and are, on average, suspended six times more than White girls (Crenshaw, Ocen, & Nanda, 2015). During the 2011-2012 school year, Black girls in New York City and Boston schools were 10 and 11 times more likely to

receive an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than White girls, respectively. During the 2014-2015 school year, Black girls in the Texas major urban cities of Houston, Dallas, San Antonio, and Austin schools were, on average, almost seven times more likely to receive an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than White girls (National Women's Law Center, 2017).

As disparities continue to be documented in reports for Black girls, Cavanaugh (2009) sought to determine the extent to which social factors, like family structure and parental involvement, could predict the likelihood of middle school Black girls being assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence. Of the known social factors, seven were determined to be statistically significant: observed violence at school, gang membership, school suspension, attitude toward violence, grade level, drug use, and active parental monitoring were predictors of a student more likely to be assigned to an exclusionary consequence. Cavanaugh (2009) indicated that the student group with the most predictors was Black girls. A complex and intricate relationship was revealed between disparities in exclusionary discipline assignment and ethnicity/race, a finding later corroborated by Lunenburg (2013). In a similar study, Harper (2015) documented such predictors to have damaging, lasting effects on Black males. With respect to the effects of these predictors and Black girls, Cavanaugh (2009) urged administrators to implement safeguards for decreasing the amount of violence students and, in particular, Black girls are exposed to on campus and to create parental involvement plans that are more engaging, collaborative, and relevant to the cultural bond between Black girls and their parents.

Additionally, Wun (2014) examined the implications of discipline disparities on the social and emotional development of a select group of Black girls at a secondary suburban school in California. After conducting 12 months of participant observations and interviewing 15 Black girls with exclusionary discipline records during the 2013-2014 school year, Wun (2014) determined that Black girls were most susceptible to formal and informal “racialized and gendered forms of discipline and punishment” (p. 2). With respect to formal discipline consequences, Black girls constitute 9% of the total student enrollment despite 26% of Black girls having an official exclusionary discipline consequence on their record. With respect to informal discipline consequences, Black girls were exposed to higher rates of cognitive biases and anti-Black racism from teachers and administrators. Like Lunenburg (2012), Wun (2014) contended that social and contextual implications have as much of an effect on exclusionary discipline assignment as does the behavioral infraction itself. As such, future researchers ought to focus on recognizing such biases as a problem to be corrected and not ignored.

To expand upon the school discipline literature for Black girls, Blake, Butler, Lewis, and Darensbourg (2010) analyzed the types of behavioral infractions being committed by Black girls and if their assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence was disproportionately different from White and Hispanic girls. Unique to this investigation was their examination of the relationship between exclusionary discipline participation and Black girls, independent and separate from Black boys. The specific types of misbehavior in which White, Hispanic, and Black girls differed were analyzed. Blake et al. (2010) documented that Black girls were overrepresented in all behavioral infractions and mirrored the same overrepresentation patterns that have been

extensively documented for Black boys (e.g., Henkel, Slate, & Martinez-Garcia, 2015; Hilberth & Slate, 2012, 2014). Concerning exclusionary discipline consequences and Hispanic girls, Black girls were twice as likely to receive an in-school suspension and were slightly overrepresented in out-of-school suspensions. Regarding exclusionary discipline consequences and White girls, Black girls were four times as likely to receive an in-school suspension and were twice as likely to receive an out-of-school suspension.

In a recently published article, Slate, Gray, and Jones (2016) examined the extent to which inequities were revealed in the assignment of an in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement to Black, Hispanic, and White girls in Texas Grades 4 through 11. Of the grade levels examined, Black girls were assigned to a statistically significantly higher percentage of out-of-school suspensions than were White girls in all eight grades. Of the eight grades examined, Grade 6 and Grade 9 yielded the highest percentage of out-of-school suspensions for Texas Black girls. A clear lack of equity was determined to be present in exclusionary discipline assignments for Black girls, particularly in Grade 6 and Grade 9. These years are important because they are regarded as pivotal years of school transition for elementary and middle school students, respectively. Slate et al. (2016) recommended that school administrators perform routine checks for fidelity with regard to campus discipline practices and Black girls and to implement more robust Positive Behavioral Intervention Systems to support Black girls during their Grade 6 transition to middle school and Grade 9 transition to high school.

Statement of the Problem

Inequities in the assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence for middle school boys has been established as a function of student ethnicity/race (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; White & Slate, 2018). Only recently have researches (e.g., Henkel et al., 2015; Hilberth & Slate, 2012, 2014) started to investigate and document similar overrepresentation patterns in discipline for Black girls. Currently, researchers have yet to publish a study on whether the ethnicity/race of girls is related to more days serving out a discipline consequence. Since disparities exist in discipline assignment for Black and Hispanic students (Ryan & Goodram, 2013), examining the number of days girls are assigned to each consequence is needed. To this end, the extent to which inequities might also exist in the time Hispanic and Black girls are assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence will be determined. Such information is essential and should drive the decision making of school administrators to create fair and equitable behavioral management systems for students.

Significance of the Study

In this study, the extent to which inequities existed in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on the ethnicity/race of middle school girls was examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Additionally, the degree to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence were addressed for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White girls. Because instructional time is naturally linked to academic achievement, disproportionality in the number of days assigned to in-school or out-of-school

suspension decreases the likelihood of success for these excluded girls. As a result, the findings of this study may benefit administrators seeking to reform outdated and ineffective discipline practices on their campus.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which differences were present in the number of days Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White). A second purpose was to determine the degree to which trends existed in the relationship between the number of days girls were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence and their ethnicity/race. By conducting these analyses, the degree to which inequities were present in the numbers of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on the ethnicity/race of Texas middle school girls was established.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this empirical investigation:

(a) For Grade 6 girls who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension), what is the effect of their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (b) For Grade 7 girls who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence, what is the effect of their ethnicity/race on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (c) For Grade 8 girls who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence, what is the effect of their ethnicity/race on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (d) For Grade 6 girls, what

trend is present in the relationship between their ethnicity/race and number of days they were assigned to the two exclusionary discipline consequences?; (e) For Grade 7 girls, what trend is present in the relationship between their ethnicity/race and number of days they were assigned to the two exclusionary discipline consequences?; and (f) For Grade 8 girls, what trend is present in the relationship between their ethnicity/race and number of days they were assigned to the two exclusionary discipline consequences? The first three research questions were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years whereas the last three research questions involved comparisons of data across the four school years.

Method

Research Design

Used in this study was a causal comparative research design. Examined in a causal comparative method is the “relationship between one or more categorical independent variables and one or more quantitative dependent variables” (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 44). Analyzed were statewide archival data previously obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System. Thus, the independent and dependent variables had already interacted and could not be changed. For these reasons, a causal comparative research design was used (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The data included Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls by their ethnicity/race, assignment to the two exclusionary discipline consequences, and the number of days received for that assigned exclusionary discipline consequence. As such, the independent variable of ethnicity/race for girls consisted of three groups: (a) Black, (b) Hispanic, and (c) White. For each school year (i.e., 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-

2015, 2015-2016), the dependent variable was the number of days assigned to any of the two exclusionary discipline consequences.

Participants

Participants in this study were Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White girls in Texas who received an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. With respect to total in-school suspension assignments, the Grade 6 sample was 82,915 girls, of which 22,044 were Black, 33,454 were Hispanic, and 14,417 were White; the Grade 7 sample was 99,686 girls, of which 25,078 were Black, 57,052 were Hispanic, and 17,556 were White; and the Grade 8 sample was 102,971 girls, of which 25,203 were Black, 57,836 were Hispanic, and 19,932 were White. With respect to total out-of-school suspension assignments, the Grade 6 sample consisted of 36,309 girls, of which 12,965 were Black, 20,269 were Hispanic, and 2,445 were White; the Grade 7 sample was 48,592 girls, of which 15,138 were Black, 28,495 were Hispanic, and 4,959 were White; and the Grade 8 sample was 52,560 girls, of which 16,824 were Black, 29,537 were Hispanic, and 4,899 were White.

Instrumentation and Procedures

The Texas Education Code §37.001 (2002) contains the rules and procedures for administering an exclusionary discipline consequence. In-school suspension is established under Texas Education Code §37.002 and is a consequence issued by an administrator that removes a student from their assigned classroom. Assignment to this consequence may not exceed 10 school days. Out-of-school suspension is established under Texas Education Code §37.005 and is a more punitive consequence issued by an administrator that temporarily removes a student from their assigned campus for at least

one school day. Assignment to this consequence may not exceed 3 consecutive school days.

For each school year, discipline data are submitted by school districts to the Public Education Information Management System. Data were obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System through a Public Information Request form for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Then, data were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software program. Once imported, the data were analyzed separately for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 girls by the status of their ethnicity/race. Minimal errors in the data are assumed to be present given that school districts send their discipline data directly to the Texas Education Agency via standardized computer files.

Results

Examined in this investigation was the degree to which the ethnicity/race of girls was related to being assigned more days to an exclusionary discipline consequence. In-school suspension and out-of-school suspension data were analyzed for Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls for the 2012 through the 2016 school years. Conducted were separate statistical analyses for each exclusionary discipline consequence, at each grade level, and by each school year. Checks for normality of data and for homogeneity of variance were performed prior to conducting inferential statistical procedures. Despite not meeting the underlying assumptions of a parametric Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Field (2009) contends that, due to the robustness of this procedure, these violations can be withstood. Results begin with Grade 6 for the 2012-2013 school year and through the end of the 2015-2016 school year and are listed by ascending order of punishment severity (i.e., in-

school suspension, out-of-school suspension) for Black, Hispanic, and White girls. Then, results are repeated for Grade 7 and Grade 8 girls.

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 6 Girls

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year for the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension as a function of ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) for Grade 6 girls, the parametric ANOVA yielded a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 21131) = 56.61, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .005$. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). Scheffe' post hoc procedures revealed statistically significant differences in two of the three ethnic/racial groups. Grade 6 Black girls were assigned an average of 0.94 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls and an average of 0.74 more days than Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Black and Hispanic girls were assigned to an in-school suspension for a similar number of days. Presented in Table 3.1 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 3.1 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 19408) = 47.42, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .005$, in the number of days Grade 6 girls were assigned to an in-school suspension based on their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). Scheffe' post hoc tests revealed that all three ethnic/racial groups of girls had a statistically significant different number of days assigned to this consequence. Grade 6 Black girls

were assigned an average of one day more, 1.01, to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls and 0.51 more days than Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.50 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are delineated in Table 3.1.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(2, 17993) = 42.13, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .005$, in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 6 girls as a function of their ethnicity/race. A below small effect size was yielded for this finding (Cohen, 1998). Scheffe' post hoc tests revealed the presence of a statistically significant difference between all pairwise comparisons. Grade 6 Black girls were assigned an average of 0.90 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls and an average of 0.50 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.39 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls. Contained in Table 3.1 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis in the 2014-2015 school year.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 17956) = 36.64, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .004$, in the number of days spent in in-school suspension for Grade 6 girls based on their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). Scheffe' post hoc comparisons revealed that all pairwise comparisons were statistically significantly different. On average, Grade 6 Black girls were assigned 0.87 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls and an average of 0.48 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.48 more days to this consequence than were Grade 6 White girls. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are contained in Table 3.1.

