PERSISTING INEQUITY: SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS' SOCIAL DOMINANCE ORIENTATION AND DISCIPLINARY PRACTICES

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Abstract

Empirical research has established that exclusionary discipline is applied to black students at a higher rate than white students for similar offenses, and that this disproportionality cannot be attributed to the severity or frequency of misconduct. Exclusionary discipline, which removes a student from the educational setting, poses significant challenges to academic and social well-being and introduces a host of proximal issues for black students. This dissertation draws upon Social Dominance Theory (SDT), which examines how beliefs aligned to existing hierarchies perpetuate discrimination and oppression, to explore how administrators' anti-egalitarian beliefs and disciplinary practices influence the disproportionate application of exclusionary discipline towards black students in a large urban school district. Using an ordinary least square regression model, this study investigated data collected from high school administrators regarding their anti-egalitarian attitudes and disciplinary practices to predict relationships with discipline disproportionality. Results indicated that administrators' anti-egalitarian attitudes positively correlated with the presence of exclusionary discipline gaps, particularly in the areas of alcohol, tobacco, and drug-related incidents, disruptive behavior, and bullying. Furthermore, disciplinary practices such as anti-suspension, preventative measures, and system approaches also showed significant correlations with exclusionary discipline gaps when controlling for anti-egalitarian attitudes. These findings suggest that disciplinary decisions are influenced by administrators' beliefs in maintaining social hierarchies, contributing to the disproportionate discipline of black students. The study highlights the need for education systems to address discipline disproportionality as a systemic issue rooted in power dynamics and social hierarchies. By recognizing the role of school administrators in perpetuating

inequities, educational institutions can implement strategies to promote equity, inclusion, and improved outcomes for all students.

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Dedication

This is dedicated to my parents, to whom I owe my passion for social justice and love of service. Together they instilled the importance of dedication and hard work to achieve my dreams. For my father, Dr. James R. Allison, who taught me to ignore the noise, believe in myself, and never allow circumstance to become my limitation. For my mother, Jennifer Westerman, who showed me the world and taught me the beauty of selfless generosity. And for my bonus Dad, Thomas Westerman, who taught me how to take things in stride and keep smiling. Their hope for a better future will continue to inspire my work to educate and empower our next generation of children.

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Chapter One: Introduction

National, state, and local data demonstrates significant disparities in the application of exclusionary discipline practices to black students (U.S. Department of Education, 2018). Exclusionary discipline is defined as the application of out-of-school suspensions and expulsions by school administrators that serve to remove or exclude a student from the educational setting. Dozens of studies have documented that exclusionary discipline is applied to black students at a higher rate than white students for similar offenses (Losen et al., 2015; Losen & Gillespie, 2012; Losen & Skiba, 2010; McIntosh et al., 2014, 2018; Quintana & Mahgoub, 2016). According to the Office for Civil Rights (2018), black students comprise only eight percent of the nationwide student population, however they account for twenty-five percent of students receiving one or more out-of-school suspensions and twenty-three percent of students receiving expulsions. Black students are the most disciplined subpopulation in American schools (Office of Civil Rights, 2018).

Exclusionary discipline practices introduce a host of proximal issues for black students. Existing research finds that exclusionary discipline of black students is associated with lower achievement (Fenning & Jenkins, 2018; Losen & Skiba, 2010; Mallett, 2016; Mcneal, 2014; Raffaele Mendez, 2003; Rocque & Paternoster, 2011; Wald & Losen, 2003). Black students are subjected to a pattern of differential treatment and are more frequently disciplined for subjective infractions such as defiance or disrespect, whereas white students were more likely to be disciplined for objective infractions such as smoking or fighting (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Skiba et al., 2002). Empirical research has shown that disproportionate discipline of black students is not attributed to greater frequency or severity of misconduct (Skiba & Williams, 2014; Skiba et al., 2011), and persisted even when controlling for teacher behavior ratings

(Bradshaw et al., 2010), poverty level (Skiba et al., 2011), and socioeconomic status (Wallace et al., 2008). The literature suggests that "schools with highly differential patterns of suspension by race may be perceived by students as unfair and less inclusive environments, particularly by Black students…", indicating the detrimental effects of exclusionary discipline are impactful at both the psychological and societal levels (Bottiani et al., 2017).

When exploring traditional explanations for discipline disproportionality, the insidious effects of educators' implicit bias are often credited with the perpetuation of this inequity. Implicit biases, defined as mental associations based on social categories that can lead to discriminatory behaviors without conscious intent, can lead to negative stereotypes (e.g. criminality) for African Americans, which in turn become "powerful influences on the punitive treatment of students of color" (Gregory et al., 2017). Research on implicit bias indicates that educating individuals in the process of making unbiased decisions will reduce the occurrence of bias and stereotyping (Devine et al., 2012; Girvan, 2016; Lai et al., 2013; McIntosh et al., 2014), however there is also evidence that implicit bias does not exclusively motivate behavior and interacts with a variety of contextual factors that influence action (Fishbein, 2010; Marcucci, 2020). Notwithstanding policy efforts to engage educators in recognizing and rectifying their implicit biases (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Kent; McIntosh et al., 2014; Smolkowski et al., 2016), discipline inequities still exist.

Sidanius, Pratto, van Laar, and Levin (2004) found that approaches focusing on individual psychological motivations for prejudice and discrimination fail to address systematic group oppression, structural inequalities, and their institutional and ideological underpinnings. Thus, while implicit bias may be associated with discipline disproportionality, it alone does not comprehensively explain the institutionalization of the inequities in the application of

exclusionary discipline found in our educational system (Wilson, 2017). What insight might be offered by a systemic perspective that considers how bias, power, and hierarchy influence the "unequal distribution of economic, cultural, and social capital…[that intersect] in schools to reproduce racial inequality without the use of explicitly discriminatory laws or practices" (Anyon et al., 2018)?

Social Dominance Theory (SDT) integrates the concept of implicit bias as a component of the processes that manifest and perpetuate systemic hierarchical systems of inequity. Unlike the focus of implicit bias on the individual, SDT uses the lens of group hierarchy to understand discrimination and subordination (Wilson, 2017). Social dominance theorists posit that group-based social hierarchies exist at both the individual and institutional levels, and credit the confluence of these with discriminatory attitudes and practices (Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001). SDT seeks to explain the universal and subtle forms of discrimination and oppression faced by so many during their daily lives (Sidanius et al., 2004). By integrating perspectives from a variety of psychological and structural theories to understand the relationship between the degree of group-based inequality and the structures responsible for maintaining this inequality, SDT seeks to explain why oppression is so widespread and tenacious (Sidanius et al., 2004).

Carter, Skiba, Arredondo, and Pollock (2017) contend that schools cannot effectively address racial discipline disparities without first recognizing and addressing the longstanding influence of hierarchical power structures, for one must consider "the full range of racialized historical and current factors that shape school life in the United States….[the] policies that enforced unequal treatment placed African Americans…at an economic and social disadvantage that persists to this day" (p.2). SDT provides a frame for a multi-leveled analysis of disproportionality in exclusionary discipline which considers the impact of "cultural ideologies

and policies, institutional practices, relations of individuals to others inside and outside their groups, [and] the psychological predispositions of individuals" (Pratto et al., 2006). SDT analyzes psychological predispositions via an individual's Social Dominance Orientation (SDO), or measure of support for inequality between social groups and policies that maintain the status quo (Hindriks et al., 2014; Ho et al., 2015).

Exclusionary Discipline as a Leadership Issue

The National Educational Leadership Preparation Program (NELP) Program Recognition Standards are cohesive guidelines that detail how to empower candidates with the knowledge, skills, and commitments necessary for successful leadership at the district level (NPBEA, 2018). The NELP Standard 3 focuses on the capacity of district leaders to develop and maintain a supportive, equitable, culturally responsive, and inclusive district culture. A primary tenet of Standard 3 is that candidates demonstrate the ability to evaluate, advocate, and cultivate culturally responsive instructional and behavior support practices grounded in equity and inclusion (NPBEA, 2018). A lack of equity in the application of exclusionary discipline toward black students speaks directly to this standard, and school administrators play a critical role in establishing and maintaining an inclusive culture. Administrators are the school personnel responsible for disciplinary decisions, and their beliefs about discipline and students impact how they interpret and apply exclusionary practices. The U.S. Department of Justice and U.S. Department of Education (2014) produced a joint letter that concluded:

> …significant and unexplained racial disparities in student discipline give rise to concerns that schools may be engaging in racial discrimination that violates the Federal civil rights laws…in our investigations we have found cases where African-American students were

> disciplined more harshly and more frequently because of their race than similarly situated white students. In short, racial discrimination in school discipline is a real problem. (p. 4)

School administrators frequently make decisions in contested philosophical and political territory with its roots in conflicting intents ascribed to education as informed by stakeholders' varied expectations for educator response to discipline (Kennedy et al., 2017; Noguera, 1995). According to DeMatthews et al. (2017), school administrators bear some responsibility for the racial discipline gap because when applying consequences "they often do so by adhering to policies and broader cultural norms that place black and latina/o students at risk for school failure and exclusion" (p. 520). Empirical and theoretical research show that American schools ascribe to the Foucault's panoptic discipline approach, or the belief in deterrence through high levels of surveillance and strict punishment (Foucault, 1979; Gastic & Johnson, 2015). In a practical sense, school administrators apply this panoptic approach via exclusionary discipline and institute a "hidden curriculum" that prepares students for a "life of marginalization and limited economic or civic contribution" with long-term consequences to both the disciplined students and society (Marcucci, 2020, p. 51). Alternately, principals who equip students with critical thinking skills or practical workplace skills, focus on preventative measures, and believe their teachers can handle discipline on their own are less likely to employ exclusionary discipline (Kafka, 2011; Marcucci, 2020). NELP Standard 3 calls specifically to promote students' current and future success and well-being, so developing understandings around the disproportionate application of exclusionary discipline is critical to improving outcomes for black male students.

This study directly supports the strategic plan priorities of the participants' school district. One of the plan's priority areas outlines efforts to ensure students and staff are safe and engaged at school. Specifically, the measurable objectives seek to decrease rates of suspension

and discretionary expulsion referrals, as well as reduce the disproportionality in the rate of suspensions and discretionary expulsion referrals. The plan states that this will be achieved through a reduction of both overall numbers of suspensions and discretionary expulsions and a narrowing of the gap between the suspension/discretionary expulsion rates of the highest and lowest subgroups. The district's efforts will be guided by initiatives to develop the staff and structures at the school level, including relevant professional development on culturally competent teaching, proactive strategies, and Multi-Tiered Systems of Support. A second priority area highlights decreasing student proficiency gaps between subgroups by improving the quality of curriculum, instruction, and assessment. Exclusionary disciplinary practices result in the disparate loss of instructional time for black students. As highlighted by recommendations released by a district advisory council, the district's efforts to produce high levels of achievement were hindered by ineffective policies and practices concerning discipline, and the committee recognized the need to enhance equity, reduce disparities, and improve outcomes.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this quantitative correlational design study is to assess the relationship between school administrators' Social Dominance Orientation and rates of exclusionary discipline as applied to black and white adolescents in a large urban school district. Recognizing that school leaders greatly influence the climate and governing structures of schools (Hallinger & Leithwood, 1994; R. J. Skiba, Chung, et al., 2014), the leaders' social dominance orientation and disciplinary practices may show a correlation to the school's application of exclusionary discipline for behavioral infractions. When considered within the framework of Social Dominance Theory, a school leader's social dominance orientation may influence the degree of discipline disproportionality present within a school. The study explores the hierarchy-enhancing

outcomes of educational institutions and seeks to explain the persistence of inequities in discipline considering SDT's claim that institutions, to enact their hierarchal function, will attract individuals whose level of social dominance orientation and endorsement of legitimizing myths matches that of the organization.

This study will attempt to answer the following research question:

1. What is the relationship between the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO-E) of the school administrator and the rate of exclusionary discipline imposed on black and white students?
2. What is the relationship between school administrators' Disciplinary Practices and the rate of exclusionary discipline imposed on black and white students?

Significance of the Study

School discipline and school safety are primary areas of concern for school administrators (P. Fenning & Jenkins, 2018; Leithwood et al., 2008; Sebastian & Allensworth, 2012). Research demonstrates that it is critical to address school and classroom factors to impact patterns of racial disproportionality (Burris, 2011). While there have been studies going beyond directionality to suggest that the application of exclusionary discipline is intentional or by design (Burris, 2011), the data is limited in this regard. As of now, there is insufficient data to conclude that schools intend to accelerate the movement of some students, or some groups of students, toward school exclusion and the school-to-prison pipeline (Skiba et al., 2014). However, extensive research on the persistence of exclusionary discipline and its accompanying negative impacts on black students show that additional studies are needed to develop insight into why this disparity persists.

While references to implicit bias and race are common throughout research regarding exclusionary discipline disproportionality toward black students, this study brings additional

perspective to the role of the administrator in this phenomenon by connecting bias, systems, and hierarchy through the theoretical framework Social Dominance Theory. This research presents the opportunity to look differently at the individual decisions that contribute to maintaining the systemic hierarchy as manifested at the institutional level through our public schools. It has the potential to add perspective on the phenomenon of disproportionate application of exclusionary discipline toward black students.

Historically disparate educational outcomes for black students in American public schools and the ongoing failure of attempted remedies (Kafka, 2011), point to schools being hierarchy-enhancing institutions, or environments that favor social inequality and current relations of domination among unequal social groups. This study focuses on the application of exclusionary discipline as a contributing factor to the institutional disadvantage black students experience through public education. The contribution of the administrators who run schools and bear the primary responsibility of dispensing exclusionary discipline may provide insight into why inequities and disparate outcomes persist (Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2000; Mukuria, 2002; Rausch & Skiba, 2005; Skiba, Simmons, Staudinger, et al., 2003; Skiba et al., 1997). The critical influence of school administrators on the governance of schools must be examined to improve educational outcomes for black students, both academically and socially (Wu et al., 1982). Social Dominance Theory (SDT) brings new perspective to the persistent challenge of discipline disproportionality by studying school administrators' role in maintaining inequity and social hierarchy through the application of exclusionary discipline.

Key Terms and Definitions

Critical Race Theory: Framework of legal analysis based on the premise that race is a socially constructed category used to oppress and exploit people of color. Racism is inherent in the law

and legal institutions of the United States, which function to create and maintain social, economic, and political inequalities between whites and nonwhites.

De-Racing: Ignoring societal structures and institutional structures that sustain racial hierarchy.

Discipline Disparity: Instances when students who belong to specific demographic groups are subjected to exclusionary discipline disproportionately, or at a greater rate than students who belong to other demographic groups.

Discipline Disproportionality: Racial disproportionality in discipline is the overrepresentation of black students that are subject to exclusionary discipline as compared to the total population of children in the community or institution.

Dysconscious Racism: Form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant white norms and privileges through an impaired consciousness or distorted way of thinking about race.

Exclusionary Discipline: Here defined as out-of-school suspension and expulsion from the school environment. application of an out-of-school suspension and expulsion by school administrators that serves to remove or exclude a student from the educational setting.

Exclusionary Discipline Rate: The per-pupil rate of suspensions and expulsions for black students as relative to the per-pupil rate of suspensions and expulsions for white students.

Hierarchy-Attenuating Institution: Normative environment in hierarchical societies which serves to attenuate the hierarchy and inequalities. Reduces social inequality and relations of domination.

Hierarchy-Enhancing Institution: Normative environment in hierarchical societies which serves to enhance the hierarchy and inequalities. Favors social inequality and relations of domination.

Implicit Bias: Mental associations based on social categories that can lead to discriminatory behaviors without conscious intent.

Implicit Association Test (IAT): Response latency test that measures implicit attitudes by assessing the strength of associations between concepts and evaluations or stereotypes.

In Loco Parentis: A Latin term meaning "in place of a parent" and refers to the legal responsibility of some person or organization to perform some of the functions or responsibilities of a parent.

Institutional Racism: Systematic policies or laws and practices that provide differential access to goods, services, and opportunities of society by race. Specifically discriminatory policies and practices within organizations and institutions.

Legitimizing Myths: Attitudes, values, beliefs, stereotypes, and ideologies which provide an intellectual and moral justification for social practices.

Racial Spaces: Social reality created by and experienced through patterns of mobility and immobility that have been organized around the logic and historical practices of white supremacy.

School/School-Based Administrators: School leaders responsible for overseeing the administrative duties at school and providing an equitable, safe, and productive learning environment for all students and faculty at their institution.

School-to-Prison Pipeline: Construct used to describe policies and practices, especially with respect to school discipline, in the public schools and juvenile justice system that decrease the probability of school success for children and youth and increase the probability of negative life outcomes. Indicates a direction of causality related to the policies and practices of schools rather than solely the characteristics of individual students, are responsible for adverse outcomes among students of color.

Social Desirability: A type of response bias by which respondents project a favorable image of themselves by reporting an answer in a way they deem to be more socially acceptable than would be their honest answer.

Social Dominance Theory: The effects of power can be explained by the motivation of individuals or dominant groups to protect and justify the social arrangements as they exist.

Social Dominance Orientation: Measure of an individual's general attitude toward and support of relations of domination and preference for hierarchy within a social system.

Structural Racism: A system in which public policies, institutional practices, cultural representations, and other norms work in various, often reinforcing ways to perpetuate racial group inequity. It is a feature of the social, economic, and political systems in which we all exist.

Zero Tolerance: Policy of issuing the most severe punishment possible to every individual who commits a crime or breaks a rule without exception.