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 7 Girls

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year for the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension as a function of the ethnicity/race of Grade 7 girls, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 27346) = 41.57, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .005$. This finding represented a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were revealed between all three ethnic/racial groups. As delineated in Table 3.2, Grade 7 Black girls were assigned an average of 0.82 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7 White girls and an average of 0.61 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.22 more days than were Grade 7 White girls.

 Insert Table 3.2 about here

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 25823) = 45.47, p < .001$, partial $\eta^2 = .004$, in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 7 girls as a function of their ethnicity/race. The effect size for this difference was below small (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons were statistically significantly different. As revealed in Table 3.2, Grade 7 Black girls were assigned, on average, 0.93 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7 White girls and 0.47 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.46 more days than were Grade 7 White girls.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, the parametric ANOVA yielded a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 23694) = 37.56, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .003$. This finding was a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). A statistically significant difference was yielded between all pairwise comparisons. As contained in Table 3.2, Grade 7 Black girls were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.88 more days than Grade 7 White girls and an average of 0.51 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.36 more days than were Grade 7 White girls.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 22811) = 41.74, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .004$, a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). A statistically significant difference was yielded between all pairwise comparisons. As presented in Table 3.2, Grade 7 Black girls were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.94 more days than Grade 7 White girls and an average of 0.54 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned, on average, 0.39 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7 White girls.

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 8 Girls

Concerning the 2012-2013 school year, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(2, 27846) = 31.40, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Pairwise comparisons revealed a statistically significant difference in two of the three ethnic/racial group pairings. Grade 8 Black girls were assigned an average of 0.59 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 White girls and an average of 0.52 more days than were Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade

8 Hispanic and White girls were assigned a similar number of days to this consequence. Presented in Table 3.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 3.3 about here

With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 26504) = 28.38, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Pairwise comparisons yielded statistically significant differences between two of the three ethnic/racial groups. Grade 8 Black girls were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.64 more days than were Grade 8 White girls and an average of 0.48 more days than were Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls and Grade 8 White girls were assigned, on average, a similar number of days to this consequence. Contained in Table 3.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Regarding the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 25219) = 17.99, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .001$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons yielded statistically significant differences. Grade 8 Black girls were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.55 more days than were Grade 8 White girls and an average of 0.34 more days than were Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.21 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 White girls. Delineated in Table 3.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 23390) = 36.69, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .003$, below small effect size

(Cohen, 1998). Pairwise comparisons revealed statistically significant differences in all ethnic/racial groups except one. Grade 8 Black girls were assigned to an in-school suspension an average of 0.72 more days than were Grade 8 White girls and an average of 0.55 more days than were Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic and White girls were assigned a similar number of days to this consequence. Revealed in Table 3.3 are the descriptive statistics for this school year.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 6 Girls

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(2, 9677) = 33.32, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .007$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons except one. Grade 6 Black girls were assigned 0.61 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls and 0.60 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic and White girls were assigned a similar number of days to an out-of-school suspension. Delineated in Table 3.4 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 3.4 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 9482) = 34.51, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .007$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. Grade 6 Black girls were assigned 1.05 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls and 0.56 more days than were Grade 6

Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.49 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls. Revealed in Table 3.4 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(2, 8408) = 23.53, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons except one. Grade 6 Black girls were assigned 0.81 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls and 0.52 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic and White girls were assigned a similar number of days to an out-of-school suspension. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are delineated in Table 3.4.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(2, 8730) = 21.89, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .005$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons were statistically significantly different except in one. Grade 6 Black girls were assigned 0.64 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 White girls and 0.50 more days than were Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Grade 6 Hispanic and White girls were assigned a similar number of days to an out-of-school suspension. Presented in Table 3.4 are the descriptive statistics for this school year.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 7 Girls

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 12918) = 53.31, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .008$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons revealed statistically significant differences. Grade 7 Black girls were assigned, on average, 1.07 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned 0.63 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned 0.45 more days to an out-of-school suspension than Grade 7 White girls. Contained in Table 3.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

 Insert Table 3.5 about here

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 12895) = 58.79, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .009$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). All pairwise comparisons were statistically significantly different. Grade 7 Black girls were assigned an average of 1.17 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White girls and an average of 0.81 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned 0.36 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White girls. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are revealed in Table 3.5

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(2, 11633) = 51.12, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .009$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. Grade 7 Black girls were assigned an average of 1.29 more days to an out-of-school

suspension than were Grade 7 White girls and an average of 0.65 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.64 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White girls. Delineated in Table 3.5 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 12719) = 40.35, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. Grade 7 Black girls were assigned an average of 1.18 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 White girls and an average of 0.71 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 7 Hispanic girls were assigned 0.47 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White girls. Descriptive statistics for this analysis are presented in Table 3.5.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 8 Girls

Regarding the 2012-2103 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 13452) = 42.95, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. As revealed in Table 3.6, Grade 8 Black girls were assigned an average of 0.94 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 White girls and an average of 0.47 more days than Grade 7 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.46 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White girls.

 Insert Table 3.6 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 13556) = 44.58, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .007$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. As delineated in Table 3.6, Grade 8 Black girls were assigned an average of 1.07 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 White girls and an average of 0.46 more days than Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.61 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White girls.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 12821) = 81.01, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .012$, small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons. As revealed in Table 3.6, Grade 8 Black girls were assigned an average of 1.41 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 White girls and an average of 0.86 more days than Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Hispanic girls were assigned an average of 0.55 more days to an out-of-school suspension than White girls.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(2, 12719) = 40.53, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Statistically significant differences were present in all pairwise comparisons, with one exception. Grade 8 Black girls were assigned an average of 0.87 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 White girls and an average of 0.63 more days than Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Grade 8 Black and Hispanic girls were assigned a similar number of days to an out-of-school suspension. The descriptive statistics for this analysis are contained in Table 3.6.

Discussion

Addressed in this investigation was the extent to which inequities existed in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence as a function of ethnicity/race for Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White girls in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Also analyzed was the degree to which trends were present across all four school years. Summarized below are the results by grade level.

Across all four school years, ethnicity/race was statistically significantly related to the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 6 girls. With one exception, Black girls were assigned the highest number of days in this consequence, followed by Hispanic girls, and then by White girls. The one exception was that Grade 6 Black girls and Grade 6 Hispanic girls were assigned a similar number of days in the 2012-2013 school year. Contained in Table 3.7 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

Insert Table 3.7 about here

Across each school year, the ethnicity/race of Grade 7 girls was statistically significantly related to the number of days they were assigned to an in-school suspension. In all analyses for all four school years, Grade 7 Black girls were assigned to the highest number of days, followed by Hispanic girls, and then by White girls. From these findings, a clear stair-step effect was revealed, a result that was congruent with Slate et al. (2016). Black girls always had the highest average number of days assigned to an-school

suspension; Hispanic girls always had the second highest average number of days assigned to an in-school suspension; and White girls always had the lowest average number of days assigned to this consequence. Delineated in Table 3.7 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

Across all four school years, the ethnicity/race of Grade 8 girls was statistically significantly related to the number of days they were assigned to an in-school suspension in only one school year. Analysis of the 2014-2015 school year revealed Grade 8 Black girls were assigned to the highest number of days, followed by Hispanic girls, and then by White girls. In all other school year analyses, Grade 8 Black girls were assigned to statistically significant more days of in-school suspension than Grade 8 White girls but were assigned a similar number of days to Grade 8 Hispanic girls. Revealed in Table 3.7 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

With respect to all four school years, the ethnicity/race of Grade 6 girls was statistically significantly related to the number of days they were assigned to an out-of-school suspension in only one school year. In the 2013-2014 school year, Grade 6 Black girls were assigned to the highest number of days in this consequence, followed by Hispanic girls, and then by White girls. Across all other school years for this consequence, Grade 6 Black girls were assigned a statistically significantly higher number of days compared to Grade 6 White girls but were assigned a similar number of days compared to Grade 6 Hispanic girls. Revealed in Table 3.8 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

Insert Table 3.8 about here

Concerning all four school years, the ethnicity/race of Grade 7 girls was statistically significantly related to the number of days assigned to an out-of-school suspension. With respect to all analyses, Black girls were assigned to the highest number of days, followed by Hispanic girls, and then by White girls. Contained in Table 3.8 the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

With respect to all four school years, the ethnicity/race Grade 8 girls was statistically significantly related to the number of days they were assigned to an out-of-school suspension in all school years, with one exception. Regarding the analysis of the 2015-2016 school year, Black girls were assigned the highest number of days compared to White girls but were assigned a similar number of days compared to Hispanic girls. Delineated in Table 3.8 are the summary results for the statistical analyses of this consequence.

Connections with Existing Literature

Revealed in this multiyear, statewide investigation were results congruent with the current findings from a growing body of researchers (e.g., Crenshaw et al., 2015; Henkel et al., 2015; Slate et al., 2016) who ascertained the existence of statistically significant relationships between student ethnicity/race and assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence for girls. Results were also comparable with additional researchers (Hilberth & Slate, 2012, 2014) in which middle school student ethnicity/race was a statistically significant factor in the disparate assignments of in-

school suspension and out-of-school suspension. In this empirical investigation, in all four school years and at all three grade levels, Grades 6, 7, and 8 Texas Black girls were assigned the highest number of days of in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension.

Implications for Policy and for Practice

Several implications for policy and for practice can be made based on the evidence revealed in this study. First, school leaders are urged to analyze current discipline data to determine whether girls, as a result of their ethnicity/race, are overrepresented in their assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence. If disparities for girls are discovered, the degree to which ethnic/racial factors are related to more time spent in a discipline consequence can be ascertained. As such, the aim of campus administrators should be to reform any disciplinary policies that negatively influence the academic achievement select girls. Second, campus officials are encouraged to streamline the teaching of social and emotional learning skills into a standards-based curriculum. The explicit teaching of interpersonal skills with learning objectives helps girls from diverse backgrounds make meaningful connections between socially acceptable behavior and academic achievement. A final implication would be for campus principals to focus their efforts on increasing the interdisciplinary collaboration among grade level teachers who teach the same groups of students. Designing a master schedule in which students and teachers are intentionally grouped by common demographic characteristics can close generational gaps between girls and male teachers from different ethnic/racial backgrounds.

Recommendations for Future Research

In this empirical investigation, the relationship between student ethnicity/race and the number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences for girls in Grades 6, 7, and 8 was examined. Given the ramifications of the findings of this study, several recommendations for future research are warranted. First, researchers are encouraged to extend this study to Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls based on their economic status. Researchers have yet to establish if the results in this investigation are generalizable to other student demographic characteristics (e.g., girls who receive special education services, girls who are at-risk, girls who are English Language Learners). A second recommendation is for researchers to replicate this study in other Texas grade levels. Extending this study will confirm whether the findings contained herein are similar for girls across elementary or high school grade levels. Because the focus of this study was on the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension by the ethnicity/race of girls, a final recommendation would be for researchers to extend this investigation to Disciplinary Education Alternative Program placements and Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements. Extending this study to the most punitive forms of discipline will reveal if results from this study are similar across all exclusionary consequences for Texas middle school girls.

Conclusion

In this empirical investigation, the extent to which inequities were revealed in the number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences by the ethnicity/race of Texas middle school girls was analyzed. Obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were statewide data on all Grade 6, 7,

and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White girls for the 2012 through the 2016 school years.

Inferential statistical analyses yielded the presence of statistically significant differences in the average number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension based on the ethnicity/race of girls. In all three grades across all four school years, Black girls were assigned to the statistically significant highest number of days in an in-school suspension and an out-of-school suspension than were White girls. With respect to the 2014-2015 school year for in-school suspension, Black girls were assigned to a statistically significant higher number of days in this consequence, followed by Hispanic girls, then by White girls. Results were repeated in the 2103-2014 school year but for out-of-school suspension. From these findings, inequities in the number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences based on the ethnicity/race of Texas middle school girls were established.

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Table 3.1

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 6 Girls as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	5,696	4.64	5.43
Hispanic	11,738	3.89	4.70
White	3,700	3.70	4.53
2013-2014			
Black	6,503	4.75	5.46
Hispanic	14,799	4.28	5.15
White	4,524	3.82	4.30
2014-2015			
Black	4,944	4.20	4.79
Hispanic	9,926	3.70	4.42
White	3,126	3.31	3.82
2015-2016			
Black	4,901	4.10	4.85
Hispanic	9,991	3.71	4.44
White	3,067	3.23	3.57

Table 3.2

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 7 Girls as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	6,763	4.97	5.75
Hispanic	15,745	4.36	5.23
White	4,841	4.15	5.06
2013-2014			
Black	6,503	4.75	5.46
Hispanic	14,799	4.28	5.15
White	4,524	3.82	4.30
2014-2015			
Black	6,051	4.71	5.64
Hispanic	13,496	4.19	5.25
White	4,150	3.83	4.37
2015-2016			
Black	5,761	4.72	5.83
Hispanic	13,012	4.18	5.04
White	4,041	3.78	4.42

Table 3.3

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 8 Girls as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	6,944	4.65	5.33
Hispanic	15,398	4.12	4.88
White	5,507	4.06	4.74
2013-2014			
Black	6,520	4.58	5.31
Hispanic	14,914	4.10	4.98
White	5,073	3.94	4.73
2014-2015			
Black	5,995	4.37	5.12
Hispanic	14,318	4.03	4.91
White	4,909	3.83	4.64
2015-2016			
Black	5,744	4.36	5.23
Hispanic	13,206	3.81	4.54
White	4,443	3.64	4.31

Table 3.4

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-School Suspension for Grade 6 Girls as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	3,317	3.95	3.84
Hispanic	5,546	3.35	3.19
White	817	3.34	3.35
2013-2014			
Black	3,428	4.15	4.31
Hispanic	5,211	3.60	3.58
White	846	3.11	3.58
2014-2015			
Black	3,059	3.93	4.12
Hispanic	4,648	3.41	3.43
White	704	3.13	3.98
2015-2016			
Black	3,161	3.88	3.84
Hispanic	4,864	3.38	3.42
White	708	3.23	3.07

Table 3.5

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-School Suspension for Grade 7 Girls as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	3,317	3.95	3.84
Hispanic	7,409	3.72	3.74
White	1,381	3.27	3.00
2013-2014			
Black	4,225	4.65	4.93
Hispanic	7,497	3.84	4.13
White	1,176	3.47	3.39
2014-2015			
Black	3,766	4.47	4.83
Hispanic	6,699	3.81	4.05
White	1,171	3.18	2.96
2015-2016			
Black	3,830	4.51	4.55
Hispanic	6,890	3.80	3.86
White	1,231	3.33	2.86

Table 3.6

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-School Suspension for Grade 8 Girls as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Ethnicity/Race	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Black	4,419	4.14	4.08
Hispanic	7,386	3.68	3.70
White	1,650	3.21	2.85
2013-2014			
Black	4,310	4.35	4.46
Hispanic	7,630	3.89	3.94
White	1,619	3.28	3.21
2014-2015			
Black	4,015	4.62	5.25
Hispanic	7,318	3.76	3.78
White	1,491	3.21	3.07
2015-2016			
Black	4,080	4.39	4.36
Hispanic	7,203	3.76	3.91
White	1,439	3.52	3.75

Table 3.7

Summary of Results for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-school Suspension for Grades 6-8 Girls as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

Grade Level and School Year	Partial Eta Squared	Effect Size Range	Highest Number of Days
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.005	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.005	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.005	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.004	Below Small	Black
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.003	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.004	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.003	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.004	Below Small	Black
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.002	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.002	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.001	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.003	Below Small	Black

Table 3.8

Summary of Results for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-school Suspension for Grades 6-8 Girls as a Function of Their Ethnicity/Race in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

Grade Level and School Year	Partial Eta Squared	Effect Size Range	Highest Number of Days
Grade 6			
2012-2013	.007	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.007	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.006	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.005	Below Small	Black
Grade 7			
2012-2013	.008	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.009	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.009	Below Small	Black
2015-2016	.009	Below Small	Black
Grade 8			
2012-2013	.006	Below Small	Black
2013-2014	.007	Below Small	Black
2014-2015	.012	Small	Black
2015-2016	.006	Below Small	Black

CHAPTER IV

INEQUITIES IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS ASSIGNED TO AN EXCLUSIONARY
DISCIPLINE CONSEQUENCE AS A FUNCTION OF THE ECONOMIC STATUS OF
TEXAS MIDDLE SCHOOL STUDENTS: A STATEWIDE, MULTIYEAR
INVESTIGATION

This dissertation follows the style and format of *Research in the Schools (RITS)*.

Abstract

Examined in this study was the extent to which inequities existed in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students as a function of their economic status in Texas for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014-2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Across all four school years and at all three grade levels, inferential statistical procedures revealed the presence of inequities in the average number of days students who were Poor were assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension. Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were Poor spent statistically significant more days in an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than students who were Not Poor. The presence of clear inequitable trends in disciplinary days assigned for students who were Poor were established.

Keywords: In-school suspension, Out-of-school suspension, Economic Status, Texas, Middle School, Poor, Not Poor, Students

INEQUITIES IN THE NUMBER OF DAYS ASSIGNED TO AN EXCLUSIONARY
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INVESTIGATION

An emergence of researchers (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; Lunenburg, 2012, 2013; Hilberth & Slate, 2014; White & Slate, 2018) have established direct links between the inequitable assignment of punitive disciplinary consequences and ethnicity/race. In each of their investigations, Butler, Lewis, Moore, and Scott (2012), Hemphill et al. (2010), and Skiba et al. (2014) have revealed additional inequities for students who are economically disadvantaged and receive discipline consequences by their ethnicity/race. Because economic status is widely used to predict the educational outcomes of students, researchers investigating the current effects of poverty on student achievement have augmented the debate on the degree to which ethnicity/race is responsible for widening the discipline gap between White, Hispanic, and Black students who are economically disadvantaged. Due to removal from the classroom and subsequent loss of instructional time, Grade 10 Black students who were suspended at least one time ended up costing taxpayers more than \$35 billion in 2016 (Rumberger & Losen, 2016). As the rate of students who are economically disadvantaged increases steadily throughout Texas, Black students who are poor will be most vulnerable to experiencing inequitable educational outcomes. Clearly, the ramifications of exclusionary discipline assignment are far-reaching and warrant further investigation.

In Texas, 58.7% of students were identified as being economically disadvantaged in the 2017-2018 school year, an increase of 6% from the 2007-2008 school year (Texas Education Agency, 2018). Such an increase in the rate of students who are poor has shifted the student discipline paradigm and fostered urgency among school administrators to replace punitive disciplinary practices with restorative methods. As the state increases achievement standards for Hispanic and Black students, and for students in poverty, schools can no longer risk the instructional time lost for these students. Recently, select researchers (Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016) have documented the extent to which disparities are present in the assignment of an exclusionary discipline consequence for students who are poor. Only one report (White & Slate, 2017) in the extant literature has documented the degree to which the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence has on students who are poor. Overall, the body of literature covering discipline disparities by student economic status is lacking and needs expanding. Investigations that reveal disparities in educational attainment between similar students who are assigned to the same consequence but are removed from the classroom for less days may spur school officials to change how schools are instructionally designed, managed, and operated.

Of the documented inequities in exclusionary discipline consequences for non-White, non-poor students, Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placement by student economic status was the singular focus of Eckford and Slate (2016). In their investigation, Texas statewide discipline data were analyzed for Grades 6, 7, and 8 White, Hispanic, and Black boys by their economic status. Eckford and Slate (2016) revealed inequities in the placement to a Juvenile Justice Alternative Education for

White, Hispanic, and Black boys who were poor compared to their peers who were not poor. As such, researchers are encouraged to ascertain whether such discipline disparities by student economic status are present in girls, high school students, and for each exclusionary discipline consequence.

To determine the extent to which economic status influenced the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences within White, Hispanic, and Black student groups, Khan and Slate (2016) analyzed suspension and alternative school placement data for Grade 6 students in Texas. In their investigation, statistically significant differences were revealed in the assignment of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement within each ethnic/racial group by economic status. Students who were poor received a disparate number of exclusionary discipline consequences when compared to their same ethnic/racial peers who were not poor. The most important finding was for Grade 6 students because they received the highest number of assignments for each disciplinary consequence. To address these inequities, Khan and Slate (2016) proposed that school officials prioritize diversity when hiring faculty and staff members as well as develop disciplinary methods that aim to improve the depreciation of cultural capital evidenced in students who are poor.