Chapter Two: Literature Review

A History of Exclusionary Discipline in K-12 Schools

Early Beginnings: Promoting Social Order

The K-12 public education systems' reliance on exclusionary discipline is rooted in the history of school discipline in the United States (Kafka, 2011). Schools originated their approach to discipline under the longstanding legal doctrine of in loco parentis, schools and educators were to act "in place of the parent" and were assumed to have a child's best interest when imposing discipline (DeMitchell, 2008). At the turn of the 19th century, the purpose and process of education was the promotion of social order with the dominant belief being that students should be trained to submit to the authority of the teachers, systems, and society at-large (Kafka, 2011; Tyack, 1974). This era also developed the idea that, based on social and genetic differences, "while some students were of the managing class, others were destined for less intellectually rigorous work, and public schools should be organized to meet the needs and goals of each distinct layer" (Kafka, 2011, p. 33). By sorting and ranking students by perceived ability and pre-determined outcomes, schools maintained social and economic disparities among groups, and "sought to normalize students to group differences, and to the notion that socioeconomic inequity was a natural - if not ordained -aspect of diversity" (Kafka, 2011, p. 33). Public education shifted to include the placement of students in "special schools" under the auspices of serving their unique needs, and schools began to connect poor performance to the notion of inferior mental capacity of groups of individuals, primarily immigrants and black students from poverty. This approach reflected a psychological or behavioral perspective of student behavior, in which misconduct or failure to succeed was understood to indicate students' cognitive or developmental deficits (Anyon et al., 2018). Tyack claims that "despite frequent

good intentions and abundant rhetoric about 'equal educational opportunity,' schools have rarely taught the children of the poor effectively – and this failure has been systematic, not idiosyncratic" (Tyack, 1974, p. 11).

1950-1970: Bureaucratic Structure

Schools began to develop centralized discipline policies in the 1950s and 1960s, encouraged by a movement by teachers that narrowed the scope of their responsibilities and argued the education of troubled youth required the expertise and attention of specially trained personnel (Hyman & Wise, 1979). This marked the rise in regulation and proceduralism that would become a standard aspect of public schools and represented a distinct departure from the doctrine of in loco parentis. The 1970s witnessed further formalization of school's bureaucratic structures through centralized discipline policies, relegation of discipline authority to forces outside of the classroom, and the expansion of the involvement of non-educators such as law enforcement and security officers in school's disciplinary structures. The resulting policies framed school discipline as a system of punishment and mandated stricter punitive penalties, many squarely aimed at black youth because of racialized national discourse about juvenile crime, violence, and defiance in schooling (Kafka, 2011). Schools became institutional systems that reinforced injustice for some while simultaneously offering opportunities to others, and though public schools did not create the pervasive societal inequities, they play a systemic part in perpetuating them (Tyack, 1974).

The focus on school safety became prominent in American society with the origination of the Gallup Poll's Public's Attitudes Toward the Public Schools in 1969 (Nichols et al., 1999). The 1970s witnessed an explosion of concerns that the nation's schools were confronting gang-related violence, crime, and use of illegal drugs. Media reports stoked fear in the public,

concerns that politicians capitalized on through promises to restore "law and order" as manifested through policies such as Nixon's "War on Drugs" (Kafka, 2011).

1980-2000: Zero Tolerance

Sociopolitical influences during the 1980s and 1990s further grew public concern about school safety (Bottiani et al., 2017) and mainstream media perpetuated a fear of black males as "super-predators" (Dilulio, 1995, p. 23). This led to policies shaped by the belief that school violence and crime were worse than the reality and contributed to an increase in punitive measures rather than preventative efforts (Hyman & Perone, 1998). The term "zero tolerance" stemmed from a 1980s era U.S. Customs Service antidrug program, but states and school districts started using the phrase to address school discipline soon after (Kafka, 2011). This idea that some acts of student misconduct required strict punishment without exception was translated into federal policy in 1994, when President Bill Clinton signed the Gun Free Schools Act. This law required the immediate expulsion of any student found in possession of a gun (later it came to include any weapon) and a referral to the criminal or juvenile justice system (Kafka, 2011). Many states and local districts expanded these zero tolerance policies far beyond the rules and regulations of the Gun Free Schools Act. During this period, "state legislatures overhauled their juvenile justice laws to ease accessibility to juvenile justice records, increase opportunities for prosecutors to try juveniles as adults for serious crimes, enable local governments to enact curfews, and expand definitions of what constituted 'gang involvement' and other youth-related crimes (Fabelo et al., 2011, p. 2). State legislatures were limited in their ability to enact effective reform in the juvenile justice system due to certain characteristics of the legislative process, namely their focus on philosophy and emotion, perceptions of voter beliefs, and tendency toward short-term fixes rather than long-term solutions (Torbet, 1998). These changes coincided to

create an atmosphere that accountability through punishment was the way to create a safer community, and policy and practitioners urged stricter enforcement of disruptive or dangerous actions in schools (Koch, 2000).

The philosophy of zero-tolerance claims that removing disruptive students through exclusionary discipline will positively affect student learning by protecting and preserving the educational environment. Zero tolerance policies are not based on the doctrine of in loco parentis, requiring educators to not act as parents, but instead as agents of rules and regulations established by centralized agencies at the district, state, and federal levels (Kafka, 2011). These policies are intended to limit teachers' and principals' discretion and to prohibit educators from 'tolerating' certain kinds of misconduct and "purposefully locates discipline outside of schools and classrooms and separates discipline from the broader educative purposes of schooling" (Kafka, 2011, p. 7). Schools, under public scrutiny due to high-profile incidents of violence, sought to exchange the idea of individual authority for the institutional support and perceived strength of a district bureaucracy (Kafka, 2011). By promoting this centralization and specialization in the role of school discipline, and the increased use of non-educational personnel to address discipline concerns, educators in the postwar era "willingly narrowed the scope of their classroom responsibilities and emphasized the academic and intellectual goals of their work over the moral and therapeutic" (Kafka, 2011, p. 73). By the 1970s, the groundwork was established for the inception of zero tolerance, as the locus of disciplinary control had been shifted outside of the school and classroom and Kafka (2011) notes that "In this context, the notion of in loco parentis was almost beside the point: Discipline had become a matter of security and punishment – not an educative act intended to be in a child's best interest" (p. 96).

By 1997, zero tolerance legislation and policies had been adopted by at least 79 percent of schools nationwide (Boccanfuso & Kuhfeld, 2011) and as a result schools determined that certain specified behaviors incur an immediate suspension or expulsion (Brooks et al., 2000; Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2000; Skiba et al., 1997). Strict exclusionary discipline policies, loosely associated with the rubric of "zero tolerance" became common among states, jurisdictions, and schools, and the past twenty years have witnessed an expansion of the reliance on suspension and expulsion as sanctions for disruptive behavior (Fabelo et al., 2011). Schools and districts expanded these policies to include a wide range of behaviors deemed to be disruptive, ascribing to the so-called "broken window" criminal justice theory that recommended the forceful pursuit and prosecution of lower-level offenses to deter offenders from eventually committing more serious crimes (Green, 1999; Wilson & Kelling, 1982). This theory expanded the use of exclusionary discipline beyond serious behaviors and encouraged the application of out-of-school suspension and expulsion in response to a wide range of infractions (Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014).

As a result of zero-tolerance policies, suspension and expulsion are common in discipline codes of conduct (Fenning et al., 2012) and have transitioned into a common practice for addressing behaviors unrelated to school safety (Losen, 2015). Research has found that the use of exclusionary discipline is not reserved for serious or dangerous behavior, but is now commonly used to address day-to-day disruptions, especially defiance and non-compliance (Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014). Many offenses for which students are suspended appear to be non-violent, minor to moderate infractions, such as disobedience and disrespect, defiance, attendance problems, and classroom disruptions (Brooks et al., 2000; Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Losen & Skiba, 2010; Raffaele Mendez et al., 2003; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014; Skiba

et al., 1997). Rausch & Skiba (2004) reported that only 5% of out-of-school suspensions were issued due to offenses considered serious or dangerous. The remaining 95% of suspensions resulted from offenses categorized as disruptive behavior or other.

2000-Present

Centralized disciplinary authority and zero-tolerance policies are still widespread as governing principles in school discipline (Kafka, 2011). Exclusionary discipline policies have come under increased scrutiny by both the media and federal (U.S. Department of Education & U.S. Department of Justice, 2014), and there is growing pressure for policymakers to reduce the use of exclusionary discipline and investigate racial inequities in school disciplinary outcomes (Curran, 2019). Recent years have also brought forth a social science and advocacy movement to replace punitive exclusionary discipline measures with positive behavioral support and restorative justice (Curran, 2019). As awareness around exclusionary discipline has grown, Kennedy, Murphy, and Jordan (2017) recognize that school administrators now face a "triple challenge of negotiating cultural orientations toward punitive discipline, needing logistically feasible and legally defensible consequences for students' challenging behaviors when prevention strategies prove insufficient, and lacking training and infrastructural support to successfully implement alternatives to current rigid and punitive discipline matrices" (p. 267). Current research findings demonstrate the need to frame interventions aimed at changing administrators' disciplinary practices "within the complexity of the contradictory positions and pressures that each individual faces" (Kennedy et al., 2017, p. 267).

Negative Outcomes of Exclusionary Discipline

Exclusionary discipline policies and practices have been instituted across K-12 education as a means of remediating and addressing school violence and student misbehavior under the

auspices of maintaining a positive, safe educational climate(Brooks et al., 2000; Kafka, 2011; Mendez et al., 2002). When considering exclusionary discipline, this is specifically referring to a removal from the academic environment through out-of-school suspensions (McCarthy & Hoge, 1987) and expulsions (KewalRamani, 2007). The use of exclusionary discipline is contingent upon a belief that removing certain children from the learning environment for some period of time is necessary or helpful in order to maintain a school climate conducive to learning (Rausch & Skiba, 2005). Exclusionary discipline is intended by administration and perceived by students as punishment (Costenbader & Markson, 1998; Mellard & Seybert, 1996). Based on the classic definitions of punishment (Alberto, 2006; Skinner, 1953), exclusionary discipline should serve as a deterrent to future disruptive behavior. However Raffaele Mendez & Knoff (2003) assert that the challenge presented by the application of exclusionary discipline is that, "in contrast to a consequence, suspension is delivered to punish an already-committed inappropriate act or behavior; it rarely has a logical, functional, or instructive connection to the offense or infraction; and it usually occurs in the absence of additional interventions that focus on teaching or reinforcing students' more prosocial or appropriate responses to difficult situations" (p. 31).

Proponents claim that applying exclusionary discipline with a zero-tolerance approach appropriately denounces disruptive or violent student behavior and serves as a deterrent to future behavior by sending a clear message that acts which negatively impact the learning environment or harm or endanger others will not be permitted at school under any circumstances (Burke & Herbert, 1996; Noguera, 1995). Raffaele Mendez (2003) raised doubts about the deterrent value of harsh school discipline. Tobin et al. (1996) found a negative effect on the trajectory of behavior and concluded that exclusionary discipline practices like "suspension functions as a reinforcer…rather than as a punisher" (p. 91). Exclusionary discipline may in fact exacerbate the

behaviors they intend to reduce (Mayer, 1995). Extensive research has shown that rather than reducing a student's likelihood of being suspended, suspension itself predicts an increase of future rates of offenses that result in exclusionary discipline (Bowditch, 1993; Raffaele Mendez, 2003; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014; Tobin et al., 1996).

There is inadequate research and no published evidence in peer reviewed journals that shows student removal has a positive impact on student learning or achievement overall (Rausch & Skiba, 2005). In fact, repeated suspension has been linked to negative outcomes for students including academic failure, negative school attitudes, grade retention, and drop out (Brooks et al., 2000; DeMatthews et al., 2017; Nichols et al., 1999; Raffaele Mendez et al., 2003; Rumberger & Losen, 2017). Raffaele Mendez et al. (2002) investigated disciplinary outcomes in one school district and found strong negative correlations between the suspension rate and achievement scores. Research hypothesizes that the removal of students from the educational environment has a negative effect on student learning by reducing the opportunity to learn, an assertion supported by consistent findings that increased opportunity for student learning is associated with academic gains and achievement (Greenwood et al., 2002; Hattie, 2002; Rausch & Skiba, 2005). Comprehensive school reform efforts document the effectiveness of programs intended to increase the time students spend engaged in learning (Borman et al., 2003; Rausch & Skiba, 2005). Increased use of school exclusion through suspension and expulsion reduces academic engagement and student achievement (Greenwood et al., 2002).

Impacts on Black Students

The burden of these proximal issues and negative outcomes is carried disproportionately by black students, as they are much more likely to be subjected to exclusionary discipline (Bottiani et al., 2017). Reviews of national suspension rates since the 1970s for K-12 public

schools shows significant increases in the use of suspension for students of all races accompanied by an increase in the racial discipline gap (Gregory et al., 2010; Kafka, 2011; Marcucci, 2020). Black students had a suspension rate of about 6% in the 1970s, twice the likelihood of suspension as white students (about 3%). The introduction of zero tolerance policies led to a 9-point increase in suspension rates for black students to 15% in 2006. Black students are now more than three times more likely than white students to be suspended (Losen & Skiba, 2010).

Four decades of research on the topic of school discipline (e.g. Skiba, Chung, et al., 2014) have documented the disproportionate application of exclusionary discipline toward black students, leading them to bear a host of proximal issues related to exclusionary discipline. Research indicates a "negative relationship between exclusionary school discipline and multiple measures of student academic achievement…" (Skiba et al., 2014, p. 553). Skiba (2014) found that "out-of-school suspension and expulsion are associated with short-term negative outcomes, such as academic disengagement and depressed academic achievement that may cascade over time, ultimately increasing a student's risk for contact with law enforcement and involvement with the juvenile justice system (p. 557). School suspension has been found to be moderate-to-strong predictor of school dropout (Balfanz et al., 2003). Students of color, especially black students, are being removed from the opportunity to learn at a much higher rate than their peers (Losen & Skiba, 2010). The research has established the importance of instructional time in relation to academic outcomes (Greenwood et al., 2002; Losen & Skiba, 2010). Removing black students from the educational environment with such frequency has far-reaching detrimental impacts as "disciplinary removal has a negative effect on both educational opportunity and school engagement" (Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014, p. 553).

Rausch (2005) found that after accounting for school-level differences in poverty, the average black out-of-school suspension incident rate was greater than other racial groups. Researchers and practitioners have challenged the notion that racial disparities in discipline can be largely explained by socioeconomic differences (MacMillan & Reschly, 1998; Skiba, Simmons, Ritter, et al., 2003), and this growing research base indicates that poverty in no way explains most of the variance in the application of discipline by racial group (McGee, 2004; Myers et al., 2004; Ogbu, 2003; Perry, 2003). Skiba et al. (2002) conducted a study that found that poverty explained only a small proportion of the variance in the relationship between race and suspension and expulsion. There are a wealth of studies that establish neither socioeconomic disadvantage nor differing rates of misbehavior account for racial disparities in out-of-school suspension rates, and do not provide sufficient explanation for the overrepresentation of black students in the application of exclusionary discipline (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Losen & Skiba, 2010; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; Rausch & Skiba, 2005; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014; Skiba et al., 2002; Wallace et al., 2008; Wu et al., 1982).

The statewide study *Breaking Schools' Rules* (Fabelo et al., 2011) established links between the application of exclusionary discipline, school dropout rates, and increased involvement in juvenile justice after controlling for 83 variables, including achievement rate, socioeconomic disadvantage, attendance rate, and disability status. Researchers have studied the impact of exclusionary discipline on black students in terms of the school-to-prison pipeline, which is "a construct used to describe policies and practices, especially with respect to school discipline, in the public schools and juvenile justice system that decrease the probability of school success for children and youth and increase the probability of negative life outcomes…" (Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014, p. 546). There is a substantial body of research demonstrating a

correlation between the experience of exclusionary discipline and short- and long-term negative outcomes. Together, the studies make a convincing case supporting the conclusion of the American Academy of Pediatrics (Council on School Health, 2013) that exclusionary discipline is itself a developmental risk factor, beyond students' behavioral or demographic risks (Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014).

Influences on School Administrators' Exclusionary Discipline Practices

School discipline literature features many sophisticated research designs that support claims of directionality when considering the impact of school practices and exclusionary discipline themselves creating further risk for negative school and life outcomes (Aronson & Steele, 1995; Chin et al., 2020; Fabelo et al., 2011; Marcucci, 2020; Perry, 2003; Taylor & Walton, 2011). Skiba, Chung, et. al (2014) discovered that principal perspectives about discipline were stronger predictors of racial disproportionality in discipline than either student demographic or behavioral characteristics. Losen and Skiba (2010) discovered that a portion of the variability in schools' rates of out-of-school suspension and expulsion appear to be attributable to differences in principal attitudes toward the disciplinary process. One study confirmed that race was a prominent predictor for the severity of discipline consequences after controlling demographic and behavior variables (Williams et al., 2013). School administrators support of exclusionary discipline policies varies widely (Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2000; Mukuria, 2002). A national report (Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2000) found that principals' use of out-of-school suspension was in direct proportion to their stated support for zero tolerance policies and procedures. Ethnographic studies and principal surveys suggest that schools with administrators that support zero tolerance policies tend to have higher rates of exclusionary discipline (Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2000; Skiba, Simmons, Staudinger, et al., 2003). Skiba

et al. (2003) surveyed 325 principals regarding attitudes toward zero tolerance, suspension, expulsion, and violence-prevention strategies. Findings showed that principal attitude and school disciplinary outcomes were correlated. Principals who believed that exclusionary discipline could be prevented through a positive school climate had lower rates of out-of-school suspension and made more frequent use of preventive measures. School administrators are responsible for applying the consequence of exclusionary discipline in response to student behavior, and these decisions have the potential to be influenced by bias, structural inequities, and hierarchy. In what follows, I review each of these influences.

Bias in School Administrators

Implicit cognition suggests that individuals do not maintain conscious control over their social perception, impression formation, nor judgements that motivate their actions (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Implicit bias is a direct manifestation of these and can lead to actions that demonstrate disparate treatment. A substantial body of research and evidence establishes that implicit bias is pervasive and is associated with racial prejudice and discrimination against African Americans (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006), and so implicit bias serves as one explanation for disproportionality in exclusionary discipline practices toward black students.

Implicit Bias. Greenwald & Krieger (2006) assert that to understand patterns of disparate impact in the form of systematically disadvantageous outcomes to African Americans in health care, education, employment, housing, or criminal justice, one must consider implicit bias. It is probable that implicit bias plays a role in disparate outcomes along racial lines due to (1) observed pervasiveness of implicit bias, (2) implicit biases are predictive of discriminatory behavior, (3) findings that implicit bias plays a causal role in discrimination. Rudman (2004) conveys that “the hidden nature of prejudice is one of its most pernicious aspects, whether the

secret is kept from others or ourselves. Biases that we do not acknowledge but that persist, unchallenged, in the recesses of our minds, undoubtedly shape our society…" (p. 130).