In another investigation, Lopez and Slate (2016) examined the degree to which inequities were present in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for Texas Grade 7 and 8 White students on the basis of their economic status. In each grade level, Lopez and Slate (2016) documented the presence of statistically significant disparities in Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements for White students who were poor compared to White students who were not poor. Grade 7 White students

who were poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement at four times the rate of Grade 7 White students who were not poor. Grade 8 White students who were poor were assigned to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placement at three times the rate of Grade 8 White students who were not poor.

Concerned with discipline disparities in regard to student level of poverty, Barnes, Slate, Martinez-Garcia, and Moore (2017) examined the degree to which assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence by economic status differed for students who were Extremely Poor (i.e., qualified for the federal free lunch program), students who were Moderately Poor (i.e., qualified for the federal reduce-price lunch), and students who were Not Poor (i.e., did not qualify for either federal lunch program). Texas statewide in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension data were analyzed for all Grade 6, 7, and 8 middle school students during the 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. A consistent stair-step effect in the assignment to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension as a function of student economic status was evident during all three school years, across all three grade levels, and for both exclusionary discipline consequences. Moreover, the level of student economic disadvantage was directly related to higher rates of assignment to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for all students, regardless of the school years or their grade level. As a result, students who were Extremely Poor received exclusionary discipline consequences at statistically significant higher rates than students who were Moderately Poor and students who were Not Poor. Students who were Moderately Poor received exclusionary discipline consequences at statistically significant higher rates than students who were Not Poor. Based on their results, Barnes et al. (2017) suggested that

researchers expand this investigation to include multiple student socioeconomic characteristics like at-risk status and grade levels like high school.

With respect to the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence as a degree of student poverty, the body of literature is limited to one recently published article by White and Slate (2017). In their investigation, the extent to which inequities were present in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence for Texas middle school students by their economic status was examined for the 2015-2016 school year. In addition to the punitive disciplinary assignment disparities reported by Barnes et al. (2017) for the same grade level students during the same school year, White and Slate (2017) revealed statistically significant differences in the number of days assigned to students who were economically disadvantaged. Concerning the average number of days assigned to an in-school suspension, middle school students who were poor spent a day more assigned to in-school suspension when compared to their peers who were not poor. Regarding the average number of days assigned to an out-of-school suspension, middle school students who were poor spent half a day more assigned to out-of-school suspension when compared to their peers who were not poor. Overall, students who were economically disadvantaged not only were assigned to exclusionary disciplinary consequences at an inequitable rate, but they spent more time removed from the classroom as well. To understand the complexity of each discipline disparity, White and Slate (2017) contended that future investigations should differentiate between ethnicity/race and gender in elementary and high school grade levels across multiple school years and in other states.

Statement of the Problem

The relationship between the assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence and the School Dropout to Jail Pipeline (e.g., Barnes & Slate, 2016; Coleman & Slate, 2016; Eckford & Slate, 2016; White & Slate, 2018) for students based on their ethnicity/race has been well documented. In recent empirical investigations, researchers (e.g., Barnes et al., 2017; Khan & Slate, 2016; Lopez & Slate, 2016) have provided evidence that inequities in the assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence are also invariably connected to the economic status of students. Because most of the research conducted on exclusionary discipline inequities has been a function of ethnicity/race, exclusionary discipline inequities as a function of economic status have not been thoroughly documented. Furthermore, each of the investigations involved statistical analyses of only one year of data. As a result, the degree to which their findings can be extrapolated over time is unclear.

Additionally, no information was located in the extant literature regarding the relationship between student economic status and the number of days they were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence. Because students in poverty are assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence at statistically significantly higher rates than students not in poverty (Khan & Slate, 2016), examining the number of days assigned to such a consequence is needed to ascertain the degree to which inequities might also exist in the time they are assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence. Student-specific discipline data are essential for school administrators establishing and sustaining equitable behavior management systems for students.

Significance of the Study

In this study, the degree to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on the economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) of middle school students was examined for four school years (i.e., 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016). As the number of Texas middle school students who have been identified as economically disadvantaged and who have received an exclusionary discipline consequence continues to rise (Lopez & Slate, 2016; Losen & Martinez, 2013), an investigation into whether inequities are present in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence for these students is merited. As such, the findings from this study may assist educational stakeholders in implementing disciplinary structures and systems that lead to equitable learning opportunities for students living in poverty.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the extent to which differences were present in the number of days Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) based on their economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor). A second purpose was to determine the degree to which trends were present in the relationship between student economic status and the number of days they were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence. As such, the degree to which inequities were present in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on the economic status of students was determined.

Research Questions

The following research questions were addressed in this empirical investigation:

(a) For Grade 6 students who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension), what is the effect of their economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (b) For Grade 7 students who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence, what is the effect of their economic status on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (c) For Grade 8 students who were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence, what is the effect of their economic status on the number of days they received each of these consequences?; (d) For Grade 6 students, what trend is present in the relationship between their economic status and number of days they were assigned to any of the two exclusionary discipline consequences?; (e) For Grade 7 students, what trend is present in the relationship between their economic status and number of days they were assigned to any of the two exclusionary discipline consequences?; and (f) For Grade 8 students, what trend is present in the relationship between their economic status and number of days they were assigned to any of the two exclusionary discipline consequences? The first three research questions were examined for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and the 2015-2016 school years whereas the last three research questions involved comparisons of data across the four school years.

Method

Research Design

A causal comparative research design was used in this study. Examined in a causal comparative method is the “relationship between one or more categorical

independent variables and one or more quantitative dependent variables” (Johnson & Christensen, 2012, p. 44). Statewide archival data that were previously obtained from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System were analyzed. As such, the independent and dependent variables had already occurred and could not be manipulated. For these reasons, the research design used herein was a causal comparative research design (Johnson & Christensen, 2012). The data included Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 students by their economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor), assignment to any of the two exclusionary discipline consequences, and the number of days received for that assigned exclusionary discipline consequence. Thus, the independent variable of economic status consisted of two groups: (a) Poor, and (b) Not Poor. For each school year (i.e., 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, 2015-2016), the dependent variable was the number of days assigned to any of the two exclusionary discipline consequences.

Participants

Participants in this study were Black, Hispanic, and White middle school students in Texas who received an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. With respect to total middle school in-school suspension assignments, the Grade 6 sample was 249,035 students, of which 195,118 were Poor and 53,917 were Not Poor; the Grade 7 sample was 285,661 students, of which 220,367 were Poor and 65,294 were Not Poor; and the Grade 8 sample was 288,865 students, of which 216,081 were Poor and 72,784 were Not Poor. With respect to total middle school out-of-school suspension assignments, the Grade 6 sample consisted of 119,451 students, of which 101,057 were Poor and 18,394 were Not Poor; the Grade 7 sample was 143,453 students,

of which 118,423 were Poor and 25,030 were Not Poor; and the Grade 8 sample was 150,252 students, of which 120,567 were Poor and 29,685 were Not Poor.

Instrumentation and Procedures

The Texas Education Code §37.001 (2002) outlined the rules and procedures for enacting each of the two exclusionary discipline consequences. Established under Texas Education Code §37.002, in-school suspension is a consequence (e.g., chronic misbehavior) assigned by a school administrator to a student that removes a student from their assigned classroom. The number of days assigned to an in-school suspension cannot exceed 10 consecutive school days. Established under Texas Education Code §37.005, out-of-school suspension is a consequence (e.g., fighting) assigned by a school administrator to a student that requires a student to be removed from their assigned campus. The number of days assigned to an out-of-school suspension cannot exceed three school days. An economically disadvantaged student is defined by the Texas Education Agency as a person who is eligible for free or reduced-price meals under the National School Lunch and Child Nutrition Program (2017). According to McFarland et al. (2017), the Free and Reduced-Price Meal Application is used by the state to determine the criteria for student eligibility. In this study, students who were economically disadvantaged were referred to as Poor and students who were not economically disadvantaged were referred to as Not Poor.

For each school year in Texas, data on both exclusionary discipline consequences and participation in free and reduced-price meals are submitted by school districts to the Public Education Information Management System. Data were requested from the Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System through a Public

Information Request form for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years. Once obtained, the data were imported into the Statistical Package for Social Sciences software program. Then, the data were analyzed separately for Grade 6, Grade 7, and Grade 8 students by their economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor). Because school districts submit their discipline data directly to the Texas Education Agency via standardized computer files, minimal errors in the data are assumed to be present.

Results

In this investigation, the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on the economic status of students was examined. Data were analyzed for Texas Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were Poor and students who were Not Poor, and who had been assigned to an in-school suspension and to an out-of-school suspension in the 2012-2013 school year through the 2015-2016 school years. Statistical analyses were conducted separately for in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension at each grade level and by each school year. Checks for normality of data and for homogeneity of variance were conducted. Inferential statistical procedures were used to answer the six research questions. Although the majority of the underlying assumptions of a parametric Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) were not met, the robustness of this procedure can tolerate repeated violations to its normality (Field, 2009). Results are listed by Grade 6 and by ascending order of punishment severity (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) for students who were Poor and students who were Not Poor, beginning with the 2012-2013 school year and through the end of the 2015-2016 school year. Results are then repeated for Grade 7 and Grade 8 students.

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 6 Students

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year for the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension as a function of the economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) of Grade 6 students, the parametric ANOVA yielded a statistically significant difference, $F(1, 67967) = 430.46, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). As revealed in Table 4.1, Grade 6 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 1.12 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 students who were Not Poor.

 Insert Table 4.1 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(1, 62356) = 363.18, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, in the number of days Grade 6 students were assigned to an in-school suspension based on their economic status. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). As delineated in Table 4.1, Grade 6 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 1.01 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 students who were Not Poor.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 59536) = 364.84, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 6. A below small effect size was yielded for this finding (Cohen, 1998). Grade 6 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.97 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 students who were Not Poor. The descriptive statistics for this analysis are contained in Table 4.1.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(1, 59168) = 394.79, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .007$, in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 6 students. The effect size for this finding was below small (Cohen, 1998). Grade 6 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.99 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 6 students who were Not Poor. Presented in Table 4.1 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 7 Students

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year for the extent to which differences were present in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension as a function of the economic status of Grade 7 students, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(1, 76855) = 366.43, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .005$. This finding represented a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 7 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.98 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7 students who were Not Poor. Table 4.2 contains the descriptive statistics for this consequence in this school year.