The Civil Rights Act passed in 1964, making it illegal to discriminate based on group membership, and resulted in a dramatic decrease in the outward expression of stereotypes and prejudice and an increase in normative pressures to appear nonprejudiced (Dunton & Fazio, 1997; Judd et al., 1995; Plant & Devine, 1998; Rudman, 2004). Motives to control prejudice can sometimes moderate implicit and explicit prejudice correspondence (Rudman, 2004). Social desirability, or the tendency for individuals to conform to dominant ideological ideas, is often cited as a primary motivator and is manifested through, for example, the learned trait of expressing egalitarian views (Marcucci, 2020). Baron & Banaji (2006) found that white children begin explicitly endorsing racial equality by age 10, however prior to that express explicit bias toward white people. Despite this expressed egalitarian attitude, most Americans harbor anti-black implicit bias (Newheiser & Olson, 2012; Nosek et al., 2002).

Implicit bias theories treat individuals as being guided by more than simply their explicit beliefs and conscious intentions to act. A belief is explicit if consciously endorsed, and an intention to act is conscious if the person is aware they are acting for a particular reason (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Implicit biases are discriminatory biases based on attitudes or stereotypes that produce behavior that diverges from a person's professed or endorsed beliefs or principles (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Implicit bias impacts the way individuals perceive and respond to the world, though they are limited by individuals' self-perceptions. Rudman (2004) explains that "even when people are truthful, self-reports can only reflect what they believe about their orientations, whereas implicit measures bypass this limitation. Following established parameters for automaticity, implicit biases are thought to be automatic not only in the sense that

they are fast-acting, but also because they can operate without (1) intention (i.e., are involuntary and uncontrollable), and (2) without conscious awareness. For this reason, implicit biases have also been described as automatic or nonconscious" (Rudman, 2004, p. 133).

Implicit Association Test (IAT). Rudman (2004) notes that "indeed, if researchers were to rely solely on self-report measures, they would be tempted to conclude that prejudice has become, if not outdated, at least unfashionable. Clearly people have had their "consciousness raised" when it comes to reporting how they feel about many social groups" (p. 130). Explicit bias is impacted by social desirability, and outward acts of racism or prejudice are not commonly accepted in society. However, Rudman (2004) explains "this does not mean that the problem of bigotry has been solved, for when attitudes are measured using methods that do not rely upon respondents' willingness or ability to report their opinions, the persistence of prejudice and stereotypes is routinely exposed" (p. 130). Biases based on all matter of characteristics become apparent when people are unable to control their responses (Chin et al., 2020; Marcucci, 2020; Rudman, 2004). Response latency measures, such as the Implicit Association Test (IAT), serve as measures of implicit bias and have exposed their common nature and the extent to which they can (unintentionally) guide our thoughts and actions.

Greenwald & Krieger (2006) found during an examination of the IAT data that explicit measures of bias generally show greater evidence for impartiality or neutrality. On average, 42% of respondents expressed neutrality on explicit measures, however only 18% of respondents were judged implicitly neutral. The IAT measures revealed nearly 75% of respondents demonstrated bias toward the relatively advantaged group, despite explicit measures that indicated slightly over one-third of respondents showed a bias favoring advantaged groups. The data reviewed indicates a broad generalization that implicit attitude measures display much more bias favoring

advantaged groups than explicit measures. A study by McConnell and Leibold (2001) examining the relationship between the IAT race attitude measure and discriminatory behavior found that white participants whose IAT scores indicated a strong implicit preference for white relative to black displayed subtle behaviors that suggested higher levels of comfort interacting with white experimenters. These measures also predict spontaneous behaviors including eye contact, seating distance, and other actions that communicate social connection and warmth. The findings indicate that implicit bias can disadvantage black individuals (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006; McConnell & Leibold, 2001). As is the case with the application of exclusionary discipline toward black students, disassociations between implicit and explicit attitudes often manifest toward stigmatized groups (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). In the case of this study, it is through an education system that fails to empower black students with the same opportunities as their fellow students. Rudman (2004) found that "while many Whites can subjectively tell that it is easier for them to associate Blacks with negative, as opposed to positive, evaluation on the race IAT, they resist attributing this proclivity to prejudice" (p. 133; Monteith et al., 2001).

Persistence of Implicit Bias. Applying the principle that attitudinal focus can reduce weak automatic influences on social judgement, it would be reasonable to expect that training people to consider their objectives more closely in an inter-racial interaction might reduce the effects of implicit bias. (Greenwald & Banaji, 1995; Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). However, this is not the case as examined by Poehlman et al (2009), who found that prediction of behavior by IAT measures did not reduce deliberative behavior and still demonstrated the effects of implicit bias. IAT measures remain consistent over time, suggesting the stability of implicit attitudes and stereotypes (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Because an individual cannot

reasonably control their implicit biases, they have the potential to regularly influence interactions and decisions, including those among staff and students at schools.

Findings show that measures of implicit bias have relatively greater predictive validity in situations that are socially sensitive during which individuals may be inhibited from expressing negative attitudes or unpopular stereotypes (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). The interactions involved when making disciplinary decisions then are more susceptible to the influence of implicit bias because it manifests more prominently when making evaluative decisions, especially when engaging in interactions that could lead to discomfort or misunderstanding (Rudman, 2004). While most educators espouse racial equality (Quinn, 2017) high-pressure environments and stress may limit the opportunity to override implicit bias, making it more likely to impact how they interact with and discipline their black students (Marcucci, 2020). McIntosh et al. (2014) identified these interactions as "vulnerable decision points" (p. 9) during the discipline continuum (e.g. the conscious decision to refer a student to administration) that can be impacted by "neutralizing routines" (p. 15) that impose reflective, self-evaluative questions to prevent hasty decisions especially in ambiguous or high-pressure situations.

Bias of Crowds. The "ordinariness" of implicit bias plays a role in perpetuating social injustice at both the personal and collective level (Rudman, 2004, p. 129). A criticism of the IAT is that it measures an individual's understanding of external cultural beliefs and so truly assesses differences in the clarity with which these beliefs are perceived. However, the IAT test maintains predictive validity for a variety of types of social behavior (Greenwald et al., 2009; Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Implicit bias should be considered a social phenomenon that passes through the minds of individuals but as supported by the empirical evidence, is more consistently related to the situations they inhabit (Marcucci, 2020). Surowiecki (2004) advised

on the "wisdom of crowds," meaning the collective judgement of a group better reflects the truth than any one individual's answer (Clemen, 1989; Page, 2007). Aggregate judgement is wise because "each individual is likely to have partial true knowledge as well as erroneous biases….When independent judgements are averaged, the random variations are aggregated away, leaving the true knowledge to emerge as the central tendency of the distribution (Payne et al., 2017, p. 236). This implies that implicit bias better measures situations than individuals and is consequently more predictive in aggregate (Chin et al., 2020).

Implicit bias manifests at a young age at a similar level as adults. Baron & Banaji (2006) found that implicit pro-white/anti-black bias measured among white Americans using an Implicit Association Test was similar among 6-year-olds, 10-year-olds, and adults. This presents a challenge because multiple longitudinal studies have shown the IAT to have low temporal stability, particularly when measuring for racial bias (Cooley & Payne, 2017; Cunningham et al., 2001; Devine et al., 2012). Accordingly, Payne et al. (2017) described this as one of three puzzles regarding implicit bias: it has effects that are large but unstable, biases that are paradoxically permanent yet unstable, and biases that predict outcomes better for places than people. They sought to explain these puzzles through their "bias of crowds" theory, which highlights the disparate outcomes strongly associated with implicit bias become less significant "when examined at aggregate levels such as nations, states, or metropolitan areas" (Payne et al., 2017, p. 234).

When studying the bias of large groups, it becomes clear that high status groups are culturally favored, demonstrating that societal appraisals are ingrained in the implicit cognitions of all group members (Jost & Banaji, 1994; Rudman, 2004). The bias of crowds theory also claims that implicit orientations may be more influenced by cultural biases as compared with

explicit attitudes and beliefs and remains consistent with the assumptions of many theories that "frequent and recent exposures to stereotypes and prejudices can forge connections between the mental representation of social groups and a variety of stereotypic traits and prejudiced evaluations" (Payne et al., 2017, p. 234). Inequality as manifested at the cultural level and communicated in countless ways, including biased media depictions and daily observations of which social groups occupy stratified positions, exerts a constant influence that causes large average effects, among those the exclusionary discipline gap. Pervasive negative cultural stereotypes associated with African Americans manifest as a social stereotype, or mental association between a group and a trait. This trait may not reflect reality however nonetheless distinguishes members of one group from others and is connected to myriad inequities including the exclusionary discipline gap that exists between black and white students (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006). Administrators' implicit biases affect the ways in which they interpret student behaviors and the severity of the punishment delivered (Chin et al., 2020; Gregory et al., 2010). Those with stronger implicit bias may be more likely to interpret the behavior of black students as threatening and requiring the application of exclusionary discipline (Ferguson, 2000).

School administrators are not exempt from manifesting bias, and their responses to student behavior represent a complex and multi-determined process integrating choice on the part of school personnel (Morrison & Skiba, 2001; Rausch & Skiba, 2005). Studies have found rates of disciplinary removal at the school level to be inconsistent among similar populations, strongly related to school factors independent of individual student factors such as teacher attitudes, administrative centralization, and school governance, and attributable to variances in principal attitudes toward discipline (Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2000; Mukuria, 2002; Rausch & Skiba, 2005; Skiba, Simmons, Staudinger, et al., 2003; Skiba et al., 1997; Wu et al., 1982).

Structural Inequity and Hierarchy

It is critical to recognize that systemic factors in American educational institutions work to sustain bias and disparate outcomes for black students (Anyon et al., 2018). Critical Race Theory (CRT), which emerged from legal scholarship, asserts that race is the fundamental axis that organizes American society, and that racism is deeply embedded in US institutions. Critical Race Theorists in education assert that schools are racialized institutions in which power and privilege manifest and control educational access and opportunity (Anyon et al., 2018; Lewis et al., 2015). Economic, cultural, and social capital are inequitably distributed and lead schools to perpetuate racial inequality without employing explicitly discriminatory laws or practices (Leonardo, 2007).

According to Rausch & Skiba (2005), when considering the extent that "school disciplinary responses represent a *choice* on the part of those administering consequences, it is appropriate to consider systems-level explanations of the negative relationship between suspension/expulsion rates and school achievement" (p. 22). Wu et al. (1982) found a relationship between the probability of being suspended and the quality of school governance at the school level. For example, Losen & Skiba (2010) found that schools led by principals who supported alternatives to suspension focused on prevention were less likely to suspend students Their regression model including both individual and school effects on suspension found that school level variables (overall school suspension rate, teacher attitudes, administrative centralization, school governance, perceptions of achievement, socioeconomic disadvantage, and racial status) far surpassed those at the individual student level including attitude and misbehavior as predictors of suspension. Morrison found that far from a discrete event, the application of exclusionary discipline represents a complex process impacted by student

behavior, teacher perception, administrator perspectives, and school policy (Morrison & Skiba, 2001).

School administrators rely on personal judgement and discretion when making disciplinary decisions, allowing for multiple interpretations especially in the case of subjective offenses. The differential processing hypothesis asserts that systemic discrimination leads to the disproportionate application of consequences toward black students, and these subjective judgments are detrimental to their life outcomes (Gregory et al., 2010). A report studying the relationship between school discipline, student success, and juvenile justice involvement found that a large majority of black male students (83 percent) and black female students (70 percent) had at least one discretionary violation as compared to 59 percent of white male students and 37 percent of white female students, and black students had a 31 percent higher likelihood of school discretionary action when compared to otherwise identical white students (Fabelo et al., 2011). The term "school-to-prison pipeline" indicates a direction of causality related to the policies and practices of schools rather than solely the characteristics of individual students, are responsible for adverse outcomes among students of color (Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014).

Skiba et al. (2002) researched racial and gender disparities and found that white students were issued office disciplinary referrals for more objective offenses (e.g. vandalism, obscene language, smoking) while black students were referred more often for subjective behaviors such as excessive noise, threat, and loitering. Disciplining for subjective offenses can bring about bias such as selective enforcement, when a school official chooses to overlook a violation of a policy committed by a student who is a member of one racial group, while strictly enforcing the policy against a student who is a member of another racial group. Fenning and Jenkins (2018) found that "even those who would not endorse outwardly racist beliefs are not immune to having

implicit biases that are out of conscious control and could potentially affect assessment of student behavior, particularly subjective judgements such as class disruption and disrespect, which is open to interpretation and determination of threat and safety" (p. 298). Skiba, Peterson, and Williams (1997) found a variance among administrators at one school regarding their definition of defiant behavior.

Schools as racial spaces. Classrooms are dominated by liberalism, or the idea that schools as institutions are independent of racism, and issues of inequity lay with the actors themselves rather than the systems in which they exist (Job, 2009). Blaisdell (2016) contends that the liberal ideology that dominates educational settings interprets practices as neutral and providing equal opportunity ignores the impact of structural and institutional racism that hinder academic performance and fails to consider the complicity of social institutions in perpetuating racial discrimination. A combination of "structural and cultural factors explain most of the racial disparity in school discipline rates" (Kafka, 2011, p. 4). The nation's public schools manifest the effects of poverty and insufficient and inequitably allocated resources that serve to reduce the academic success of students of color. Schools are "racial spaces" and reflect and respond to the society in which they operate. CRT literature employs racial spaces to analyze systemic racism as achieved through segregation, and extensive social science research demonstrates that "racially isolated and economically poor neighborhoods restrict employment options for young people, contribute to poor health, expose children to extremely high rates of crime and violence, and house some of the lowest performing schools" (Powell, 2008, p. 804). The extension of this segregation into educational institutions bolsters the probability of long term social, economic, and political challenges for students of color (Blaisdell, 2016).

According to Blaisdell (2016), in the context of schools, "the racial spaces are places where the rights of students are subject to a racialized hierarchy that privileges whites and marginalizes non-whites. School personnel are not usually aware of their role in this active privileging and marginalization" (p. 249). The term "'racial spaces' refers to a social reality created by and experienced through patterns of mobility and immobility that have been organized around the logic and historical practices of white supremacy" (Iglesias, 2000, p. 310). Leonardo (2004) defines white supremacy as "acts, decisions, and policies that white subjects perpetrate on people of color" and "direct processes that secure domination and the privileges associated with whiteness" (p.137). Using the frame of Critical Race Theory to analyze schools and classrooms as racial spaces can uncover racial hierarchy and educators' role in perpetuating hierarchy through the application of exclusionary discipline and its proximal negative outcomes.

Blaisdell (2016) asserts that de-racing, or ignoring societal structures and institutional structures that sustain racial hierarchy, maintains the racialized space because it gives the appearance of working on racial disparity while simultaneously supporting the status quo. White individuals have increased access to educational resources within racial spaces. De-racing frames the increased access as being due to students' individual merit and focuses responses at the individual level. Given the persistence of racial disparity in discipline, responses devised by schools are ineffective because those responses ignore the school's own role in segregating students of color (Blaisdell, 2016; Stec, 2007). By focusing on the effects of racial inequities, de-racing fails to address the cause through its focus on individual solutions: "De-racing provides that one can and should come out of a group-based status and supplant it with an individual ethos that stresses merit progress….the justificatory mechanisms available to whites rely precisely on the appeal to a non-racial standpoint. Such a non-racial standpoint is important

for groups that hold power because it does not allow them to be viewed as groups but works to maintain the group-based power nevertheless" (Stec, 2007, p. 39). School administrators who either ignore or fail to recognize the impact of racial hierarchy on their disciplinary decisions perpetuate systemic inequity for black students. Overrepresentation in discipline referrals for students of color resulted in increased removals from the classroom environment, however because interventions fail to recognize how the school's practices marginalize students, they instead intervene at the individual level often in ways that serve to limit access further (Blaisdell, 2016).

White Norms & Dysconscious Racism. CRT asserts a fundamental belief that institutional policies and practices favor, promote, and benefit the white majority racial group (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). There is considerable scholarship that demonstrates that schools are racialized institutions whose policy and practices shape discipline disparity toward black students (Anyon et al., 2018) by manifesting the social rules and ideologies that reinforce inequality (Apple, 2012; Leonardo, 2009). Since people of all racial identities are conditioned to see whiteness as desirable, schools teach social lessons and consequences of non-white racial conformity (Anyon et al., 2018). Research shows that students are disciplined in schools for not adhering to white norms and can further limit access to educational resources (Blaisdell, 2016). Discipline practices can be interpreted as a form of labeling and social control when school policies limit student expression to white standards and the "consequences for students of color who breach social norms result in exclusionary practices that impede access to educational and economic success (Anyon et al., 2018, p. 395). Boykin, Tyler, and Miller (2005)argued that the Western-European ideals of individualism and competition are the dominant ideologies guiding school processes. This stands in contrast to the stronger emphasis on communal values found in

black culture (Gay, 2013), and Gay suggests that these cultural differences can lead to tensions regarding communication. Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera (2010) note that specifically, "differences in ways of communicating between blacks (e.g. animated, interpersonal) and whites (e.g. dispassionate, impersonal) may lead to conflict (p. 63; Kochman, 1981).

Armstrong and Wildman (2008) explain that for people of color to find success, they must adopt a normative or performed whiteness, and refer to this expectation as dysconscious racism. King (1991) defined dysconscious racism as "a form of racism that tacitly accepts dominant white norms and privileges. It is not the *absence* of consciousness (that is, not unconsciousness) but an *impaired* consciousness or distorted way of thinking about race as compared to, for example, critical consciousness" (p.133, emphasis in original). Seeing culture through a dominant, un-named white perspective is a process described by Powell (2008) as the "fundamental attribution error" (p. 798). An individual's behavior, especially that which does not conform to white norms, is blamed on underlying dispositions and not the racial spaces in which they live (Blaisdell, 2016). This cultural and social disconnect leads black students to "hold more negative perceptions of school climate than their white peers, reporting more experiences of racism and lower ratings of racial fairness at school" (Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014, p. 553). These negative ratings are associated with higher rates of exclusionary discipline (Kupchik & Ellis, 2008; Watkins & Aber, 2009) and support the idea that suspensions may be used as a tool to "cleanse" the school of students the school deems troublemakers (Bowditch, 1993).

Structural racism both impacts and is perpetuated by social institutions such as schools, hence schools institutionalize the racial hierarchy. According to Powell (2008), "Institutional racism shifts our focus from the motives of individual people to practices and procedures within

an institution. Structural racism shifts our attention from the single, intra-institutional setting to inter-institutional arrangements and interactions. Efforts to identify causation at a particular moment of decision within a specific domain understate the cumulative effects of discrimination" (p. 796). As with the bias of crowds, considering systemic issues at the individual level confounds the problem. Institutional views of racism explain how outside factors affect students of color both in and out of school contexts, as well as bring into consideration how racial disparities result from ongoing social, political, and economic policies rooted in white supremacy. When considering "how specific school practices exist within the context of more wide-scale practices by many social institutions, these school-level practices can be analyzed more accurately for their contribution to societal-level racial disparity" (Blaisdell, 2016, p.249)

Institutionalized Outcomes

Schools are institutions that have long struggled to produce their espoused egalitarian outcomes amid a stratified and racialized society (Kafka, 2011). Tyack (1974) attributes the failure of education reforms to serve all students is the fact that they "called for a change of philosophy or tactics on the part of the individual school employee rather than systemic change – and concurrent transformations in the distribution of power and wealth in the society as a whole" (p. 10). It is critical that we recognize the role of staff actions, institutional context, and structural inequity in which schools exist (Astor et al., 1999; Watts & Erevelles, 2004). Schools do not operate in isolation, and both result from and contribute to the social rules and ideologies that create economic, political, and social inequality for black students (Apple, 2012; Leonardo, 2009). The negative life outcomes for black students as connected to the application of exclusionary discipline show that American public schooling is failing at its purported altruistic

goal of preparing children for success (Kafka, 2011; Losen, 2011), instead serving as an institution that enhances societal hierarchy, produces social inequality, and favors the dominant structure of power.

Because schools reflect dominant ideologies about race (Bonilla-Silva, 2018; Lewis, 2003), exclusionary discipline is a manifestation of hierarchy and power leading to "racialized school practices grant access and privilege to some, while creating barriers and challenges to others (Anyon et al., 2018, p. 394). Blaisdell (2016) highlights the white supremacy that underlies many educational decisions and how schools "uncover the racial nature of the spatial discourses that simultaneously draw and make invisible the redlines that surround students of color and that limit their access to curricular and other education resources" (p. 268). Because American racial hierarchy places white culture as the dominant (Guinier, 2004; Powell, 2008; Stec, 2007), one possible sociopolitical school-level factor influencing administrators' application of exclusionary discipline may be incongruence between student and school cultures(Fenning & Rose, 2007). Educators as a workforce are predominantly white, and research has shown that this lack of representative bureaucracy predicts disciplinary disparities (Grissom et al., 2009). These cultural differences manifest as the grouping of black students as an "out-group," or group distinct from the dominant white culture and ideology, associated with negative stereotypes and harmful societal bias that serve to justify harsher punitive discipline.

This study moves to consider theories of societal power and their emphasis the system-justifying nature of the dominant ideology (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007; Jost et al., 2001; Jost & Banaji, 1994). Jost & Banaji (1994) proposed the concept of system-justification to explain the social functions of stereotyping. The authors explain that "System-justification is the psychological process by which existing social arrangements are legitimized, even at the expense

of personal and group interest" (Jost & Banaji, 1994, p. 2), and its goal is to highlight the prominence of the degree to which stereotypes of black students by the dominant ideology serve to justify the existing state of political and economic systems, status or power hierarchies, division of social roles, and distribution of resources(Jost & Banaji, 1994). In an effort to gain insight on how the disciplinary decisions of individual administrators interact with bias, power, and hierarchy, this study seeks to add the perspective of Social Dominance Theory to explain the persistence of the disproportionate discipline of black students despite revised mandates, policies highlighting the urgent need to reduce discipline disparities, and rhetoric aimed at increasing educator awareness of their implicit bias (Bradshaw et al., 2010; McIntosh et al., 2014; Smolkowski et al., 2016).

Theoretical Framework: Social Dominance Theory

Social Dominance Theory (SDT) draws on the idea that throughout history, human societies have organized themselves into hierarchies, with dominant groups taking control of the economic surplus. Social dominance theory seeks to understand the variables that influence how group-based social hierarchies are formed and maintained, and because it views societies as systems, it seeks to explain how processes at multiple levels interact to produce systemic effects (Sidanius et al., 2004).

To focus on both individual and structural factors that contribute to social hierarchy and oppression, SDT unites perspectives from cultural theories of ideology, realistic group conflict theory, social identity theory, social comparison theory, Marxism, sociobiology, biopolitics, and evolutionary psychology (Pratto et al., 2006; Sidanius et al., 2004). For example, SDT draws from classical and neoclassical elitism theories regarding the nature of structures within a society and the role ideas play in maintaining group-based inequality. These theories posit that social

organization stems from hierarchical and oligarchical structures, and so what may be perceived as democratic rule reflects control by economic and social elites (Lange et al., 2012).

Social identity theory asserts that discrimination stems from a need for individuals to "achieve positive group distinctiveness for the purpose of enhancing individual self-esteem" (Sidanius et al., 2004, p. 863). This, met with system justification theory's notion that "exploitative and hierarchically organized relationships between dominant and subordinate groups are, in part, the product of active cooperation between these two groups" led to a new conception (Sidanius et al., 2004, p. 867). Rather than simply extending study from individual to social group, SDT instead moves from individual to social context, institutional behavior, and cultural ideologies.

Structure

SDT features a trimorphic structure from which group-based hierarchies are constructed: age, gender, and arbitrary-sets. Arbitrary set systems are groups defined by social distinctions meaningfully related to power such as nationality, race, ethnicity, class, estate, descent, or religion (Pratto et al., 2006). Arbitrary-set groups become the negative reference to the dominant group. Hierarchical social systems are complex; however a common feature is castes with at least two groups, one acting as the dominant "largely endogamous social group which enjoys a disproportionately high degree of positive social value" (Sidanius et al., 1994, p. 339). Positive social value represents desired items and symbolic resources including political power, wealth, protection by force, plentiful and desirable food, and access to good housing, health care, leisure, and education. Subjugated groups share or are forced upon a disproportionate share of negative social value in the form of substandard housing, disease, lack of employment, dangerous and distasteful work, disparate punishment, stigmatization, and vilification (Pratto et al., 2006).

Social dominance theorists assert that hierarchies are maintained by discrimination infused across multiple levels, including institutional, individual, and collaborative intergroup processes (Pratto et al., 2006). It highlights and empirically supports a "layer of granularity in the pattern of individual differences in orientation toward intergroup hierarchy…[that matter] for a range of intergroup processes" (Ho et al., 2015, p. 1024). SDT analyzes the interaction of four factors and how they perpetuate social stratification and hierarchy: 1) function and impact of social ideologies and institutions; 2) individual interpretation (construal) of social structures; 3) personal attitudes and their formation (SDO); 4) asymmetrical behaviors among social groups (Sidanius et al., 2004).

SDT studies the role of social inter-group power as opposed to social status where power refers to "the ability to impose one's will on others, despite resistance" and status is "the amount of prestige one possesses along some evaluative dimension" (Sidanius et al., 2004, p. 865). SDT seeks to deconstruct these structures, as power cannot be defined simply as a relationship based upon asymmetric interdependence (Fiske & Berdahl, 2007). Social dominance theorists not only consider power as it expressed by dominant groups, but also considers the power and agency of subordinate groups. In this way, SDT integrates not only both perspectives, but also how the groups interact and relate to one another. SDT develops an understanding of how the behavior of groups with differing interests can work in tandem to sustain group hierarchy.

Sidanius et al. (2004) assert "group discrimination tends to be systematic because social ideologies help to coordinate the actions of institutions and individuals" (p. 847). Because institutions "allocate resources on much larger scales, more systematically, and more stably than individuals generally can, SDT regards institutional discrimination as one of the major forces creating, maintaining, and recreating systems of group-based hierarchy" (Sidanius et al., 2004, p.

847). One of the mechanisms that facilitates discrimination, and in turn hierarchy, are the processes that match individuals with "discriminatory predispositions to social roles that differentially allocate social value to dominant and subordinate groups" (Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001, p. 245). The aggregate effect of these processes is that institutions are staffed by individuals whose beliefs toward high and low status groups match the institutions to which they belong (Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001). Girvan et al. (2017) assert that stereotypes bias staff perceptions concerning which students present the greatest threat to their desire to be respected, leading to disproportionality. The key is in in the transactional process because students "in turn, sense that the discipline disparities are unjust and have their own concerns about stereotypes impeding their educational goals, which causes them to be less willing to engage with school or comply with behavioral expectations, thus reinforcing [staff] concerns and increasing disproportionality" (Girvan et al., 2017, p. 393).

Institutional oppression is the result of both the interacting influences of cultural, historical, and structural conditions, and the psychological and behavioral predispositions of the individuals within the system (Sidanius et al., 2004). Van Laar and Sidanius (2001) connected SDT's claim of an individual's need to maintain a positive identity with self-protecting strategies observed in the academic setting that sometimes manifest the unintended negative consequences of lowering motivation, persistence, and effort. SDT suggests that researchers study not only "the behavior of institutions in the creation and maintenance of group-based social hierarchy, but also the manner in which institutions interact with the behavioral predispositions of personnel within these institutions" (Sidanius et al., 2004, p. 849).

Skiba et al. (2002) found that black students were more likely to be disciplined for subjective offenses such as disruption, excessive noise, threat, loitering. This indicates there is

space for personal discretion and opportunity for multiple interpretations on the part of school staff involved. Even after controlling behavior and demographic variables, race was a strong predictor for receiving harsher discipline consequences (Fenning & Jenkins, 2018). A study by Skiba et al. (2014) found that the perspective of the principal regarding discipline had greater impact on racial disproportionality than student demographics or characteristics.

Legitimizing Myths

Central to SDT is the consideration of the degree of hierarchy at the societal level, and how competing forces promote ideologies through both the individual and institutions. The hegemonic group maintains control over social legitimacy, and through this promotes the idea that ruling by elites is just, fair, moral, necessary, and inevitable using ideologies referred to as legitimizing myths (Lange et al., 2012). Legitimizing myths are consensually shared social ideologies, including attitudes, beliefs, values, and stereotypes, which exist to validate the existing social order between dominant and subordinate groups. Using moral and intellectual justifications, they explain how individuals and institutions should behave, codify the current state of society, and rationalize the unequal distribution of social capital (Sidanius et al., 2006). They incorporate stereotypes, attributions, shared representations, and predominant values and discourse. There are two functional types of legitimizing myths: hierarchy-enhancing and hierarchy-attenuating.

Hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myths "provide moral and intellectual justification for group-based oppression and inequality….[including] racism, sexism, heterosexism, stereotypes, notions of 'fate', just world beliefs, nationalism…and internal attributions for poverty" (Pratto et al., 2006, p. 275). This rhetoric promotes the ideals of fairness or meritocracy, rather than overt references to outgroups' inferiority or justifying dominance (Cargile, 2017; Ho et al., 2012).

Hierarchy-attenuating legitimizing myths combat the current social stratification and seek to change the narrative justifying the hierarchy and its practices. The greater the extent a legitimizing myth is held consensually between dominant and subordinate groups, the more powerful support it provides to either enhance or attenuate the current hierarchical structure (Pratto et al., 2006; Sidanius et al., 2006).

The potency of the legitimizing myth is also connected to its ability to connect the establishment of a group-based hierarchy (SDO) and the endorsement of attitudes, behaviors, and policies that maintain the system (Hindriks et al., 2014; Sidanius, 1999). SDT's asymmetry hypothesis develops the "notion that legitimizing ideologies will be differentially related to ingroup favoritism and ingroup identities among members of dominant and subordinate groups" (Sidanius et al., 2004, p. 864). For example, high SDO and the endorsement of hierarchy-enhancing ideologies increases ingroup favoritism with dominants but decreases ingroup favoritism among subordinates (Sidanius et al., 2004). The degree of asymmetrical ingroup bias differs systematically across levels of status and power and has the potential to lead to self-debilitating behaviors among subordinates (Pratto et al., 2006). Because these myths are closely related to societal structures, they can be misleading but are convincingly presented as truth to reinforce social hierarchy.

Social dominance theorists assert that hierarchical relationships are maintained in part by the coordination and cooperation between dominants and subordinates, with subordinates' efforts toward a positive identity leading to concessions to the status quo of power structures (Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001). This especially occurs when the "hierarchical relationship is mutually perceived as legitimate and when there are consensual ideologies that lead people to complementary relationships in the hierarchy" (Aiello et al., 2013, p. 492). While subordinate

groups often do not support ideologies justifying the system to the same degree as dominant groups, "the endorsement will often still be of sufficient magnitude and breadth as to lend net support to the set of hierarchically structured group relations" (Sidanius et al., 2004, p. 869). These social stigmas promote behaviors among low status groups that serve to confirm these negative stigmas, with the effect being the reinforcement of subordinate group status (Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001) .

Social Dominance Orientation

SDT posits that individuals' attitudes are determined not only by their beliefs, values, and logical reasoning, but are also largely impacted by a complicated set of personal and social motivations (Sidanius et al., 2006). These differences regarding desires for group hierarchy have serious implications for the ways in which individuals reflect prejudice and discrimination through their intergroup relations (Ho et al., 2012). The aggregate effect of these actions is what contributes to sustaining social hierarchy. Social dominance orientation (SDO), as a measure of support for inequality between social groups, has been found to "uniquely predict a multitude of intergroup attitudes and phenomena that contribute to the exacerbation or attenuation of hierarchy between groups across a wide range of different samples, countries, and contexts" (Kteily et al., 2011, p. 208). SDO is considered a component of understanding SDT and is not regarded as the underlying cause of social hierarchy. SDO is influenced by five primary factors: group position, social context, stable individual differences in temperament and personality, gender, and socialization (Pratto et al., 2006; Sidanius et al., 2004). The measure of an individual's SDO determines the likelihood of their association with hierarchy-enhancing or hierarchy-attenuating ideologies and institutions.

When considering arbitrary-set groups, differences in SDO between the dominant and subordinate groups grow in relation to the severity of the power gap between the groups (Pratto et al., 2006). As naturally follows from this is the assessment that SDO increases among people higher in group positions within their society (Aiello et al., 2013). It is important to note that SDO scores, while sensitive to social context, experience a relative stability across time and context, implying a personality or trait (stable) component of SDO (Kteily et al., 2011; Sidanius et al., 2004). In line with this understanding of SDO as a generalized orientation, in addition to indicating prejudice toward arbitrary-set groups, SDO additionally predicts responses to minimal groups, novel social categories, and new social policies (Ho et al., 2015).

SDO and Legitimizing Ideologies. SDO is related to the endorsement of consequential hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing beliefs and predicts support for social policies that maintain the status quo (Hindriks et al., 2014; Ho et al., 2015). Empirical research indicates SDO is an effective way of assessing whether legitimizing myths serve to enhance or attenuate the group hierarchy. An analysis can determine if the myth is intended to support dominance through force or intended to subtly maintain inequality (Ho et al., 2012; Pratto et al., 2006). Individuals higher in SDO are more likely to hold hierarchy-enhancing ideals and use legitimizing myths to justify their prejudice.

Kteily, Sidanius, et al. (2011) support the claim that SDO is a cause, rather than a reflection, of prejudice and discrimination against subordinate groups. Their longitudinal study, using cross-lagged analyses, found that SDO has a significant marginal utility for predicting prejudice against outgroups (Kteily et al., 2011). The findings of Kteily, Sidanius, et al. (2011) contributed to evidence indicating that SDO is a cause of individual support of legitimizing ideologies that oppose the redistribution of social capital to subordinate groups. They further

suggest that the causal relationship between SDO and prejudice and discrimination is due to high SDO individuals' decreased inclusiveness and empathy, their need to justify the perceived disadvantages of group subordination, and their acceptance of hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myths.

Two dimensions of social dominance orientation. SDT initially defined SDO as a preference for ingroup dominance (Pratto et al., 1994a). Social dominance theorists later clarified that SDO scale measured a general orientation toward hierarchy rather than a preference for ingroup dominance (Kteily et al., 2012; Pratto et al., 2006). The SDO scale has been employed extensively throughout social psychological research and has proven to have high validity as a measure of generalized anti-egalitarianism, generalized prejudice, and support for group-based social hierarchy (Pratto et al., 1994a; Sidanius et al., 2006).

In response to this ongoing research, social dominance theorists Jost and Thompson (2000) distinguished the idea of group justification with SDO as an indication of one's preference for their own group despite their group's position in the hierarchy. This led Ho et al. (2012) to revise the original conception of SDO and break it down into two subdimensions that indicate different approaches to the maintaining hierarchical power. This finding, as further defined by Ho et al. (2012), and codified by a revised SDO_7 scale by Ho et al. (2015) enabled greater precision when predicting intergroup behaviors and attitudes. The empirical research demonstrates the SDO_7 scale to be effective in measuring individual's general orientation toward group-based inequality (Ho et al., 2015). The revised SDO_7 measure allowed social dominance theorists to focus in on the two manifestations of dominance and provide explanations grounded in the understanding that "depending on the outcome and the sociostructural context, one component of SDO might be more consequential than the other" (Ho et al., 2012, p. 595). The

SDO measure comprises two distinct but complementary dimensions: one measures support for group-based dominance, the other measures opposition to equality.