 Insert Table 4.2 about here

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(1, 73395) = 445.68, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, in the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 7 students as a function of their economic status. The effect size for this difference was below small (Cohen, 1998). Grade 7 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 1.08 more days to an in-school suspension than

Grade 7 students who were Not Poor. Revealed in Table 4.2 are the descriptive statistics for this consequence in this school year.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, the parametric ANOVA yielded a statistically significant difference, $F(1, 68670) = 316.94, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .005$. This finding was a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 7 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.92 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7 students who were Not Poor. Presented in Table 4.2 are the descriptive statistics for this consequence in this school year.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(1, 66733) = 398.36, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .006$, a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 7 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 1.01 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 7 students who were Not Poor. The descriptive statistics for this consequence in this school year are contained in Table 4.2.

Results for In-School Suspension and Grade 8 Students

Concerning the 2012-2013 school year, the parametric ANOVA revealed a statistically significant difference, $F(1, 76510) = 237.54, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .003$, a below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 8 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.72 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 students who were Not Poor. Revealed in Table 4.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Insert Table 4.3 about here

With respect to the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(1, 73503) = 263.90, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .004$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 8 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.78 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 students who were Not Poor. Delineated in Table 4.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Regarding the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(1, 71197) = 270.70, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .004$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 8 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.77 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 students who were Not Poor. Contained in Table 4.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

With respect to the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was yielded, $F(1, 67467) = 277.07, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .004$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 8 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.77 more days to an in-school suspension than were Grade 8 students who were Not Poor. Revealed in Table 4.3 are the descriptive statistics for this analysis.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 6 Students

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 31463) = 102.35, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .003$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 6 students who were Poor were assigned 0.65 more days, on

average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 students who were Not Poor. Delineated in Table 4.4 are the statistical analyses for this consequence.

 Insert Table 4.4 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 30676) = 77.83, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .003$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 6 students who were Poor were assigned 0.61 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 students who were Not Poor. Contained in Table 4.4 are the statistical analyses for this consequence.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 28271) = 67.66, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 6 students who were Poor were assigned 0.56 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 students who were Not Poor. Presented in Table 4.4 are the statistical analyses for this consequence.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 29033) = 69.72, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 6 students who were Poor were assigned 0.54 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 6 students who were Not Poor. Revealed in Table 4.4 are the statistical analyses for this consequence.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 7 Students

With respect to the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 37094) = 79.38, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size

(Cohen, 1998). Grade 7 students who were Poor were assigned 0.55 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 students who were Not Poor. Delineated in Table 4.5 are the statistical analyses for this consequence.

Insert Table 4.5 about here

Regarding the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 37450) = 103.30, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .003$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 7 students who were Poor were assigned 0.71 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 students who were Not Poor. The statistical analyses for this consequence are presented in Table 4.5.

Concerning the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 34377) = 62.20, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 7 students who were Poor were assigned 0.53 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 students who were Not Poor. The statistical analyses for this consequence are revealed in Table 4.5.

With respect to the 2015-201 school year, a statistically significant difference was revealed, $F(1, 34524) = 88.73, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 7 students who were Poor were assigned 0.60 more days, on average, to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 7 students who were Not Poor. The statistical analyses for this consequence are contained in Table 4.5.

Results for Out-of-School Suspension and Grade 8 Students

Regarding the 2012-2013 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(1, 38451) = 76.58, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 8 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.50 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 students who were Not Poor. Revealed in Table 4.6 are the statistical analyses for this consequence in this school year.

 Insert Table 4.6 about here

Concerning the 2013-2014 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(1, 38422) = 83.27, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 8 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.58 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 students who were Not Poor. Presented in Table 4.6 are the descriptive statistics for this school year.

With respect to the 2014-2015 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(1, 37028) = 37.907, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .001$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 8 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.49 more days to an out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 students who were Not Poor. Delineated in Table 4.6 are the descriptive statistics for this school year.

Regarding the 2015-2016 school year, a statistically significant difference was present, $F(1, 36343) = 60.65, p < .001$, partial $n^2 = .002$, below small effect size (Cohen, 1998). Grade 8 students who were Poor were assigned an average of 0.47 more days to an

out-of-school suspension than were Grade 8 students who were Not Poor. Contained in Table 4.6 are the descriptive statistics for this school year.

Discussion

In this investigation, the degree to which differences existed in the average number of days assigned to in-school and out-of-school suspension based on the economic status of Grade 6, 7, and 8 students was analyzed for the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years. In each school year and at each grade level, representation ratios of the mean number of days per exclusionary discipline assignment for students who were Poor and Not Poor were calculated to ascertain the extent to which student economic status was related to equitable time spent in each consequence. Provided below are the results by grade level.

With respect to equitable representation across the four school years, Grade 6 students who were Poor received 82.18% of the total days assigned to in-school suspensions. As such, a ratio of 1.05 was presented. Conversely, a ratio of 0.82 was established for Grade 6 students who were Not Poor. If a representation ratio of 1.00 is equitable, Grade 6 students who were Poor were slightly overrepresented and Grade 6 students who were Not Poor were underrepresented. The inequitable assignment of days assigned to in-school suspension for Grade 6 students based on their economic status is depicted in Figure 4.1.

Insert Figure 4.1 about here

Regarding the equitable representation of Grade 7 students across all four school years, students who were Poor received 80.76% of the total days assigned to in-school suspensions. Accordingly, a ratio of 1.05 was presented. With respect to students who were Not Poor, a ratio of 0.84 was established. If a representation ratio of 1.00 is equitable, Grade 7 students who were Poor were slightly overrepresented and Grade 7 students who were Not Poor were underrepresented. The inequitable assignment of days assigned to in-school suspension for Grade 7 students based on their economic status is represented in Figure 4.2.

Insert Figure 4.2 about here

Concerning the equitable representation of Grade 8 students across all four school years, students who were Poor received 77.93% of the total days assigned to in-school suspensions. With respect to students who were Poor, a ratio of 1.04 was presented. Conversely, a ratio of 0.88 was revealed for students who were Not Poor. If a representation ratio of 1.00 is equitable, Grade 8 students who were Poor were slightly overrepresented and Grade 8 students who were Not Poor were underrepresented. Overall, the ratio of the mean number of days for students who were Poor increased along with the student grade level at a lower rate than the mean number of days for students who were Not Poor. These results are consistent with White and Slate (2017) who previously established the disproportionality of days assigned to an in-school suspension as a function of economic status for Texas middle school students in the 2015-2016

school year. The inequitable assignment of days assigned to in-school suspension for Grade 8 students based on their economic status is represented in Figure 4.3.

Insert Figure 4.3 about here

With respect to the equitable representation across the four school years, Grade 6 students who were Poor received 86.52% of the total days assigned to out-of-school suspensions. As such, a ratio of 1.02 was presented. Regarding Grade 6 students who were Not Poor, a ratio of 0.87 was established. If a representation ratio of 1.00 is equitable, Grade 6 students who were Poor were slightly overrepresented and Grade 6 students who were Not Poor were underrepresented. Revealed in Figure 4.4 is the inequitable assignment of days for this consequence.

Insert Figure 4.4 about here

Concerning the equitable representation of Grade 7 students across all four school years, students who were Poor received 84.50% of the total days assigned to out-of-school suspensions. Accordingly, a ratio of 1.02 was presented. With respect to students who were Not Poor, a ratio of 0.89 was established. If a representation ratio of 1.00 is equitable, Grade 7 students who were Poor were slightly overrepresented and Grade 7 students who were Not Poor were underrepresented. The inequitable assignment of days for this consequence is depicted in Figure 4.5.

Insert Figure 4.5 about here

Regarding the equitable representation of Grade 8 students across all four school years, students who were Poor received 82.00% of the total days assigned to out-of-school suspensions. As such, a ratio of 1.02 was presented. Concerning Grade 8 students who were Not Poor, a ratio of 0.91 was revealed. If a representation ratio of 1.00 is equitable, Grade 8 students who were Poor were slightly overrepresented and Grade 8 students who were Not Poor were underrepresented. Overall, the ratio of the mean number of days for students who were Poor increased along with the student grade level at a lower rate than the mean number of days for students who were Not Poor. These results are also congruent with White and Slate (2017) who recently predicted disparate trends in days assigned to out-of-school suspension by the economic status of students during the 2015-2016 school year. The inequitable assignment of days assigned for this consequence is revealed in Figure 4.6.

Insert Figure 4.6 about here

Connections with Existing Literature

In this multiyear, statewide analysis, the existence of disparities in the assignment to exclusionary discipline consequences based on student economic status have only recently been documented in the extant literature (e.g., Barnes et al., 2017; Coleman & Slate, 2016; Khan & Slate, 2016). In just one study, on one school year, currently

published by White and Slate (2017), Texas middle school students who were Poor received a statistically significant higher number of days in an exclusionary discipline consequence than their peers who were Not Poor. As revealed across four school years and three grade levels in this Texas study, Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were Poor were assigned statistically significant more days to an in-school suspension and an out-of-school suspension than students who were Not Poor, including the 2015-2016 school year in which White and Slate (2017) analyzed. Inequitable trends in disciplinary days assigned for students who were Poor were clearly established.

Implications for Policy and for Practice

Major implications for policy and practice can be espoused as a result of the findings documented herein. First, school administrators are urged to collect and disaggregate student discipline data to determine the extent to which the economic status of students is related to more days assigned to in-school and out-of-school suspensions. As a result of these analyses, disparities in days assigned for students who are poor could be revealed and potentially spur school leaders to invest in positive behavioral interventions and supports for students living in poverty. Because the accountability rating system in Texas places considerable weight on the academic achievement on standardized assessments for students who are economically disadvantaged, establishing a campus-wide behavioral management system that aims to decrease exclusionary discipline referrals should lead to increased instructional time and learning for these students.

Additionally, school administrators must verify the accuracy of the total number of students enrolled in the free and reduced-price program for their school. Because

participation is predicated on qualifying students submitting a completed meal application, there may be eligible students who have been unknowingly excluded from participation, thereby increasing the likelihood that the findings in this investigation may actually underreport the extent to which discipline disparities are present for students who are poor. Given the educational demands on teachers who teach in impoverished schools and the lack of state funding to hire more effective teachers, a final implication would be for educational leaders to create school systems and structures that support communication, coordination, and collaboration among faculty and staff. Increasing the help and support for these teachers may reduce employee turnover in these schools.