SDO-Dominance (SDO-D) indicates an individual's preference for some social groups to dominate others in an overt manner. These attitudes and behaviors manifest in support of active subjugation of subordinate groups and express the belief that some groups are superior to others (Hindriks et al., 2014). Ho et al. (2015) clarified that SDO-D is not a measure of an individual's desire for ingroup dominance but is instead a measure of support for intergroup hierarchy and inequality irrespective of what group is in the dominant position.

SDO-Egalitarianism (SDO-E) is a preference for nonegalitarian intergroup relations and is reflected in an aversion toward equality and in efforts to diminish the hierarchy between groups (Ho et al., 2012). They prefer hierarchies where resources are inequitably distributed and is exhibited through the individual's desire to exclude groups from accessing social capital that could improve their position because "opposition for equality translates psychologically into support for exclusivity" (Ho et al., 2012, p. 585). Those high in SDO-E promote consensual hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myths that imply legitimacy in excluding certain groups from resources and social capital. This especially manifests if the ideologies or policies have ostensibly different purposes, such as meritocracy or economic efficiency. The less-confrontational hierarchy enhancing ideologies often serve to legitimize socially stratified systems that appear relatively egalitarian. (Hindriks et al., 2014; Ho et al., 2012).

Persisting Inequalities: Deterrence and Retribution

From the perspective of SDT, individual beliefs in deterrence and retribution are a function through which individuals express their desire for group-based social inequality and

dominance (Sidanius et al., 2006). Within group-based hierarchies, deterrence and retribution beliefs function as hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing ideologies in that the justice system is more likely enact harsh punishments "against members of subordinate social groups (e.g. the poor, stigmatized ethnic/racial minorities) than against members of dominant social groups (e.g., the wealthy, majority ethnic/racial groups), everything else being equal" (Sidanius et al., 2006, p. 435). This is so prominent that one can identify subordinate groups within a social hierarchy by simply identifying the groups overrepresented in their prisons (Sidanius et al., 2006). Pratto et al. (2006) succinctly explain that the "notion that the American criminal justice system is free of racial bias and fair can be regarded as a hierarchy enhancing legitimizing belief if it can be shown to *positively* mediate the relationship between SDO and support for hierarchy-enhancing social policies (e.g., the death penalty), and to negatively mediate the relationship between SDO and hierarchy-attenuating social policies (e.g., legal aid to indigent prisoners)" (Pratto et al., 2006, p. 288).

According to Ho et al. (2015), "inequality is often more cheaply, sustainably, and thus perhaps more perniciously maintained by more subtle means, involving complex and often consensual ideological resources" (p. 1022). Sidanius et al. (2006) found SDO to be positively correlated with both harsh negative sanctions and the endorsement of legitimizing beliefs used to validate and defend criminal justice practices. The study's empirical data supported the notion that individual's promotion of severe sanctions is in part "motivated by the desire to establish and maintain group-based social hierarchy and is additionally rationalized or justified in terms of moral norms (e.g., retribution) and/or causal beliefs (i.e., belief in deterrence)" (Sidanius et al., 2006, p. 445). This tendency of individuals with higher SDO toward harsher sanctions in criminal justice may translate into the application of disciplinary consequences within schools

because SDT "postulates and has shown that institutional discrimination is a major means by which groups create and maintain dominance over other groups" (Aiello et al., 2013, p. 487).

Applying SDT to Explain Variation in Exclusionary Discipline Rates Across Schools

Payne et al. (2017) described empirical puzzles presented by implicit bias research, including the instability of implicit tests' measures of bias over time and that individual differences in implicit bias predict behavior only weakly. The measure of an individual's SDO, on the other hand, has a strong dispositional component indicating that a person's attitudes toward group-based inequality remain relatively stable across time and situations (Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001). To shift the way implicit bias is understood, from a person-based to situation-based analysis, Payne et al. (2017) assert it is "more accurate to consider implicit bias as a social phenomenon that passes through the minds of individuals but exists with greater stability in the situations they inhabit" (p. 236). Current literature on implicit bias recognizes the existence of systemic bias, however, generally approaches it as a contributing factor rather than a separate force (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Rudman, 2004). When using implicit bias to gain insight on systemic bias, such as manifested in discipline disparities and the school-to-prison pipeline, Payne et al. (2017) explain that while an individual-based perspective would frame these disparities as the cumulative outcomes of prejudice and discrimination among individuals over time, from a systems-based perspective "these disparities constitute the racism and sexism itself" (p. 238). The institutional inequities that persist in education, whether made as conscious choices or not, perpetuate the social stratifications of racial and socioeconomic disadvantage (Skiba et al., 2002).

Social dominance theorists argue that disparities in educational outcomes, including discipline, serve as testament to a "larger and more comprehensive pattern of group-based

differential power and resource distribution" (Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001, p. 236). Van Laar and Sidanius (2001) identified three categories of processes within SDT contributing to the academic achievement gap that may also be applicable in the case of disproportionality in exclusionary discipline: 1) distribution of resources; 2) direct and indirect discrimination by individuals and educational institutions; and 3) behavioral interactions between dominants and subordinates. These processes directly influence the application of exclusionary discipline in school settings and hence provide insight into the persistence of its disproportionate application toward black students. Exclusionary discipline policies disproportionately applied to black students limit their access to academic success and a quality education, "the most important channels of upward social mobility in modern societies" (Gregory et al., 2017; Sullivan et al., 2013; Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001). Sidanius et al. (2004) identify schools as social institutions through which social capital is inequitably distributed. SDT would support that exclusionary discipline policies serve a hierarchy-enhancing function, with their effects contributing to the maintenance of the status-quo social hierarchy that places African Americans in a subordinate position.

Skiba and Edl (2004) examined principals' perspectives regarding discipline and the extent to which their attitudes were related to disciplinary outcomes. They determined that disciplinary responses are largely attributed to the instructional leaders' attitudes about school discipline. Mendez et al. (2002) found that many school personnel believe exclusionary discipline to be "necessary to maintain the health and safety of staff and students and to reinforce the authority of those who are responsible for order and control in schools" (p. 262). This speaks to the influence of hierarchy-enhancing behaviors at work in schools that are examined in detail within SDT. Assessing principals' SDO will allow an examination of how their individual

attitude and approach toward maintaining group-based hierarchy (SDO) relates to their schools' rates of discipline disproportionality between black and white students.

Chapter Three: Methodology

The purpose of this descriptive study was to explore the relationship between administrators' Social Dominance Orientation, disciplinary practices, and student exclusionary discipline rates. In particular, I asked:

Research Questions

1. What is the relationship between the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO-E) of the school administrator and the rate of exclusionary discipline imposed on black and white students?
2. What is the relationship between school administrators' Disciplinary Practices and the rate of exclusionary discipline imposed on black and white students?

Social Dominance Orientation had not yet been applied to the educational setting in the research, so it presents a novel application of the Social Dominance theoretical framework. Ho et al. (2015) suggest that "future work should examine the workings of this new measure (SDO_7) in other national and sociopolitical contexts" (p. 1024). As noted previously, the existence of differences in the application of suspension and expulsion between black and white youth has been well established. Despite the importance of the processes of justification of intergroup relations and their impact on the education system, I was unable to identify any study that has simultaneously considered the influences of Social Dominance on the persistent discipline gap experienced by black students. No study had yet explicitly examined the extent to which school administrators' Social Dominance Orientation and Discipline Practices impact the application of exclusionary discipline toward black students. It was hypothesized that antiegalitarian attitudes would be significantly and positively correlated with the presence of an exclusionary discipline gap and punitive disciplinary practices.

Participants

All high school site-based administrators within a large urban district were invited to participate in the study. The district served over 320,000 students during the school year, of whom nearly 69% qualified for free and reduced-price lunch. The district employed 1,300+ central office and site-based administrators, 18,000+ teachers, and 12,000+ support professionals. With a diverse population heralding from 158 different countries and speaking 72 different languages, the district was majority Hispanic, at 46.3%, followed by 24.2% White, 14.5% Black, 6.8% Multiracial, 6.3% Asian, 1.6% Pacific Islander, and .4% American Indian/Alaskan Native. The overall graduation rate was 84%, and districtwide proficiency was a 34% for math, 47% for English, and 26% for science. The district suspended 6,846 students during the 2022-2023 school year, a 33% increase from the 2018-2019 school year (the last pre-pandemic full school year), and black students were suspended at a rate of more than four times that of their white peers. Expulsion data was equally concerning, with overall expulsions for the district up 24% from the 2018-2019 school year, with black students more than five times more likely to be expelled than white students.

I received a total of 90 anonymous responses from high school administrators to the survey instrument. Twenty-seven incomplete responses were removed from the data. Additionally, 19 responses from administrators who reported they were not at their current site during the 2022-2023 school year were excluded from the study due to the need to correlate site-specific exclusionary discipline data. A sample size of 44 complete responses from administrators at their current sites in the 2022-2023 school year was included in this analysis.

Dependent Variable

The study's dependent variable was the gap in the rate of exclusionary discipline between black and white students, as evidenced by publicly available school-level discipline data. Using

the state's accountability portal, I analyzed school-level discipline data for infractions that resulted in the removal of a student from the school environment via suspension or expulsion for black students as compared to white students during the 2022-2023 school year. Office disciplinary referrals made within schools prompt the administrator handling the incident to complete standardized documentation within the student data system that includes information regarding the nature of the infraction as well as any resulting administrative or disciplinary action. These referrals serve as the source of all discipline data for the district and their use has been validated by researchers as a reliable measure to make informed decisions at the student, group, and system levels (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Kaufman et al., 2010). The publicly available school-level discipline data regarding the application of suspension and expulsion is limited to incidents categorized as involving weapons, violence, drug and alcohol use/distribution, or bullying as defined in the district's behavior guidelines. This reflects only a portion of the overall application of exclusionary discipline as suspensions and expulsions can be pursued outside of these offense categories. Other offense codes that ultimately resulted in suspension or expulsion were not included in the publicly available data and so were not analyzed within this study.

Similar to the approach developed by Heilbrun et al. (2015), all offenses resulting in suspension or expulsion were grouped into one of four categories for the purpose of this analysis: (a) aggressive behavior toward others (assault, bullying, harassment, and violent and physical threats); (b) alcohol, tobacco, and other drug-related offenses (ATOD); (c) disruptive or disrespectful behavior (defined by the District conduct that obstructs the learning environment, including insubordination, defiance of authority, and campus disruption) and; (d) other (nonviolent offenses including theft, property, and technology). For this analysis, the aggressive

behavior category included all incidents involving weapons or violence, as well as offenses coded as (a) Battery to a School employee, (b) Possession of a Firearm, and (c) Possession of a Dangerous Weapon. The ATOD category included incidents and offenses coded as (a) Possession/Use of Alcohol, (b) Possession/Use of a Controlled Substance, and (c) Sale/Distribution of a Controlled Substance. Finally, the disruptive or disrespectful behavior category consisted of offenses coded as (a) Bullying, (b) Cyberbullying, and (c) Discrimination Based on Race. Due to data limitations, there were no incidents to include in the "Other" category for this study.

Only data from the 2022-2023 school year was included in this analysis. The raw data listed each school separately and contained the following information according to demographic including race: (a) the count of all students involved in select incident categories (Violence, Weapons, Possession/Use of Alcohol, Possession/Use of Controlled Substances, Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Discrimination Based on Race), and (b) the total number of suspensions and expulsions issued according to select categories of offenses (Battery to School Employee, Possession of a Firearm, Possession of a Dangerous Weapon, Distribution/Sale of Controlled Substances, Bullying, Cyberbullying, and Discrimination Based on Race).

I determined a Risk Index and Relative Risk Index (RRI) gap measure of exclusionary discipline as applied to black and white students within the schools participating in the study. As developed by Skiba et al. (2003), the researcher created a Risk Index for black students representing the percentage of black students subject to an exclusionary discipline consequence for a specified offense. This was calculated by dividing the number of Black students subject to the punishment by the number of black students in the population of the school. I followed this process to develop a Risk Index for white students, from which I calculated a Relative Risk

Index (RRI), or the ratio of the risk index for black students compared to the risk index of white students. The gap measure (i.e. disproportionality) will be measured by subtracting the white risk index from the Black risk index, meaning no difference indicates equal representation between black and white students, negative difference indicates underrepresentation of black students, and positive difference indicates overrepresentation of black students. This reflects the exclusionary discipline gap, or an index of how many more times likely black students are than white students to be subject to a suspension or expulsion for an offense (Skiba et al., 2003). After an analysis, the data regarding the number of students involved in incident categories was excluded from the final regression analysis due to its misalignment with the goal of identifying incidences of discipline disproportionality.

The dependent variables were prepared for analysis by developing categories of exclusionary gap variables for discretionary offenses. The following school-level outcome variables were included to reflect the black-white exclusionary discipline gap within offense categories (i.e. measures of the suspensions and expulsions applied):

1. *Exclusionary Discipline Gap*: included all exclusionary discipline events
2. *Disruptive Behavior Gap*: included all disruptive behavior events (bullying and RMI events)
3. *Disruptive Behavior, Bullying Gap*: included all bullying events
4. *Disruptive Behavior, RMI Gap*: included all racially motivated incident events
5. *Aggressive Behavior Gap*: included all aggressive behavior events
6. *Alcohol, Tobacco, Drugs Gap (ATOD)*: included all alcohol, tobacco, drugs events

Control Variables

School-level data was collected from publicly available annual state reports of accountability issued in accordance with state and federal law. These reports provided key student demographic data. The researcher used this data to control for a variety of school factors to isolate the impact of administrators' social dominance orientation and disciplinary practices on black and white students' rate of exclusionary discipline.

The researcher controlled other variables that may shape the school discipline practices. There are several key socio-demographic factors that have the potential to influence the relationship between administrator' antiegalitarian attitudes, disciplinary practices, and discipline disproportionality. These variables were selected for control because research over the past 25 years has shown a consistent relationship between race, SES (which is related to both free lunch and mobility rate), school demographics, and rates of out of school suspensions (R. J. Skiba et al., 2002).

Multiple examinations of the control variables' interactions allowed for assessments of collinearity. The urban-rural variable was removed due to there being only one rural school among the responses. School-level ethnicity data was combined into a black-white demographic gap measure. The school-level percent SES, measured by the percent of students eligible for free and reduced lunch (FRL) during the 2022-2023 school year, was one-hundred percent for all schools due to expanded Federal funding for the pandemic-era school meal program. As a result, SES was excluded as a control variable in this study. Additionally, the mobility rate was determined to be endogenous to exclusionary discipline and was removed as a control variable. Transiency reflects the proportion of students that turnover during the school year but does not include the reason for this movement. Transiency measures are inextricably linked to the

movement in and out of schools associated with the application of exclusionary discipline, which necessitated its exclusion as a control variable.

Table 1: *Tabulation of Schools by Region*

District Region	N	1	2	3	4
	33	27.27%	30.30%	33.33%	9.09%

Finally, a tabulation of region alignment (Table 1) displayed acceptable spread, however I ran the models with the region alignment variable included and the results were substantially similar to the models run without its inclusion. Given my models were significantly underpowered due to the low number of responses collected, I decided to exclude this variable in the OLS regression.

Two additional measures of school demographics were included in this study. Research shows the importance of a positive school climate to student engagement and inclusion, as well as a reduced application of exclusionary discipline, so I included a school climate variable that reflected students' responses to questions assessing engagement (cultural and linguistic competence, relationships), safety (physical and emotional) and social-emotional competence (Skiba, Arredondo, & Williams, 2014). A Cronbach's alpha analysis of the school-level climate measures found them to be highly correlated, so they were combined to create a climate gap measure. The percentage of students eligible for special education services (IEP) was included because research has shown this variable to interact with disciplinary outcomes, with black students with disabilities more than twice as likely to be suspended for longer periods of time than those without disabilities, and 70 percent more likely than their other race peers with

disabilities to have multiple instances of exclusionary discipline (R. J. Skiba et al., 2014; Sullivan et al., 2013). This study's final control variables included:

1. *Enrollment (natural log)*: school population count
2. *Black-White Demographic Gap*: Black-White Gap of student demographic population count
3. *IEP Percentage*: count of students receiving special education services
4. *Black-White School Climate Gap*: Black-White Gap of student climate measure

Independent Variables

I collected data on the independent variables, administrators' anti-egalitarianism attitudes and disciplinary practices, through an analysis of participants' responses to the survey instrument. To determine whether accurate interpretations could be made from the survey items, I examined the independent variables' reliability and validity measures in a multistep process.

The first independent variable studied was the administrator's Social Dominance Orientation: Egalitarianism (SDO-E) measure according to the SDO_7 scale. A survey measured participants' antiegalitarian attitudes through an analysis of participants' responses on a 7-point Likert scale to a modified version including only SDO-E measures from the 16-item SDO_7 scale (see Appendix A). The second independent variable was administrators' attitudes and beliefs regarding disciplinary practices as measured by the Disciplinary Practices Survey using a 5-point Likert scale (see Appendix B).

A single comprehensive Qualtrics survey instrument, inclusive of the SDO-E and Disciplinary Practices items, was distributed via email. A brief synopsis of the request to participate was included with the link to the consent form. The anonymous survey asked only

for the administrator's current school site name and whether they were an administrator at that site during the 2022-2023 school year (see Appendix C).

I then conducted a factor analysis of the independent variables by examining the internal consistency and dimensionality of the SDO-E anti-egalitarianism measures and disciplinary practice (factor group) scores. Factor analysis allowed for the exploration of relationships among the set of predictor variables and the identification of latent constructs that account for variability in the data. An examination of the factor structure and loadings provided insights into the multidimensional nature of antiegalitarian measures and disciplinary practices and an assessment of the reliability and validity of the identified factors. The dataset was cleaned and screened for outliers, missing values, and multicollinearity prior to analysis. I then calculated aggregate measures to determine the distribution and ranges for the responses and Chronbach's alpha determined item correlations regarding whether a given administrator scored similarly on measures.