Recommendations for Future Research

As established in the trends of this empirical investigation, middle school students who were Poor were consistently assigned to more days of either in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension. The presence of inequities in the number of days assigned to the two exclusionary discipline consequences as a function of student economic status remains a serious source of concern for Texas school officials and must be addressed by researchers in future studies. First, researchers are recommended to investigate the degree to which inequities in days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence are present in other Texas grades for students living in poverty. It is unknown if the findings from this study can be extrapolated to Texas high school students from similar impoverished backgrounds. Secondly, given the clear disproportionality of days assigned to Texas middle school students who were poor, extending this study across state levels to middle school students with a similar economic makeup to Texas could effect nationwide student discipline reform. Moreover, expanding this study based on student

ethnicity/race and on gender may reveal additional insight into the degree to which inequities in days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence are present for select historically underserved students (e.g., Black females who are poor). Finally, to determine if the results contained in this investigative context for students who were poor are generalizable to the other two exclusionary disciplinary consequences (i.e., Disciplinary Alternative Education Program placements, Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program placements), researchers are encouraged to conduct investigations into the degree to which the number of days students are assigned to placements is equitable in nature.

Conclusion

In this multiyear analysis, the extent to which inequities were present in the average number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence as a function of the economic status of Texas middle school students was examined. Statewide data on all Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black, Hispanic, and White students for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years were obtained from Texas Education Agency Public Education Information Management System. Inferential statistical analyses revealed statistically significant differences in the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension based on the economic status of students. Across all four school years, in all three grades, Texas middle school students who were Poor were assigned to statistically significant higher days to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than were students who were Not Poor. The presence of inequities in the average number of days assigned to exclusionary discipline consequences for students on the basis of their economic status was established.

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Table 4.1

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 6 Students as a Function of Their Economic Status in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Poor	53,782	4.96	5.91
Not Poor	14,187	3.84	4.73
2013-2014			
Poor	49,212	4.76	5.64
Not Poor	13,146	3.75	4.57
2014-2015			
Poor	46,127	4.62	5.43
Not Poor	13,411	3.65	4.28
2015-2016			
Poor	45,997	4.51	5.31
Not Poor	13,173	3.52	4.06

Table 4.2

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 7 Students as a Function of Their Economic Status in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Poor	59,340	5.24	6.19
Not Poor	17,517	4.26	5.17
2013-2014			
Poor	57,358	5.10	5.99
Not Poor	16,039	4.02	4.73
2014-2015			
Poor	52,401	5.01	6.00
Not Poor	16,271	4.09	4.79
2015-2016			
Poor	51,268	4.92	5.77
Not Poor	15,467	3.91	4.68

Table 4.3

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 8 Students as a Function of Their Economic Status in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Poor	57,123	5.24	6.19
Not Poor	19,389	4.26	5.17
2013-2014			
Poor	55,418	4.95	5.87
Not Poor	18,087	4.17	4.90
2014-2015			
Poor	53,130	4.80	5.64
Not Poor	18,069	4.03	4.80
2015-2016			
Poor	50,410	4.63	5.43
Not Poor	17,059	3.86	4.49

Table 4.4

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-School Suspension for Grade 6 Students as a Function of Their Economic Status in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Poor	26,709	4.04	4.18
Not Poor	4,756	3.39	3.44
2013-2014			
Poor	26,189	4.12	4.30
Not Poor	4,489	3.51	3.80
2014-2015			
Poor	23,703	4.03	4.33
Not Poor	4,570	3.47	3.61
2015-2016			
Poor	24,456	3.97	4.15
Not Poor	4,579	3.43	3.49

Table 4.5

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an In-School Suspension for Grade 7 Students as a Function of Their Economic Status in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Poor	30,574	4.38	4.65
Not Poor	6,522	3.83	4.03
2013-2014			
Poor	31,399	4.57	5.07
Not Poor	6,053	3.86	4.12
2014-2015			
Poor	27,986	3.92	4.90
Not Poor	6,393	4.45	4.47
2015-2016			
Poor	28,464	4.37	4.63
Not Poor	6,062	3.77	3.96

Table 4.6

Descriptive Statistics for the Number of Days Assigned to an Out-of-School Suspension for Grade 8 Students as a Function of Their Economic Status in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 School Years

School Year and Economic Status	<i>n</i>	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>
2012-2013			
Poor	30,872	4.39	4.53
Not Poor	7,581	3.89	3.98
2013-2014			
Poor	31,019	4.61	4.98
Not Poor	7,405	4.03	4.40
2014-2015			
Poor	29,623	4.55	5.00
Not Poor	7,407	4.16	4.55
2015-2016			
Poor	29,053	4.43	4.62
Not Poor	7,292	3.96	4.23

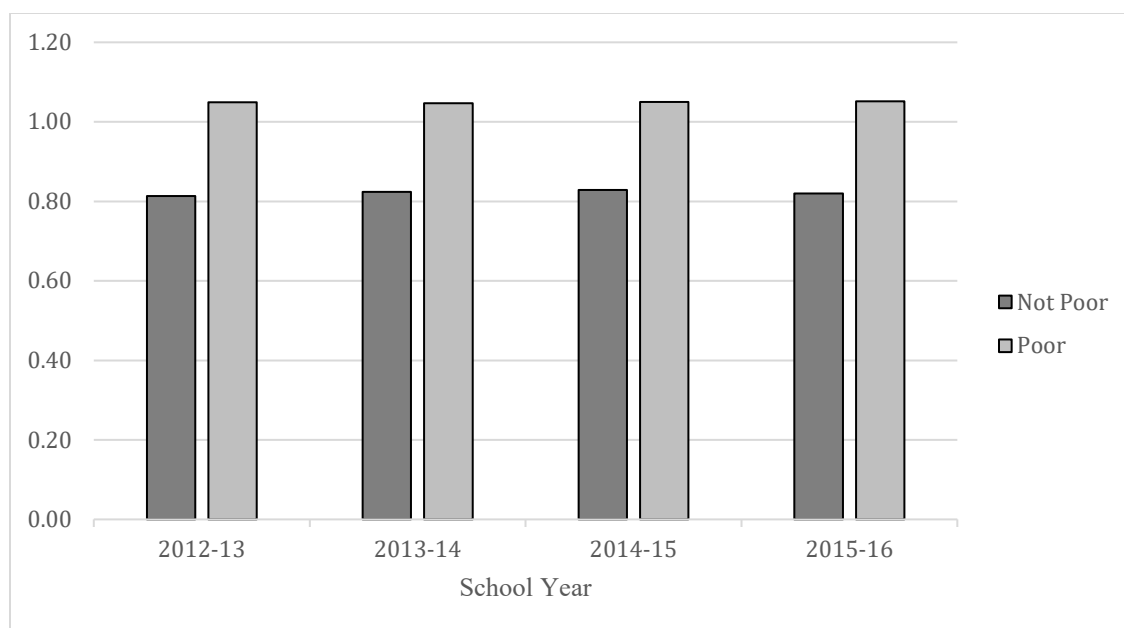


Figure 4.1. Representation ratios of the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 6 students as a function of their economic status for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years.

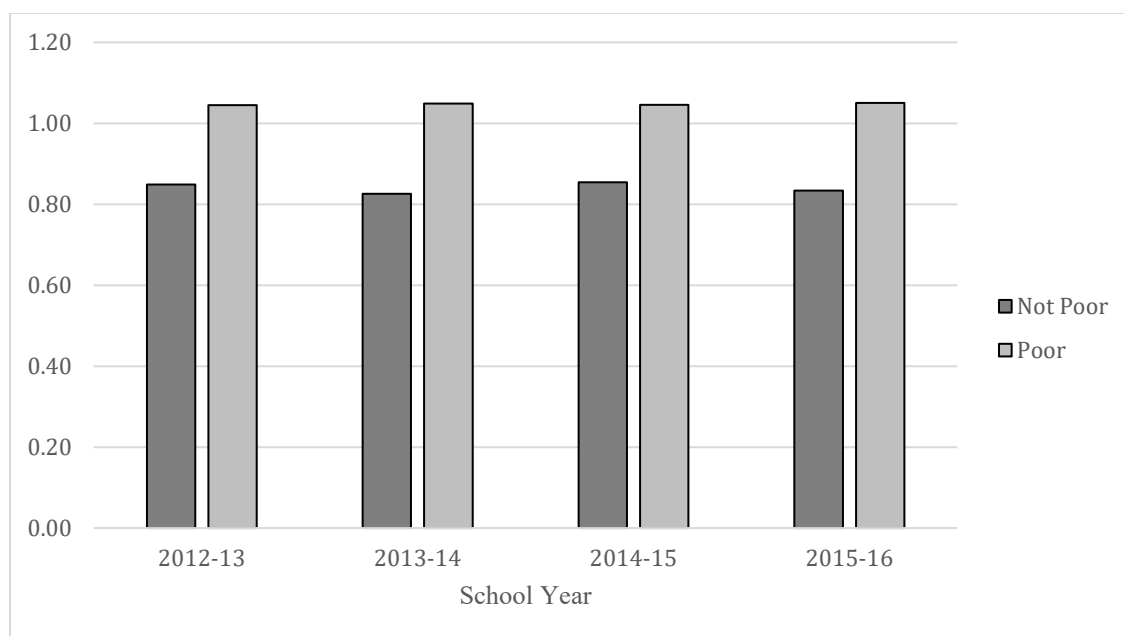


Figure 4.2. Representation ratios of the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 7 students as a function of their economic status for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years.

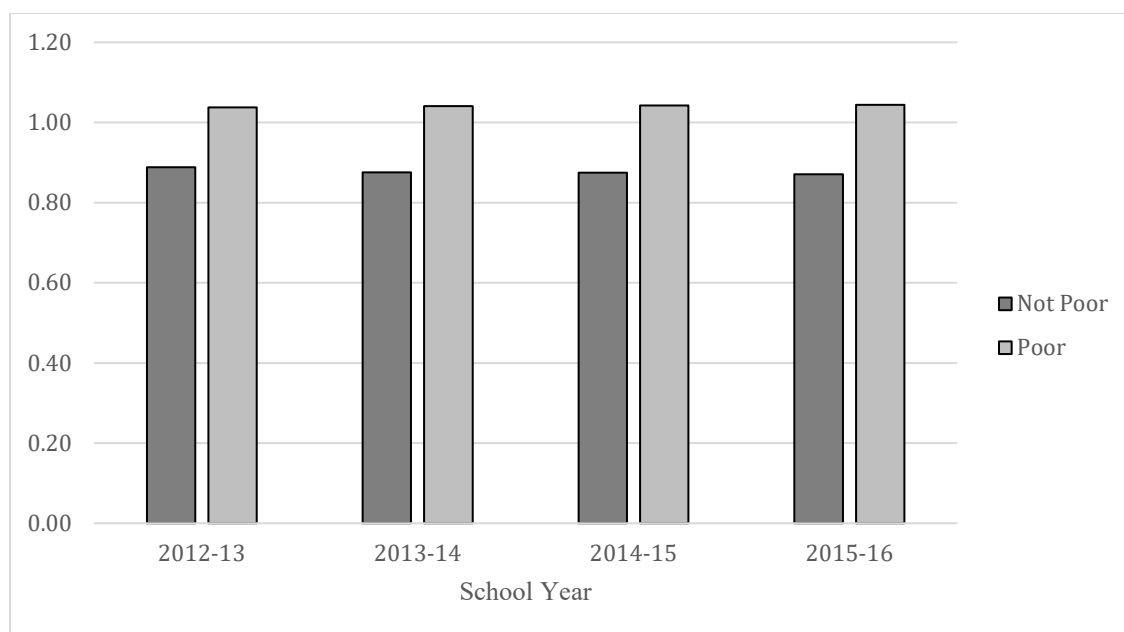


Figure 4.3. Representation ratios of the number of days assigned to an in-school suspension for Grade 8 students as a function of their economic status for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years.