I employed unrotated primary factor analysis to decompose the variance of the observed variables and identify the variance attributable to common factors through an examination of Eigenvalues. In this way I identified the common variance among observed variables and minimized the influence of unique variance. Since higher Eigenvalues indicate that a factor explains a larger proportion of the total variance, following the Kaiser criterion, I only retained factors with Eigenvalues greater than one. The primary factor analysis revealed that respective predictor variables loaded heavily onto the first factor. This suggested that Factor 1 explained more variance than a single observed variable and was representative of a substantial portion of underlying structures. I then generated factor loadings on a pattern matrix to identify the unique variance associated with each item on Factor 1. Factor loadings of above .4 contributed most

significantly to the variable. Finally, I predicted factor scores on Factor 1 to quantify the degree to which each observation aligns with this primary dimension.

Administrators' Social Dominance Orientation

The 16-item SDO_7 scale developed by Ho et al. (2015) is a validated, psychometrically sound measure that works to bring attention to the myriad forces that lead to social stratification. This scale has a high-construct validity as a measure of generalized anti-egalitarianism, generalized prejudice, and support of group-based hierarchy (Pratto et al., 1994b; Sidanius, 1999), specifically through the subdimensions of SDO-Dominance (SDO-D) and SDO-Egalitarianism (SDO-E). Research shows that SDO-D and SDO-E uniquely predict different types of intergroup beliefs. SDO-D serves as a strong predictor of more traditional racism to justify intergroup dominance through competition, aggression, and violence (Ho et al., 2015). As opposed to the more overt efforts at subjugation associated with SDO-D, individuals high in SDO-E prefer hierarchies where resources are inequitably distributed and defended by antiegalitarian ideologies. SDO-E is a better predictor of the ideologies and beliefs that prove to be hierarchy-enhancing under other purported legitimate rationales, attitudes including system legitimacy beliefs, support for the unequal distribution of resources, opposition to social policies to increase intergroup equality, and symbolic racism (Ho et al., 2015). Symbolic racism can be summarized with several beliefs: "that Blacks no longer face much prejudice or discrimination, that Blacks' failure to progress results from their unwillingness to work hard enough, that they make excessive demands, and that they have gotten more than they deserve" (Baumeister & Vohs, 2007, p. 964). It is "symbolic" because it is based on abstract moral values rather than in concrete self-interest or personal experience, and targets black people as a group rather than as specific black individuals. Public education is purported to offer equal opportunities to all students

toward economic and social mobility, however disproportionately negative outcomes for black students continue.

Due to the focus of the study being the manifestation of these anti-egalitarian attitudes in the educational setting, the researcher only administered the anti-egalitarianism (SDO-E) subdimension of the full SDO_7 scale (see Appendix A). This practice is endorsed by Ho et al. (2015) when they explain it is acceptable to administer a portion of the SDO_7 scale in cases where researchers "have a specific focus on intergroup phenomena that relate more to one dimension of SDO versus the other…" (Ho et al., 2015, p. 1023). The questions within the SDO-D subdimension have the potential to offend or contribute to socially desirable responses among educators due to strong terminology regarding dominance and hierarchy. SDO-E is associated with more subtle forms of hierarchy such as "opposition to redistributive social policies, agenda setting through the endorsement of color-blind public policy, and a lack of social compassion…" (Karunaratne & Laham, 2019, p. 1653). Additionally, the researcher replaced the word "group" with "student" to make the assessment more accessible to educators and by softening the language, attempt to mitigate the effect of social desirability bias. Social desirability bias addresses respondents' truthful reporting on an attitude or behavior that clearly violates existing social norms and the tendency to admit to socially desirable traits and to deny socially undesirable traits (Krumpal, 2011). When responses have the potential to reflect negatively on the individual in terms of prevailing cultural norms, social desirability can introduce a bias that has the potential to impact the validity of the data.

The participants responded as to the degree to which they favor or oppose an idea on a scale from 1 to 7. The scale was labeled strongly oppose (1), somewhat oppose (2), slightly oppose (3), neutral (4), slightly favor (5), somewhat favor (6), strongly favor (7). The questions

assessed participants' views in two key constructs of SDO-E: pro-trait anti-egalitarianism and con-trait anti-egalitarianism. Examples of questions included on the SDO_7 scale are, "Some groups of people must be kept in their place," and "We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different groups" (Ho et al., 2015, p. 1028). Participants' results on the modified SDO_7 scale yielded results that indicate their tendency toward maintaining hierarchy via the anti-egalitarianism (SDO-E) subdimension of SDO. These findings were analyzed for potential correlations to the participants' school-level application of exclusionary discipline toward black and white students.

Table 2: *Principal Factor Analysis of Anti-egalitarianism (SDO-E)*

Variable	Factor 1 loadings
Anti-egalitarianism	
$N = 55$ $\alpha = .745$ Eig. = 2.391	
11. We should not push for group equality.	.434
33. We shouldn't try to guarantee that every student has the same quality of life.	.449
16. It is unjust to try to make students equal.	.512
45. Group equality should not be our primary goal.	.734
56. We should work to give all students an equal chance to succeed. (R)	.477
27. We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different students. (R)	.638
40. No matter how much effort it takes, we ought to strive to ensure that all students have the same chance in life. (R)	.378
50. Group equality among students should be our ideal. (R)	.651

As shown in Table 9, the anti-egalitarianism measure among participating schools was -.0651. For the anti-egalitarianism scale (Table 2), I first reverse scaled items 27, 40, 50, and 56 so that they were scaled in the positive direction like the remaining items in the scale. I then

applied Cronbach's Alpha item analysis, which was identified at .745 on the items. The factor analysis on the items loaded onto Factor 1 with an eigenvalue of 2.391. The factor loadings ranged from .378 to .734.

Administrators' Disciplinary Practices Survey

The Administrator Disciplinary Practices Survey (Skiba et al., 2003) assessed discrete and identifiable perspectives on school discipline held by school administrators using a 5-point Likert Scale (See Appendix B). Prior research indicates there are distinctly different perspectives among administrators towards school discipline and that these attitudes may be related to differences in the use of exclusionary discipline (Harvard Civil Rights Project, 2000; Morrison & Skiba, 2001; R. Skiba & Edl, 2004). Items in the scale were selected by Skiba et al. (2003) to "reflect principal attitudes and beliefs about the purpose, process and outcomes of school discipline, rather than simply the frequency of disciplinary actions (p. 18). Skiba et al. (2003) developed the survey to assess the extent to which there were discrete and identifiable perspectives on school discipline among school principals.

Participants' responses to the questions on the Disciplinary Practices Scale were factor analyzed. Skiba et al. (2003) used multivariate factor analysis to simplify several variables through an empirical process that identifies a smaller number of dimensions or factors. Six clear factors emerged with a high association of the items with each factor, indicating there were clearly delineated attitudinal differences among principals concerning the purpose and function of school discipline (see Appendix D). These factors aligned to the function and purpose of school discipline provided a framework for the analysis of the disciplinary practice data. As noted in Appendix D, seven questions from the disciplinary practices survey were not included in these factor groupings and so were excluded from the data analysis in this study.

The first factor, coded "SYSTEM", contained items emphasizing the use of discipline as a tool to maintain system efficiency. As shown in Table 9, the average system disciplinary practices gap among participating schools was .0383. Principals scoring high on this factor believed that "special education disciplinary protections are a threat to effective discipline, that discipline consumes too much time at their school, that school disruption cannot be tolerated and that students who engage in such disruption must be removed to maintain the integrity of the learning environment for others" (Skiba et al., 2003, p. 21). Additionally, these individuals expressed a belief that violence was increasing and that the school lacked the necessary resources to handle disruption, suggesting that "the use of school exclusion is predicated on a belief that there are simply no other resources available to handle violence and disruption" (Skiba et al., 2003, p. 21). For the system disciplinary practices scale (Table 3), following the Cronbach's Alpha item analysis that assessed at .840, I conducted factor analysis on the items which loaded on to the first factor with an eigenvalue of 3.891. The factor loadings ranged from .304 to .758.

Table 3: *Principal Factor Analysis of System Disciplinary Practices*

Variable	Factor 1 loadings
Systems Disciplinary Practices	
$N = 58$ $\alpha = .840$ Eig. = 3.891	
4. Although it would be nice to get to know students on an individual basis, especially those who need help, my duties as an administrator simply don't allow me the time.	.729
9. It is sad but true that, in order to meet increasingly high standards of academic accountability, some students will probably have to be removed from school.	.753
10. The majority of this school's discipline problems could be solved if we could only remove the most persistent troublemakers.	.758
12. Schools cannot afford to tolerate students who disrupt the learning environment.	.745
29. Regardless of whether it is effective, suspension is virtually our only option in disciplining disruptive students.	.304
30. Certain students are not gaining anything from school and disrupt the learning environment for others. In such a case, the use of suspension and expulsion is justified to preserve the learning environment for students who wish to learn.	.663
39. Disciplining disruptive students is time consuming and interferes with other important functions of the school.	.596
46. Prevention programs would be a useful addition at our school, but there simply is not enough time in the day.	.411
53. Students with disabilities account for a disproportionate amount of the time spent on discipline at this school.	.353
54. Disciplinary regulations for students with disabilities create a separate system of discipline that makes it more difficult to enforce discipline at this school.	.694

The second factor, coded "ANTISUSP", represented ten variables that suggest an understanding of the negative impact of suspensions. As shown in Table 9, the average anti-suspension disciplinary practices gap among participating schools was .0519. High scores in this factor indicated a belief that suspension is neither a critical nor effective disciplinary measure, and that "suspension gives students more time on the streets, does not solve discipline problems, hurts students by reducing their learning time, and is unfair to African American students" (Skiba et al., 2003, p. 21). For the anti-suspension disciplinary practices scale (Table 4), I first reverse scaled items 19, 21, 23, and 51 so that they were scaled in the positive direction like the remaining items in the scale. Following Cronbach's Alpha item analysis, I removed item 6

because the alpha item correlation on this item was low (.351). Cronbach's Alpha on the remaining 9 items was .792. I conducted factor analysis on the remaining items, and they loaded on to the first factor with an eigenvalue of 2.862. The factor loadings ranged from .392 to .718.

Table 4: *Principal Factor Analysis of Anti-suspension Disciplinary Practices*

Variable	Factor 1 loadings
Anti-Suspension Disciplinary Practices	
$N = 58$ $\alpha = .792$ Eig. = 2.862	
19. Out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future. (R)	.537
21. I believe suspension and expulsion allow students time away from school that encourages them to think about their behavior. (R)	.631
22. Suspension and expulsion do not really solve discipline problems.	.718
23. Out-of-school suspension is a necessary tool for maintaining school order. (R)	.351
25. Students who are suspended or expelled are only getting more time on the streets that will enable them to get in more trouble.	.583
26. I believe suspension is unnecessary if we provide a positive school climate and challenging instruction.	.337
41. Suspensions and expulsions hurt students by removing them from academic learning time.	.714
51. Repeat offenders should receive more severe disciplinary consequences than first time offenders. (R)	.392
58. Suspension and expulsion are unfair to minority students.	.649

The third factor is "ADAPT" and expresses a belief that school discipline should be adapted to the needs of diverse groups. As shown in Table 9, the average adaptive disciplinary practices gap among participating schools was .0117. Those scoring high in this factor "believed that students with disabilities, disadvantaged students, and student of various ethnicities have different needs that require adaptation of disciplinary procedures…[and] that a student's academic record should be taken into account in administering school discipline" (Skiba et al.,

2003, p. 21). For the adaptive disciplinary practices scale (Table 5), I conducted a Cronbach's Alpha item analysis and identified Cronbach's Alpha of .578. I conducted factor analysis and they loaded on to the first factor with an eigenvalue of 1.205. The factor loadings ranged from .353 to .787.

Table 5: *Principal Factor Analysis of Adaptive Disciplinary Practices*

Variable	Factor 1 loadings
Adaptive Disciplinary Practices	
$N = 58$ $\alpha = .578$ Eig. = 1.205	
49. Students with disabilities who engage in disruptive behavior need a different approach to discipline than students in general education.	.549
52. A student's academic record should be taken into account in assigning disciplinary consequences.	.353
55. Disadvantaged students require a different approach to discipline than other students.	.787
57. Students from different ethnic backgrounds have different emotional and behavioral needs.	.399

Those with high scores on the fourth factor, "ZEROTOL," indicated that zero tolerance was a significant part of discipline at their school and was effective at sending a clear message regarding behavior. As shown in Table 9, the average zero tolerance disciplinary practices gap among participating schools was .004. For the zero tolerance disciplinary practices scale (Table 6), I first reverse scaled item 31 so that it was scaled in the positive direction like the remaining items in the scale. Following Cronbach's Alpha item analysis, I removed item 18 because the alpha item correlation on this item was low (below .443). Cronbach's Alpha on the remaining 3 items was .653. I conducted factor analysis on the remaining items, and they loaded on to the first factor with an eigenvalue of 653. The factor loadings ranged from .219 to .575.

Table 6: *Principal Factor Analysis of Zero Tolerance Disciplinary Practices*

Variable	Factor 1 loadings
Zero Tolerance Disciplinary Practices	
N = 59 α = .443 Eig. = .653	
20. Zero tolerance makes a significant contribution to maintaining order at my school.	.523
24. Zero tolerance sends a clear message to disruptive students about appropriate behaviors in school.	.575
31. Zero tolerance increases the number of students being suspended or expelled. (R)	.219

The fifth factor, "PREVENT," reflected promotion of preventative activities and programs and indicated a "perspective that prevention is worthwhile and pays off in terms of fewer disciplinary problems….and endorsed the belief that schools have a responsibility to teach appropriate behavior" (Skiba et al., 2003, p. 21). As shown in Table 9, the average preventative disciplinary practices gap among participating schools was -.007. For the preventative disciplinary practices scale (Table 7), I first reverse scaled items 32 and 44 so that they were scaled in the positive direction like the remaining items in the scale. Following Cronbach's Alpha item analysis, the Cronbach's Alpha on the items was .554. I conducted factor analysis on the items, and they loaded on to the first factor with an eigenvalue of 1.73. The factor loadings ranged from .009 to .757.

Table 7: *Principal Factor Analysis of Preventative Disciplinary Practices*

Variable	Factor 1 loadings
Preventative Disciplinary Practices	
$N = 60$ $\alpha = .554$ Eig. = 1.73	
5. I feel it is critical to work with parents before suspending a student from school.	.66
28. Out-of-school suspension is used at this school only as a last resort.	.227
32. The primary responsibility for teaching children how to behave appropriately in school belongs to parents. (R)	.271
36. Schools must take responsibility for teaching students how to get along and behave appropriately in school.	.009
42. In-school suspension is a viable alternative disciplinary practice to suspension and expulsion.	.107
43. I believe that putting in place prevention programs (e.g., bullying programs, conflict resolution, improved classroom management) can reduce the need for suspension and expulsion.	.757
44. Time spent on prevention programs or individualized behavior programming is wasted if students are not willing to take responsibility for their behavior. (R)	.524
47. I have noticed that time spend in developing and implementing prevention programs pays off in terms of decreased disruption and disciplinary incidents.	.555

The sixth and final factor, "TEACH," indicates a perspective that discipline should serve as a tool to teach students appropriate behavior and skills, and that it is critical to have ongoing conversations with students throughout the disciplinary process. For the teaching disciplinary practices scale (Table 8), I conducted a Cronbach's Alpha item analysis and identified Chronbach's Alpha of .213. I conducted factor analysis on the items, and they loaded on to the first factor with an eigenvalue of .406, which does not meet the threshold of statistical significance. The factor loadings were inconsistent and ranged from -.065 to .493. Due to inconsistent factor loadings (ranging from -.065 to .493), I determined it was appropriate to remove this predictor variable from the analysis.

Table 8: *Principal Factor Analysis of Teaching Disciplinary Practices*

Variable	Factor 1 loadings
Teaching Disciplinary Practices	
$N = 58$ $\alpha = .213$ Eig. = .406	
7. The primary purpose of discipline is to teach appropriate skills to the disciplined student.	.361
8. Students should receive some recognition or reward for appropriate behavior.	-.065
37. Teachers at this school were for the most part adequately trained by their teacher-training program to handle problems of misbehavior and discipline.	.493
60. Conversations with students referred to the office are important, and should be factored into most decisions about disciplinary consequences.	-.17

The following represent the independent variables included in the study:

1. *Anti-egalitarianism attitudes*: SDO-E scale
2. *System Disciplinary Practices*: discipline to maintain system efficiency
3. *Anti-suspension Disciplinary Practices*: suspension as ineffective and unnecessary
4. *Adaptive Disciplinary Practices*: willingness to make adaptations in discipline
5. *Zero Tolerance Disciplinary Practices*: support of zero tolerance policies
6. *Preventative Disciplinary Practices*: support of preventative policies, programs, and strategies

Descriptive Statistics

Table 9 provides a summary of the key characteristics of the data used in the study.

Table 9: *Descriptive Statistics*

Variables	N	M	SD	Min	Max
Dependent Variables					
Exclusionary Discipline Gap	33	3.119	3.805	-1.735	17.169
Disruptive Behavior Gap	33	2.227	2.856	-1.634	12.492
Disruptive Behavior Bullying Gap	33	2.064	2.789	-1.307	12.369
Disruptive Behavior Racially Motivated Incident Gap	33	.163	.449	-.327	1.667
Aggressive Behavior Gap	33	.795	1.062	-.889	3.165
ATOD Gap	33	.097	.552	-1.091	1.685
Independent Variables					
Anti-egalitarianism SDO-E	27	-.0651	.798	-1.73	1.69
System DP	28	.0383	.782	-1.538	1.755
Anti-Suspension DP	28	.0519	.81	-2.078	1.632
Adaptive DP	28	.0117	.742	-1.86	1.491
Zero-Tolerance DP	28	.004	.563	-.966	1.173
Preventative DP	28	-.007	.818	-2.342	.992
Control Variables					
Enrollment (natural log)	33	7.639	.603	5.231	8.121
Black-White Demographic Gap	33	-9.209	22.226	-74.34	22.14
IEP Percentage	33	10.282	3.813	0	14.87
Black-White School Climate Gap	31	0.00	.972	-1.776	2.756

Multivariate Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) Regression

The final phase of the analysis assessed predictive validity by using a multivariate ordinary least squares (OLS) regression model to measure the extent to which disproportionality in exclusionary discipline is a function of administrator's antiegalitarian attitudes, disciplinary practices, and a host of school-level control variables (Raffaele Mendez et al., 2003). It seeks to generalize from a sample to a population, thereby allowing inferences to be made regarding school administrators' antiegalitarian attitudes, their disciplinary practices, and the extent of discipline disproportionality present at their school**.** This model allowed me to examine the unique contribution of one variable to the relationship between other variables while controlling for the effects of included variables and to identify statistically significant relationships among these variables.

OLS regression is a widely used parametric statistical analysis technique used to examine the effects of multiple variables on one response measure. OLS regression concurrently evaluates several variables to address specific research questions and considers the interrelated nature of the dependent and control variables, something that would be lost in an analysis depending upon multiple simple regressions. It provides a parameter estimate and associated standard error per measure and in this way provided accurate representations of variable relationships. The model provides estimates of the slopes and intercept that minimize the sum of the squared differences between the observed and predicted values within the regression model. From these slope estimates, researchers gain insight into statistically significant correlations between the dependent and independent variables.

The Regression Equation

In multivariate OLS regression, the relationship between continuous independent (explanatory) variables and the dependent variable is described by estimating the coefficients of the independent variables in a linear equation. The general equation assumes the effects of the explanatory variables are additive, and the effect of any single explanatory variable remains the same across a range of other explanatory variables.

Model equation.

$$Y_s = \boldsymbol{\beta}_0 + \boldsymbol{\beta}_1 \text{ANTIEG}_s + X_s\boldsymbol{\beta}_j + \varepsilon_s$$

In this equation, Y_{is} is a continuous measure of the exclusionary discipline gap at school (s) while X_s represents school characteristics that would potentially influence the rates of exclusionary discipline applied to white and black students (school enrollment, school demographics, percent of students receiving special education services, and school climate measures). In addition, $\boldsymbol{\beta}_1$ represents the relationship between school administrator anti-egalitarian attitudes and the exclusionary discipline gap. In additional models, I substituted anti-egalitarianism beliefs for the measures of disciplinary practices (system, anti-suspension, adaptive, zero tolerance, and prevention). I also ran a version of the model where I include the anti-egalitarianism beliefs along with the measures of disciplinary practices.

Assumptions of the Model

Multivariate OLS regression relies on underlying assumptions that must be met in order to provide accurate estimates, including: (1) the dependent variable is a linear function of the independent variable, (2) values of the independent variable are fixed in repeated samples and the independent variable is not correlated with the residual, (3) the expected mean of the

residuals equals zero, (4) the variance of the residuals is constant, or homoskedastic, (5) the individual residuals are independent of each other, (6) the residuals are normally distributed, (7) there is not perfect multicollinearity between independent variables, (8) the linearity of regression coefficients (Todman & Dugard, 2007). OLS regression is a robust approach and can moderate violations of these assumptions if addressed in a strategic manner. Multiple diagnostic steps ensured the model met the OLS assumptions and identified outliers and instances of collinearity.

One possible threat to interval validity is multicollinearity. Multicollinearity occurs when an explanatory variable is related to one or more of the other explanatory variables in the model, and so contributes no unique information to the model and is therefore redundant. Should these relationships be very strong, they will impact the calculation of the regression model and appropriate interpretation of the results due to unreliable regression coefficients and unreliable parameters. The consequences of multicollinearity are limited in this model due to the delivery of a predictive, rather than causal, analysis. While multicollinearity may impact the validity of the interpretation of the regression coefficients associated with the explanatory variables, the response variable may still prove accurate (Moutinho & Hutcheson, 2011). I effectively reduced the level of multicollinearity by combining two or more highly correlated independent variables into a single composite variable due to both being indicators of the same underlying concept, enabling the identification of the variable's contributions to the regression model.

An additional point of consideration is sample selection bias, which occurs when the sample used in the analysis is not representative of the population of interest. Because the surveys were administered anonymously, this has the potential to lead to biased coefficient estimates in the model. Finally, OLS regression assumes that the independent variables are fixed

and exogenous, so this study has the potential to exhibit simultaneity if there is a two-way relationship between variables in the model. This leads to the error term being correlated with the independent variables, and as a result, biased coefficient estimates. It cannot be excluded that the level of discipline disproportionality within schools could positively or negatively influence administrators' disciplinary practices as manifested through, for example, interactions with students' families.

Chapter Four: Results

I employed multivariate OLS regression to simultaneously analyze the relationships between multiple independent variables and the dependent variable while controlling the effect of additional variables. This model quantified the independent variables' separate and collective influence on the exclusionary discipline gap. It enabled both an investigation of the complex relationships among variables and the identification of key predictors that contribute to the variability of the exclusionary discipline gap.

Research Question 1: Anti-egalitarianism and Exclusionary Discipline

The first research question asked: What is the relationship between the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO-E) of the school administrator and the rate of exclusionary discipline imposed on black and white students? To answer this research question, I first regressed my exclusionary discipline outcomes on antiegalitarian attitudes.

Table 10, column 1 outlines the results. I found that, on average, a one-unit increase in administrators' antiegalitarian attitudes corresponds with a 1.171 percentage point increase in the overall exclusionary discipline gap when holding all other variables constant. In short, this means that schools with stronger antiegalitarian attitudes have wider exclusionary discipline gaps between black and white students; however, this coefficient is not statistically significant. The R-squared value indicates that 28.4% of the variance in exclusionary discipline can be explained by anti-egalitarianism and the additional control variables.

Table 10: *Regression Estimates of the Relationship Between Anti-egalitarianism and Exclusionary Discipline Gaps*

Variables	Overall Exclusionary Discipline Gap (1)	Disruptive Behavior Gap (2)	Disruptive Behavior Bullying Gap (3)	Disruptive Behavior Racially Motivated Incident Gap (4)	Aggressive Behavior Gap (5)	ATOD Gap (6)
Anti-egalitarianism	1.171 (1.080)	0.707 (0.827)	0.680 (0.816)	0.027 (0.138)	0.109 (0.303)	0.355* (0.149)
Enrollment (natural log)	2.745+ (1.589)	1.975 (1.217)	1.754 (1.201)	0.221 (0.203)	0.336 (0.445)	0.434+ (0.220)
Black-White Demographic Gap	-0.024 (0.048)	-0.010 (0.037)	-0.015 (0.036)	0.005 (0.006)	-0.007 (0.014)	-0.006 (0.007)
IEP Percentage	-0.125 (0.301)	-0.082 (0.231)	-0.006 (0.228)	-0.076+ (0.039)	0.047 (0.084)	-0.090* (0.042)
Black-White School Climate Gap	0.155 (0.095)	0.108 (0.073)	0.097 (0.072)	0.011 (0.012)	0.040 (0.027)	0.007 (0.013)
Constant	-15.489 (10.949)	-11.134 (8.383)	-10.523 (8.277)	-0.611 (1.401)	-1.985 (3.069)	-2.370 (1.515)
N	27	27	27	27	27	27
R-Sq	0.284	0.267	0.262	0.193	0.247	0.305

Note. Standard Errors in Parentheses

+$p < 0.10$; *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

Looking at the more specific measures of exclusionary discipline measures (i.e., disruptive behavior, disruptive behavior bullying, disruptive behavior racially motivated incidents, aggressive behavior, and ATOD) (Table 10, columns 2-6), I found that anti-egalitarianism was positively related to all exclusionary discipline gaps but only one of the observed relationships were statistically significant. I found that a one-unit increase in antiegalitarian attitudes was associated with a 0.355 percentage point increase in the ATOD

discipline gap (column 6) ($p < 0.05$). The variables in this model accounted for 30.5% of the variance in the ATOD discipline gap.

In terms of the control variables, I found that very few were statistically significantly related to exclusionary discipline gaps. In some models, larger schools have larger exclusionary discipline gaps (see columns 1 and 6). In Table 10, column 1, the coefficient indicates that for each one-unit increase in log enrollment, overall exclusionary discipline increases by 2.745 percentage points. In models 4 and 6, I found that increases in the percentage of students with an IEP were negatively related to the exclusionary discipline gap. For example, column 4 shows that for every one percentage point increase in students with an IEP, the racially motivated incident gap decreases by 0.076 percentage points.

Research Question 2: Disciplinary Practices and Exclusionary Discipline

The second research question asked: What is the relationship between school administrators' disciplinary practices and the rate of exclusionary discipline imposed on black and white students? To answer this research question, I first regressed my exclusionary discipline outcomes on disciplinary practices in the presence of control variables.

Overall, the system variable, which measures an administrator's use of discipline as a tool to maintain system efficiency, shows low correlation with exclusionary discipline outcomes (Table 11). Columns 1, 2, 3, and 4 show a negative relationship with discipline gaps. The coefficients range from -.270 to -.694, and columns 1-3 are not statistically significant and have standard errors that exceed the magnitude of the coefficient, indicating there is uncertainty in the estimated coefficients. Column 4 shows a negative and statistically significant relationship between system practices and the racially motivated incident gap ($p < 0.05$) with a coefficient of

-.27. In short, for every one-unit increase in system practices, I found a -0.27 percentage point reduction in the gap of exclusionary discipline for racially motivated incidents. Together with the control variables, system beliefs accounted for 34.7% of the variation in the racially motivated incident gap.

Table 11: *Regression Estimates of the Relationship Between System Disciplinary Practices and Exclusionary Discipline Gaps*

Variables	Overall Exclusionary Discipline Gap (1)	Disruptive Behavior Gap (2)	Disruptive Behavior Bullying Gap (3)	Disruptive Behavior Racially Motivated Incident Gap (4)	Aggressive Behavior Gap (5)	ATOD Gap (6)
System	-0.378	-0.694	-0.424	-0.270*	0.131	0.186
	(1.055)	(0.790)	(0.787)	(0.118)	(0.287)	(0.156)
Enrollment (natural log)	2.052	1.415	1.269	0.146	0.344	0.292
	(1.481)	(1.109)	(1.104)	(0.166)	(0.403)	(0.220)
Black-White Demographic Gap	-0.010	-0.002	-0.006	0.004	-0.006	-0.001
	(0.045)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.005)	(0.012)	(0.007)
IEP Percentage	0.081	0.104	0.142	-0.038	0.043	-0.066
	(0.300)	(0.225)	(0.224)	(0.034)	(0.082)	(0.045)
Black-White School Climate Gap	0.121	0.086	0.076	0.010	0.037	-0.002
	(0.091)	(0.068)	(0.068)	(0.010)	(0.025)	(0.014)
Constant	-12.512	-8.884	-8.448	-0.435	-2.030	-1.599
	(10.330)	(7.732)	(7.700)	(1.158)	(2.809)	(1.531)
N	28	28	28	28	28	28
R-Sq	0.244	0.264	0.245	0.347	0.248	0.154

Note. Standard Errors in Parentheses

+$p < 0.10$; *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

As shown in Table 12, anti-suspension beliefs were not significantly related to gaps in exclusionary discipline. Recall that anti-suspension measures suggest an understanding of the negative impact of suspensions. The coefficients were primarily negative and small in magnitude. For example, a one-unit increase in anti-suspension beliefs was associated with a 0.130 percentage point decrease in the overall exclusionary discipline gap (column 1).

Table 12: *Regression Estimates of the Relationship Between Anti-Suspension Disciplinary Practices and Exclusionary Discipline Gaps*

Variables	Overall Exclusionary Discipline Gap (1)	Disruptive Behavior Gap (2)	Disruptive Behavior Bullying Gap (3)	Disruptive Behavior Racially Motivated Incident Gap (4)	Aggressive Behavior Gap (5)	ATOD Gap (6)
Anti-Suspension	-0.130	-0.034	-0.029	-0.005	-0.235	0.139
	(0.943)	(0.716)	(0.706)	(0.117)	(0.252)	(0.141)
Enrollment (natural log)	2.105	1.522	1.334	0.188	0.313	0.269
	(1.476)	(1.121)	(1.105)	(0.184)	(0.395)	(0.220)
Black-White Demographic Gap	-0.008	0.002	-0.004	0.006	-0.008	-0.002
	(0.045)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.007)
IEP Percentage	0.031	0.016	0.088	-0.072*	0.054	-0.039
	(0.271)	(0.206)	(0.203)	(0.034)	(0.072)	(0.040)
Black-White School Climate Gap	0.126	0.089	0.078	0.011	0.044+	-0.007
	(0.096)	(0.073)	(0.072)	(0.012)	(0.026)	(0.014)
Constant	-12.376	-8.803	-8.392	-0.411	-1.845	-1.728
	(10.384)	(7.888)	(7.772)	(1.292)	(2.775)	(1.550)
N	28	28	28	28	28	28
R-Sq	0.24	0.239	0.235	0.192	0.27	0.139

Note. Standard Errors in Parentheses

+$p < 0.10$; *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$

I found similar results regarding adaptive disciplinary practices (Table 13). Adaptive disciplinary practices captured a belief that school discipline should be adapted to the needs of diverse groups. Every one unit increase in adaptive disciplinary practices was associated with a 0.045 percentage point increase in the overall exclusionary discipline gap, though this relationship was not statistically significant.

Table 13: *Regression Estimates of the Relationship Between Adaptive Disciplinary Practices and Exclusionary Discipline Gaps*

Variables	Overall Exclusionary Discipline Gap (1)	Disruptive Behavior Gap (2)	Disruptive Behavior Bullying Gap (3)	Disruptive Behavior Racially Motivated Incident Gap (4)	Aggressive Behavior Gap (5)	ATOD Gap (6)
Adapt	0.045	0.008	-0.061	0.069	-0.112	0.149
	(1.017)	(0.773)	(0.761)	(0.126)	(0.276)	(0.152)
Enrollment (natural log)	2.119	1.525	1.324	0.201	0.304	0.290
	(1.487)	(1.129)	(1.113)	(0.184)	(0.404)	(0.222)
Black-White Demographic Gap	-0.007	0.002	-0.004	0.006	-0.007	-0.002
	(0.045)	(0.034)	(0.034)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.007)
IEP Percentage	0.031	0.016	0.093	-0.077*	0.067	-0.052
	(0.279)	(0.212)	(0.208)	(0.034)	(0.076)	(0.042)
Black-White School Climate Gap	0.123	0.088	0.076	0.011	0.036	-0.001
	(0.093)	(0.070)	(0.069)	(0.011)	(0.025)	(0.014)
Constant	-12.511	-8.836	-8.378	-0.457	-1.971	-1.704
	(10.378)	(7.880)	(7.763)	(1.282)	(2.816)	(1.549)
N	28	28	28	28	28	28
R-Sq	0.239	0.239	0.235	0.203	0.247	0.138

Note. Standard Errors in Parentheses

$+p < 0.10$; $*p < 0.05$; $**p < 0.01$; $***p < 0.001$

Table 14 displays that the regression between zero tolerance disciplinary practices and exclusionary discipline gaps yielded mostly negative relationships. Zero tolerance captures that zero tolerance was a significant part of discipline at their school and was effective at sending a clear message regarding behavior. These coefficients were larger in magnitude than I observed for system beliefs and adaptive disciplinary practices, but the coefficients are less precisely estimated as indicated by the larger standard errors.

Table 14: *Regression Estimates of the Relationship Between Zero Tolerance Disciplinary Practices and Exclusionary Discipline Gaps*

Variables	Overall Exclusionary Discipline Gap (1)	Disruptive Behavior Gap (2)	Disruptive Behavior Bullying Gap (3)	Disruptive Behavior Racially Motivated Incident Gap (4)	Aggressive Behavior Gap (5)	ATOD Gap (6)
Zero Tolerance	-0.549	-0.228	-0.217	-0.011	-0.362	0.041
	(1.419)	(1.080)	(1.064)	(0.177)	(0.380)	(0.217)
Enrollment (natural log)	2.199	1.560	1.370	0.190	0.382	0.256
	(1.489)	(1.133)	(1.117)	(0.186)	(0.399)	(0.228)
Black-White Demographic Gap	-0.004	0.003	-0.002	0.006	-0.005	-0.002
	(0.046)	(0.035)	(0.034)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.007)
IEP Percentage	0.039	0.019	0.091	-0.072*	0.063	-0.043
	(0.269)	(0.205)	(0.202)	(0.034)	(0.072)	(0.041)
Black-White School Climate Gap	0.123	0.088	0.078	0.010	0.038	-0.003
	(0.091)	(0.069)	(0.068)	(0.011)	(0.024)	(0.014)
Constant	-13.170	-9.116	-8.687	-0.428	-2.493	-1.561
	(10.476)	(7.973)	(7.856)	(1.307)	(2.806)	(1.601)
N	28	28	28	28	28	28
R-Sq	0.245	0.24	0.237	0.192	0.272	0.102

Note. Standard Errors in Parentheses

$+p < 0.10$; $*p < 0.05$; $**p < 0.01$; $***p < 0.001$

Finally, the regression between prevent disciplinary practices and discipline gaps (Table 15) shows mostly positive coefficients, however these coefficients are not statistically significant. Again, the coefficients were larger in magnitude than observed on the other disciplinary practice measures, but the coefficients were not precisely estimated as indicated by the larger standard errors.

Table 15: *Regression Estimates of the Relationship Between Preventative Disciplinary Practices and Exclusionary Discipline Gaps*

Variables	Overall Exclusionary Discipline Gap (1)	Disruptive Behavior Gap (2)	Disruptive Behavior Bullying Gap (3)	Disruptive Behavior Racially Motivated Incident Gap (4)	Aggressive Behavior Gap (5)	ATOD Gap (6)
Prevent	1.147	0.932	0.950	-0.019	0.103	0.113
	(0.891)	(0.673)	(0.661)	(0.115)	(0.251)	(0.139)
Enrollment (natural log)	2.429	1.782	1.599	0.183	0.353	0.294
	(1.445)	(1.091)	(1.072)	(0.186)	(0.407)	(0.225)
Black-White Demographic Gap	-0.008	0.002	-0.004	0.006	-0.007	-0.002
	(0.043)	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.006)	(0.012)	(0.007)
IEP Percentage	0.051	0.031	0.103	-0.072*	0.061	-0.041
	(0.261)	(0.197)	(0.193)	(0.034)	(0.073)	(0.041)
Black-White School Climate Gap	0.106	0.074	0.064	0.011	0.036	-0.004
	(0.089)	(0.067)	(0.066)	(0.011)	(0.025)	(0.014)
Constant	-15.233	-11.064	-10.694	-0.370	-2.286	-1.884
	(10.215)	(7.714)	(7.577)	(1.316)	(2.874)	(1.591)
N	28	28	28	28	28	28
R-Sq	0.293	0.300	0.301	0.193	0.247	0.127

Note. Standard Errors in Parentheses

+p< 0.10; *p < 0.05; **p < 0.01; ***p <0.001

Following the initial analysis, I conducted the full-model multivariate regression (Table 16) to examine the correlation between anti-egalitarianism, disciplinary practices, and the exclusionary discipline gap. When controlling for all variables, anti-egalitarianism displayed strong positive correlations with the independent variables, especially as reflected in Table 16, columns 1, 2, 3, and 6.