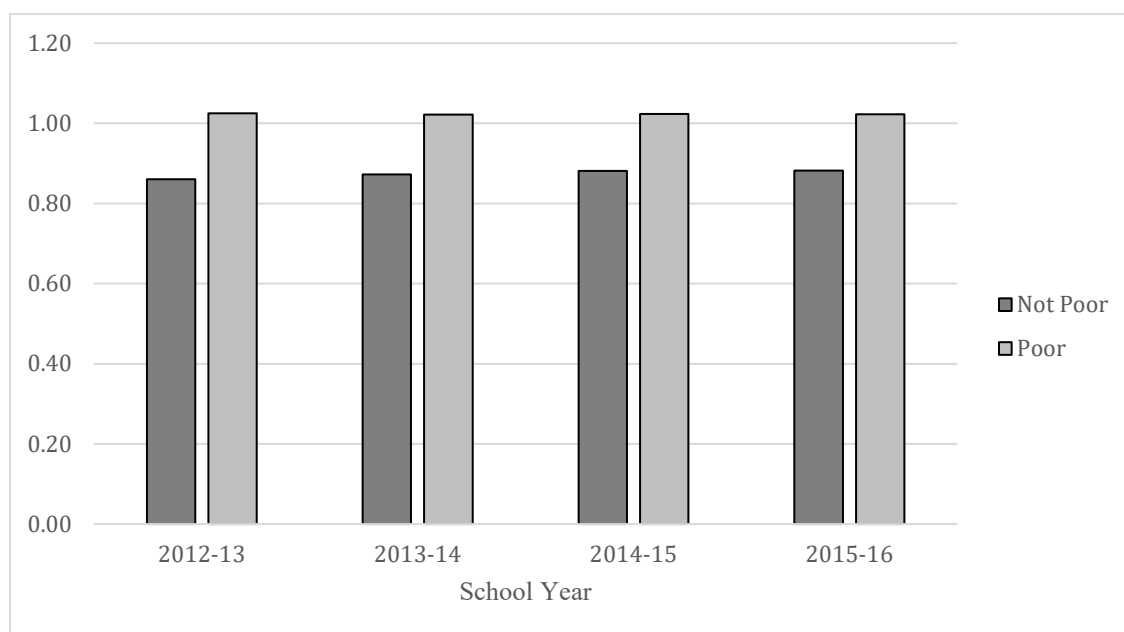


Figure 4.4. Representation ratios of the number of days assigned to an out-of-school suspension for Grade 6 students as a function of their economic status for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years.

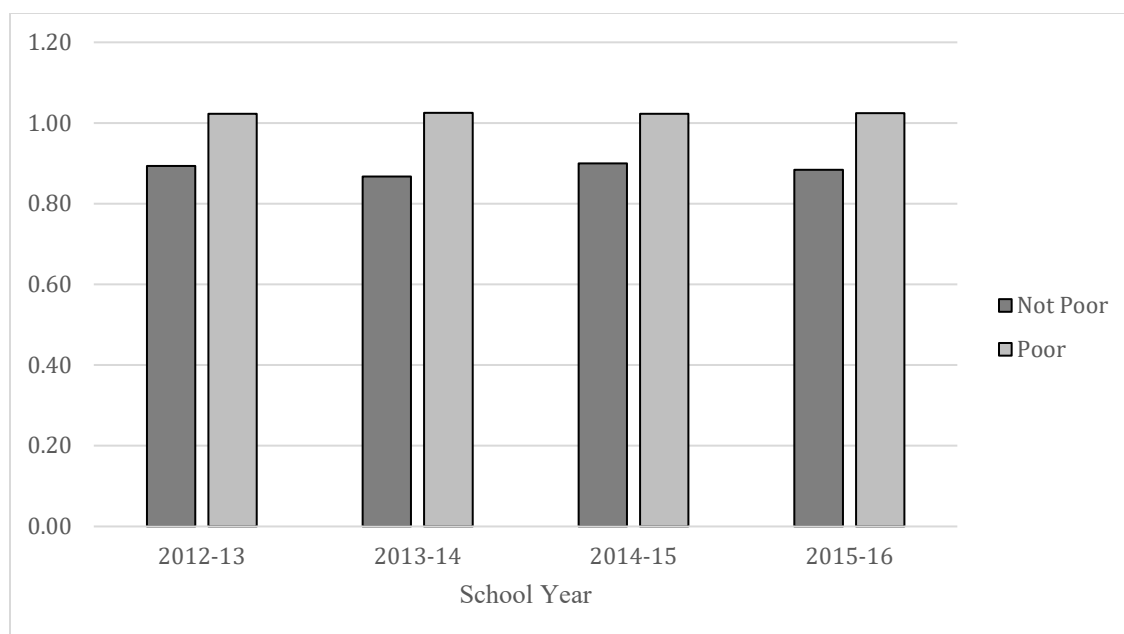


Figure 4.5. Representation ratios of the number of days assigned to an out-of-school suspension for Grade 7 students as a function of their economic status for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years.

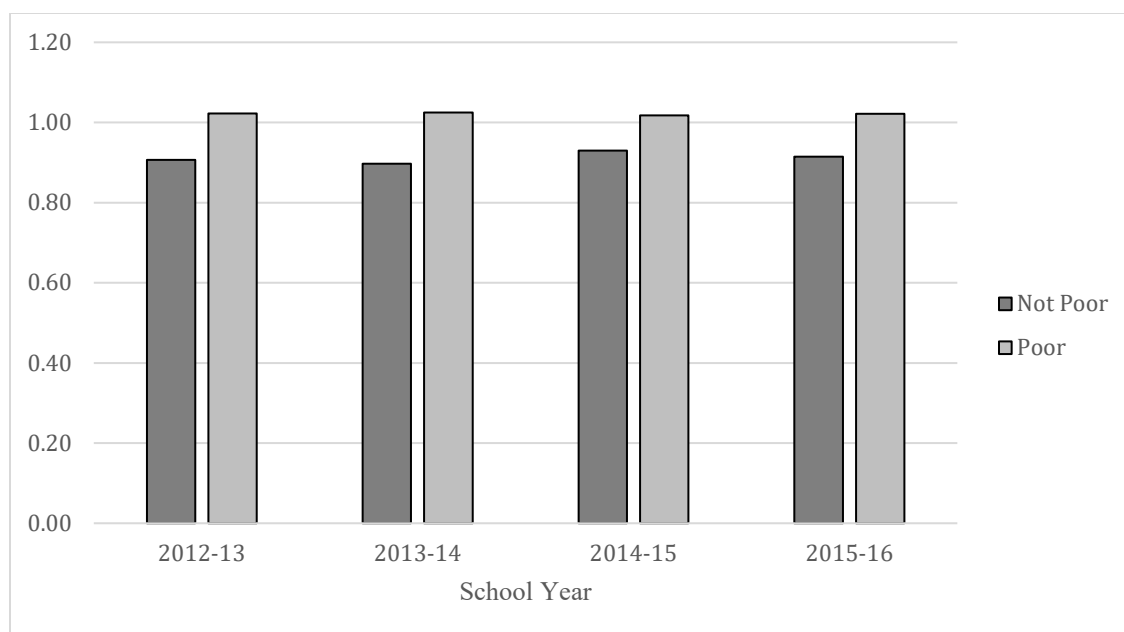


Figure 4.6. Representation ratios of the number of days assigned to an out-of-school suspension for Grade 8 students as a function of their economic status for the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to ascertain the extent to which differences were present in the average number of days students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence as a function of their ethnicity/race and economic status in Texas for the 2012-2013 through the 2015-2016 school years. In the first investigation, the degree to which the number of days differed by exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) by the ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) of Grade 6, 7, and 8 boys was examined. In the second investigation, the degree to which the number of days differed by exclusionary discipline consequence for Grade 6, 7, and 8 girls based on their ethnicity/race was addressed. In the third investigation, the degree to which differences existed in the number of days Grade 6, 7, and 8 students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence based on their economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) was analyzed. Finally, the extent to which differences in days assigned to the two exclusionary discipline consequences by student ethnicity/race and economic status revealed any trends was determined. Contained herein is a discussion of the results for each of the three articles. Additionally, implications for policy and for practice will be provided. In closing, recommendations for future research will be made.

Discussion of Results based on the Ethnicity/Race of Boys

In the first study, statistically significant differences were present in the average number of days boys were assigned to each of the two exclusionary discipline consequences as a function of their ethnicity/race. In the four school years and at each of

the three grade levels, with one exception, Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black boys were assigned the statistically significantly highest number of days to in-school suspension, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. This one exception occurred in the 2012-2013 school year and was between Grade 7 Black and Hispanic boys, as they were assigned to a similar number of days to this consequence. Across all school years and grade levels for out-of-school suspension, Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black boys were assigned the statistically significantly highest number of days to this consequence, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. From these analyses, a clear stair-step effect was yielded as a function of ethnicity/race for boys. Regarding all exclusionary discipline analyses, in all school years, and in all grade levels, Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black boys were assigned the highest number of days in each consequence, followed by Hispanic boys, and then by White boys. Accordingly, Black boys always spent the most amount of time assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension, followed by White boys, and then by Hispanic boys.

Discussion of Results based on the Ethnicity/Race of Girls

In the second study, student ethnicity/race was statistically significantly less related to the number of days girls were assigned to each of the two exclusionary discipline consequences compared to boys. In all school years and grade levels for in-school suspension, the presence of statistically significant differences between Black, Hispanic, and White girls were ascertained in Grade 7 only. Grade 7 Black girls were assigned statistically significantly more days to this consequence, followed by Hispanic girls, and then by White girls. As such, a stair-step effect was observed. A similar trend in the inequitable distribution of time was revealed in the number of days assigned to out-

of-school suspension for Grade 7 girls. These stair-step effects can be interpreted to mean that Grade 7 Black girls received the highest number of days in each of the two exclusionary discipline consequences, followed by Grade 7 Hispanic girls, and then by Grade 7 White girls. Specifically in all school years, at all grade levels, and for all exclusionary discipline analyses, Grade 6, 7, and 8 Black girls always spent the most amount of time assigned to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension, followed by Hispanic girls, and then by White girls.

Discussion of Results based on the Economic Status of Students

In the third study, student economic status was statistically significantly most related to the number of days students were assigned to each of the two exclusionary discipline consequences compared to the ethnicity/race of boys and girls. Across all four school years, in all three grade levels, and for all exclusionary discipline analyses, the economic status of Grade 6, 7, and 8 students was statistically significantly related to more days assigned to an in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for students who were Poor than students who were Not Poor. On average, Grade 6, 7, and 8, students who were Poor received a day more in each of the two consequences compared to students who were Not Poor. From these analyses, representation ratios of the mean number of days assigned to the two exclusionary discipline consequences were ascertained. If a ratio of 1.00 represents an equitable distribution of days between students who were Poor and Not Poor, Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were Poor were always overrepresented in the number of days they were assigned to both in-school and out-of-school suspensions. Conversely, Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were Not Poor were always underrepresented in the days they were assigned to each of the two

consequences. With respect to these two exclusionary consequences, the ratio of the mean for students who were Poor increased along with the student grade level at a lower rate than the mean for students who were Not Poor. As a result, students who were Poor were always assigned more days to in-school and out-of-school suspension than were students who were Not Poor.

Connections with Existing Literature

Clearly established in this multiyear analysis were inextricable links between student demographics and the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence for Texas middle school students. The presence of statistically significant disparities in the number of days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students as a function of their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) and economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor) were noted in all three studies, along with trends across all four school years and at each grade level. Commensurate with findings from a preponderance of researchers (e.g., Crenshaw et al., 2015; Hilberth & Slate, 2012, 2014; Henkel et al., 2015; Jones et al., 2016; Slate et al., 2016; White & Slate, 2018) was the presence of statistically relationships between Black boys, Black girls, and students who were Poor and their disparate assignment to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension. Currently, the extant literature on the inequitable assignment of exclusionary discipline as a function of student ethnicity/race is limited to investigations by disciplinary assignment rates. Therefore, no current publications exist in which researchers have corroborated the presence of statistically significant differences in the number of days assigned to boys and girls on the basis of their ethnicity/race. With respect to study three and the inequitable assignment of exclusionary discipline days for

students as a function of their economic status, only one publication (White & Slate, 2017) exists in which the results from this study can be ascertained. Previously established by these authors in the 2015-2016 school year were disparities in the number of days assigned to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were Poor in Texas. To expand upon the findings from their recent investigation, representation ratios were generated in study three to establish inequitable trends in the days assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence across the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who were Poor.

Implications for Policy and Practice

As a result of the analyses conducted in all three journal-ready studies, several implications for policy and practice can be proposed. First and foremost, school administrators are encouraged to examine school discipline data to determine the degree to which the number of days differ in the assignment of exclusionary discipline consequences to students based on their demographics. Should the disaggregation of data reveal the presence of inequities in disciplinary days assigned to any one student group (i.e., Black students, students who are at-risk, students who receive special education services), campus principals are urged to implement behavioral practices that focus on decreasing the number of discipline referrals that remove these students from their usual learning environment. Because exclusionary discipline consequences have been shown to unfairly target students of color and students living in poverty, their removal from the classroom can be expected to contribute to the achievement gap present between affluent, White students and non-White students who are poor. Continued removal from the

classroom, and for longer periods of time, reduces the likelihood that Black, Hispanic, and students who are economically disadvantaged will experience favorable educational outcomes.

Next, school district leaders should explore adopting discipline management systems that streamline behavioral expectations for students across all campuses. Establishing a set of discipline policies to which all educators can consistently follow should reduce the marginalization of students from diverse backgrounds. Accordingly, school district administrators are encouraged to replace ineffective, punitive practices with interventions and supports that buttress the social and emotional development of students. To this end, programs that increase student capacity to monitor and adjust their behavior may reduce the behaviors (i.e., bullying, fighting, and extreme forms of defiance) typically associated with middle schools and for which exclusionary discipline is issued.

Thirdly, as the population of Black, Hispanic, and students who are economically disadvantaged continue to rise in Texas (National Center for Education Statistics, 2017), educational leaders should evaluate school district practices for recruiting, hiring, and retaining a culturally diverse teacher workforce. Results from these evaluations should be used in selecting professional development that increase the cultural capital of teachers. Closing the generational disconnects that may prevent teachers from building relevant, meaningful relationships with students would be a benefit. Finally, because the assignment to an exclusionary discipline consequence has a negative influence on student achievement, campus principals, particularly on Title I campuses, are encouraged to use progress monitoring tools for identifying the campus disciplinary practices that may have

a negative influence on the academic achievement of historically underperforming student groups susceptible to exclusionary discipline assignment.

Recommendations for Future Research

Given the importance of the findings from the three articles in this journal-ready dissertation, several recommendations for future research can be offered. Based upon the student demographic characteristics (i.e., ethnicity/race, economic status) examined for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students, the first recommendation for researchers is to differentiate the analyses of student economic status by gender. Results that reveal additional inequities for boys and girls by their economic status could determine whether an inquiry into the degree of student poverty is merited. A second recommendation for researchers would be to extend the study of student demographic characteristics to other states with similar student enrollment composition and exclusionary discipline assignment rates. Whether the results established herein are generalizable to other states for similar students is currently unknown. A third recommendation is for researchers to replicate this study for students in elementary school. Results obtained from these analyses may determine the grade level in which disparities in disciplinary days arise. Further, results may reveal the extent to which ethnicity/race or economic status is responsible for engendering such disparities in days for either exclusionary discipline consequence. Ideally, researchers should extend this study to students in high school to determine if trends in days assigned to in-school suspension or out-of-school suspension are present across primary and secondary grade levels. As a final recommendation for future researchers, the degree to which days differed in the assignment to more punitive exclusionary discipline consequences (i.e., Discipline Alternative Education Program placements, Juvenile

Justice Alternative Education Program placements) for middle school students based on similar demographic characteristics analyzed herein is needed if achieving equitable discipline for all students is to be realized.

Conclusion

The purpose of this journal-ready dissertation was to determine the extent to which inequities existed in the number of days students were assigned to an exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension) as a function of their ethnicity/race (i.e., Black, Hispanic, and White) and economic status (i.e., Poor, Not Poor). Texas statewide data in the 2012-2013, 2013-2014, 2014-2015, and 2015-2016 school years were analyzed for Grade 6, 7, and 8 students who received days of in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension. With the exception of one school year and grade level, Black boys were assigned statistically significantly more days to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than Hispanic boys and White boys. In all school years and grade levels, Black girls were assigned statistically significantly more days to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than Hispanic girls and White girls. Across all years and grade levels for boys and girls, Hispanic students were assigned more days in each consequence than White students. Established as a result of these disparate findings was a stair-step effect. Black students always received the highest number of days in an exclusionary discipline consequence, followed by Hispanic students, and then by White students. Concerning all school years and grade levels for students based on their economic status, students who were Poor were assigned statistically significantly more days to in-school suspension and out-of-school suspension than students who were Not Poor. In each study, across all school years, and in all grade

levels, statistically significant differences were established in the average number of days assigned to the two exclusionary discipline consequences as a function of ethnicity/race and economic status for students.

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APPENDIX

10/31/2018

IRB-2018-170 - Initial: Exempt from IRB Review - White, John

IRB-2018-170 - Initial: Exempt from IRB Review

orsp@irb.shsu.edu

Wed 10/31/2018 1:35 PM

To: Slate, John <JRS051@SHSU.EDU>; White, John <jww034@SHSU.EDU>;

Cc: Miles, Sharla <sharla_miles@shsu.edu>;

Sam Houston
State University

Date: Oct 31, 2018 1:35 PM CDT

TO: John White

John Slate

FROM: SHSU IRB

PROJECT TITLE: Inequities in the Number of Days Assigned to an Exclusionary Discipline Consequence as a Function of Ethnicity/Race and Economic Status for Texas Middle School Students: A Multiyear, Statewide Analysis

PROTOCOL #: IRB-2018-170

SUBMISSION TYPE: Initial

ACTION: Exempt

DECISION DATE: October 31, 2018

EXEMPT REVIEW CATEGORY: Category 4. Research involving the collection or study of existing data, documents, records, pathological specimens, or diagnostic specimens, if these sources are publicly available or if the information is recorded by the investigator in such a manner that subjects cannot be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects.

Greetings,

Thank you for your submission of Initial Review materials for this project. The Sam Houston State University (SHSU) IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT FROM IRB REVIEW according to federal regulations.

An exemption means that your particular study presents little or no risk to participants. Likewise, research involving existing data, medical records, and pathologic specimens usually has little, if any, associated risk, particularly if these sources are publicly available or if subject identifiers are removed from the data or specimens.

We will retain a copy of this correspondence within our records.

*** What should investigators do when considering changes to an exempt study that could make it nonexempt?**

It is the PI's responsibility to consult with the IRB whenever questions arise about whether planned changes to an exempt study might make that study nonexempt human subjects research.

In this case, please make available sufficient information to the IRB so it can make a correct determination.

If you have any questions, please contact the IRB Office at 936-294-4875 or irb@shsu.edu. Please include your project title and protocol number in all correspondence with this committee.

Sincerely,

Donna Desforges
IRB Chair, PHSC

<https://mail.shsu.edu/owa/#viewmodel=ReadMessageItem&ItemID=AQMkADQwYjVmYWRLWMwMjktNGUzOS04N2I3LWI1MzJmZyQyOGJmMwBGAA...> 1/1

VITA

John W. White

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Master of Education, Secondary Education, December 2009

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Principal, Bridge City Middle School, Bridge City ISD, June 2018-present

Dean of Instruction, North Forest High School, Houston ISD, August 2017-June 2018

Assistant Principal, North Forest High School, Houston ISD, August 2015-August 2017

Academy Coordinator, Cypress Creek High School, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, August 2013-August 2015

Teacher, Cypress Creek High School, Cypress-Fairbanks ISD, August 2012-August 2015

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RECOGNITIONS

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White, J. W. & Slate, J. R. (2018). Differences in out-of-school suspension assignments by the ethnicity/race of Texas high school students. *Inaugural Edition of the Journal of Educational System*, 2(1), 1-8. Retrieved from <http://www.sryahwapublications.com/journal-of-educational-system/pdf/v2-i1/1.pdf>

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