Table 16: *Regression Estimates of the Relationships Between Anti-egalitarianism, Disciplinary Practices, and Exclusionary Discipline Gaps*

Variables	Overall Exclusionary Discipline Gap (1)	Disruptive Behavior Gap (2)	Disruptive Behavior Bullying Gap (3)	Disruptive Behavior Racially Motivated Incident Gap (4)	Aggressive Behavior Gap (5)	ATOD Gap (6)
Anti-egalitarianism	3.165*	2.374*	2.319*	0.055	0.053	0.738***
	(1.462)	(1.103)	(1.093)	(0.179)	(0.426)	(0.145)
System DP	-0.225	-0.796	-0.393	-0.402*	0.405	0.166
	(1.269)	(0.958)	(0.948)	(0.155)	(0.370)	(0.126)
Anti-Suspension DP	0.652	0.635	0.641	-0.006	-0.380	0.396**
	(1.175)	(0.887)	(0.878)	(0.144)	(0.342)	(0.116)
Adaptive DP	-1.042	-0.771	-0.923	0.152	-0.101	-0.171
	(1.210)	(0.914)	(0.905)	(0.148)	(0.353)	(0.120)
Zero-Tolerance DP	0.007	0.693	0.530	0.163	-0.787	0.100
	(1.860)	(1.404)	(1.391)	(0.228)	(0.542)	(0.184)
Preventative DP	2.480*	1.854+	1.952*	-0.098	0.195	0.431**
	(1.167)	(0.881)	(0.873)	(0.143)	(0.340)	(0.116)
Control Variables	X	X	X	X	X	X
Constant	-23.282+	-15.757+	-15.625+	-0.132	-3.442	-4.084**
	(11.856)	(8.950)	(8.863)	(1.451)	(3.455)	(1.175)
N	27	27	27	27	27	27
R-Sq	0.464	0.468	0.461	0.449	0.392	0.734

Note. Standard Errors in Parentheses.

$+p < 0.10$; $*p < 0.05$; $**p < 0.01$; $***p < 0.001$

Regarding its statistically significant influence on the overall exclusionary discipline gap, for every one-unit increase in antiegalitarian attitudes, the overall exclusionary discipline gap increases by 3.165 percentage points ($p < 0.05$). This model accounts for 46.4% of the variance in the overall exclusionary discipline gap. Column 2 highlights that the disruptive behavior gap increased by 2.374 percentage points with every unit increase in anti-egalitarianism ($p < 0.05$) . Within column 3, each one-unit increase in anti-egalitarianism is associated with a 2.319 percentage point increase in the disruptive behavior bullying gap ($p < 0.05$) . The relationship between anti-egalitarianism and the ATOD gap was the smallest in magnitude but the most precisely estimated. Every one-unit increase in anti-egalitarianism was associated with a 0.738 percentage point increase in the ATOD exclusionary discipline gap ($p <0.001$). The model accounted for 73.4% of the variation in ATOD exclusionary discipline gap. Overall, anti-egalitarian attitudes, when regressed in a model with other critical variables including disciplinary practices, have an obvious and significant impact on exclusionary discipline outcomes.

The full regression model highlighted the interactions between disciplinary practices, anti-egalitarianism, and exclusionary discipline gaps, and allowed for the identification of multiple disciplinary practices that demonstrated significant relationships with exclusionary discipline. System disciplinary practices produced a negative relationship with the disruptive behavior racially motivated incident gap, demonstrating a coefficient of -.402 with statistical significance ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that as system beliefs manifested at higher levels (through an emphasis on the use of discipline as a tool to maintain system efficiency), there was a corresponding reduction in the discipline gap for racially motivated incidents.

For each one-unit increase in anti-suspension disciplinary practices there was a corresponding .396 increase the ATOD gap that showed high statistical significance ($p < 0.01$). Paradoxically so, stronger feelings regarding the ineffectiveness of suspension were associated with an increase in the ATOD exclusionary discipline gap. Preventative disciplinary practices, defined as the promotion of activities and programs aimed at reducing exclusionary discipline, presented significant positive relationships with exclusionary discipline gaps in Table 16, columns 1, 2, 3, and 6. These results are counterintuitive since preventative practices should have the effect of reducing the discipline gap. This correlation to an increase in black-white exclusionary discipline gaps indicates a possibility that preventative practices are inequitably applied to students according to race, perhaps due to the influence of anti-egalitarianism. Table 16, columns 1 and 3 display a positive relationship in that every one-unit increase in preventative disciplinary practices corresponds with a 2.48 percentage point increase in the overall exclusionary discipline gap and 1.952 percentage point increase in the disruptive behavior bullying gap. Both coefficients have a p-value of < 0.05, indicating statistical significance.

Most notable in the model is that anti-egalitarianism and preventative disciplinary practices both display strong, statistically significant correlations with the overall exclusionary discipline gap, the disruptive behavior gap, and the bullying gap. Additionally, the ATOD gap demonstrated statistically significant relationships with anti-egalitarianism, anti-suspension disciplinary practices, and preventative disciplinary practices.

Limitations

This research is subject to several limitations including sample size, response anonymity, endogenous independent variables, data exclusions, and social desirability. To maintain the anonymity of the responses, I was unable to collect demographics on respondents, making it

difficult to determine whether I had a representative sample of administrators across the district. The sample size was small and relied on only 44 responses. This made it difficult to identify statistically significant relationships in the data and led to an underpowered model with limited ability to account for the extent of endogeneity among the independent variables. Additionally, administrators' beliefs may be a response to instead of a precondition to exclusionary discipline practices at the school level. The independent variables may not be exogenous, and therefore their impact on the model might be affected by other observed and unobserved variables, creating omitted variable bias. It is possible that bidirectional causality exists between antiegalitarian attitudes and disciplinary practices. The study relied on self-report information from administrators, which means that social desirability may have operated in survey responses. Administrators' responses may have been influenced by what was deemed to be socially preferable behavior considering the negative connotations surrounding social dominance concepts, racial disproportionality, and exclusionary discipline practices within the educational setting (Marcucci, 2020).

One limitation of the study is I relied on publicly available discipline data that was limited in scope and included only incidents subject to exclusionary discipline under certain categories and offense codes. This reflected only a portion of the overall application of exclusionary discipline. Incidents outside of the reported categories and/or offense codes may have resulted in a suspension or expulsion, however they were not included in the publicly available data and so could not be analyzed within this study. For example, the publicly available data for the aggressive behavior category only included incidents related to the offense code "battery to school staff". Other incidents categorized as aggressive behavior that resulted in

a suspension or expulsion, such as fighting, battery, or threats, were excluded from the data and hence this analysis.

The necessity of excluding school-level socio-economic status (SES) from the model potentially presents a limitation. SES is a measure of the percentage of students eligible for free and reduced lunch (FRL) and the mobility (transiency) rate. It is a key socio-demographic measure that research has shown to correlate with race, school demographics, and rates of exclusionary discipline (Skiba et al., 2002). The schools' percent FRL was originally selected to be controlled, however all schools qualified for a pandemic-era meal program during the 2022-2023 school year, and so every school reported as 100% FRL in the data. Transiency was found to be endogenous to exclusionary discipline, and so too was excluded from the model.

Chapter Five: Discussion

The purpose of this OLS regression study was to identify the extent to which relationships exist between participants' antiegalitarian attitudes, disciplinary practices, and the application of exclusionary discipline toward black and white within their respective schools.

There were two research questions in this study. The first research question asked:

What is the relationship between the Social Dominance Orientation (SDO-E) of the school administrator and the rate of exclusionary discipline imposed on black and white students?

SDO-E measured an administrators' anti-egalitarian beliefs, or their preference for nonegalitarian intergroup relations and preference for hierarchies where resources are inequitably distributed. SDO-E and is exhibited through the individual's desire to exclude groups from accessing social capital that could improve their position (Ho et al., 2012). Because schools reflect dominant ideologies about race (Bonilla-Silva, 2018; Lewis, 2003), exclusionary discipline is a manifestation of hierarchy and power that grants privilege to some and creates barriers for others. In review of the results that presented statistical significance, anti-egalitarianism regressed against the ATOD gap demonstrating a positive relationship, meaning these attitudes correlated to a moderate increase in the ATOD gap. The publicly available data within this measure was limited to exclusionary discipline applied for the distribution of controlled substances, so it is not inclusive of all ATOD offense categories. However, administrators have discretion within the ATOD category, and this result shows that when discretion is matched with an increase in anti-egalitarian attitudes, it leads to a greater discipline gap.

Sidanius et al. (2006) found high anti-egalitarianism to be positively correlated with both harsh negative sanctions and the endorsement of legitimizing beliefs used to validate and defend practices. Their empirical findings demonstrated that an individual's assignment of consequences was influenced by their desire to establish and maintain group-based social hierarchy justified through moral norms and causal beliefs. Current research focuses on anti-egalitarianism's impact on criminal justice actions and sanctions; however my study posits that the effects of anti-egalitarian attitudes may translate into the application of discipline within schools because SDT has proven that "institutional discrimination is a major means by which groups create and maintain dominance over other groups" (Aiello et al., 2013, p. 487).

Anti-egalitarianism and preventative disciplinary practices displayed strong, statistically significant positive correlations with several discipline gap measures, including increased disproportionality in the overall exclusionary discipline gap, the disruptive behavior gap, and the bullying gap. This positive, though counterintuitive, relationship with preventative practices reflects SDT's claim that social capital is inequitably distributed through schools' application of exclusionary discipline practices and supports my finding that discipline disproportionality serves a hierarchy-enhancing function (Sidanius et al., 2004). The effects of anti-egalitarianism contribute to the maintenance of the status-quo social hierarchy as manifested through the disproportionate discipline of black students. Students who are subject to exclusionary discipline are more likely to experience challenges such as poor academic outcomes and entry into the juvenile justice system, and ultimately lead to disparate, inferior educational outcomes for black students.

The second research question asked:

What is the relationship between school administrators' Disciplinary Practices and the rate of exclusionary discipline imposed on black and white students?

The anti-suspension, preventative, and system disciplinary practices showed statistically significant interactions with anti-egalitarianism and exclusionary discipline gaps. Anti-suspension practices were strongly correlated with an increase in the ATOD gap, though to a lesser magnitude, along with anti-egalitarian beliefs and preventative disciplinary practices. Their impact, while small, very likely related to one another and contributed to variance in the ATOD gap. These positive relationships with the exclusionary discipline gap imply that not all students receive access to or benefits from an increase in administrators' preventative and anti-suspension practices. Increases in preventative disciplinary practices correlated with a notable increase in the overall discipline gap, the disruptive behavior gap, and the bullying gap, in alignment with statistically significant coefficients on anti-egalitarianism. These findings show that preventative disciplinary practices and anti-egalitarianism combine with the other variables to capture a significant 46.4% of the variance in the overall exclusionary discipline gap. An administrator's tendency to prevent rather than punish, and to avoid suspension as an outcome, serves to increase disproportionality when controlling anti-egalitarian beliefs. Preventative and anti-suspension disciplinary practices, which should contribute to the reduction of exclusionary discipline, are selectively applied due to the influence of hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myths.

The system disciplinary practice factor held a negative relationship with racially motivated incident gap. This means that as administrators' system practices increase, the disproportionality within the racially motivated incident gap decreased. System practices refer to

an emphasis on the use of exclusionary discipline to maintain order, so it is surprising that it correlates to a reduction in a discipline gap measure. To provide insight on this relationship, it is important to understand how racially motivated incidents are being enforced in schools.

Racially motivated incidents are defined as single or repeated acts that target a specific person or demographic causing harm or creating a hostile learning environment and may include jokes, threats, physical altercations, or intimidation. The behavior guidelines categorize the type of racially motivated incident based on type of offense, for example that based in culture, ethnicity, or race, however this specific data was not publicly available. The guidelines specifically state that disciplinary resolutions may be prescribed in any order depending on the perceived severity of the incident. It is surprising that the racially motivated incident gap shows any disproportionality toward black students, meaning black students have a higher risk index relative to white students, given the history of racism against black people. A possible contributing factor is that black students' use of the "n" word with other black students is categorized as a racially motivated incident, regardless of the context or interaction. While ODR coding of this infraction as a racially motivated incident is justifiable in that it adheres to its stated definition, this coding fails to account for cultural norms within segments of the black community that employ the term as slang. The use of the "n" word violates white cultural norms and signifies a manifestation of dysconscious racism, and in this way serves as a hierarchy-enhancing legitimizing myth that promotes the ideal of "fairness" to allow black students to disproportionately become a target of policies promoted as protection for marginalized groups (Pratto et al., 2006). This scenario demonstrates that when schools fail to recognize how their practices marginalize students, their interventions at the individual level often serve to magnify inequities and limit access further (Blaisdell, 2016).

This brings the reader back to an explanation of why system practices correlate with a reduction in the racially motivated incident gap. Since anti-egalitarianism does not show statistical significance on the racially motivated incident gap, system practices are not strongly influenced when controlling for anti-egalitarian attitudes. So the results indicate that administrators' application of system practices occur largely independent from the influence of anti-egalitarianism's preferences regarding intergroup relations and hierarchies. Therefore I propose an explanation for this seemingly contradictory result based in the understanding that system practices prioritize an idea that discipline consumes too much time and distracts from the goals of education. Due to this belief, administrators that hold strong system beliefs may be more likely to downplay the use of the "n" word among black students to avoid the disruption accompanied with the application of discipline, hence leading to a reduction in disproportionality among racially motivated incidents.

Another finding of note is the high magnitude of the coefficient on preventative disciplinary practices when regressed against the overall exclusionary discipline gap, the disruptive behavior gap, and the bullying gap, however none were statistically significant. This lack of significance may be connected to the underpowered regression model. Preventative disciplinary practices focus on the perspective that prevention and the teaching of appropriate behaviors results in fewer disciplinary problems, so an increase in these beliefs would seemingly lead to a reduction in disproportionality, however the inverse is showing in the regression albeit without statistical significance. This could be explained by recognizing that though prevention and teaching are prioritized, when holding for anti-egalitarianism, they do not prevent the eventual escalation to the disproportionate application of exclusionary discipline.

Skiba et al. (2003) conducted a study and found that administrators who believed that exclusionary discipline could be prevented through a positive school climate had lower rates of out-of-school suspension and made more frequent use of preventive measures. However, my findings indicate that anti-suspension and preventative disciplinary practices manifest differently when an administrator exhibits increased anti-egalitarianism and makes decisions in line with maintaining a hierarchy. Though these disciplinary practices may reduce the overall use of suspension and expulsion, the practices still manifest a hierarchy-enhancing function of increasing disproportionality. This aligns with the functioning of anti-egalitarianism as expressed through seemingly legitimate rationales that result in the inequitable distribution of resources and the exclusion of certain groups from social capital. It serves to legitimize stratified systems that appear relatively egalitarian and supports the research that schools function as hierarchy-enhancing institutions. Administrators may emphasize certain discipline practices that appear to be hierarchy-attenuating, however when controlled with antiegalitarian measures and school level variables, it becomes clear that the practices actually serve to maintain the status quo. This supports the research that individuals holding stronger anti-egalitarian beliefs promote consensual hierarchy-enhancing ideologies that imply legitimacy in excluding certain groups from resources and social capital. This especially manifests if the policies have ostensibly different purposes, such as anti-suspension or preventative discipline practices, and appear relatively egalitarian (Hindriks et al., 2014; Ho et al., 2012).

Implications for Research

This study employed a novel application of social dominance theory in terms of using its SDO-E measure to examine its impact within the educational setting to explain discipline disproportionality. The findings of this study have important implications for the study of why

disproportionate discipline persists because it considered the impact of administrators' antiegalitarian attitudes in relation to disciplinary practices and exclusionary discipline outcomes. This study provided insights that might otherwise be missed if not framed within the ideas of systemic inequity in schools as hierarchy-enhancing institutions. Current literature on implicit bias recognizes the existence of systemic bias, however, generally approaches it as a contributing factor rather than a separate force (Greenwald & Krieger, 2006; Jost & Banaji, 1994; Rudman, 2004). Arguments regarding the proliferation of discipline disproportionality toward black students focus on the actions of individuals in maintaining this inequity, however, often fail to address why the disparities persist despite efforts to change individual's mindsets. Matching anti-egalitarian beliefs with the disciplinary practices scale allowed a consideration of the correlation between two components that may influence the application of discipline toward black and white students. My findings underscore the importance of the relationship between anti-egalitarian attitudes and disciplinary practices and their connections to producing exclusionary discipline gaps. Further investigation regarding the correlation of hierarchy-attenuating practices, such as preventative and anti-suspension disciplinary practices, to increases in exclusionary discipline gaps is warranted.

This study supports the research that schools serve as social institutions through which social capital is inequitably distributed. It adds to the literature by examining how exclusionary discipline policies interact with school administrators' anti-egalitarian beliefs that serve a hierarchy-enhancing function and maintain the status-quo of inferior educational outcomes for black students (Sidanius et al., 2004). Given the established research on the connection between exclusionary discipline and the school-to-prison pipeline, and the fact that one can identify subordinate groups within a social hierarchy by identifying the groups overrepresented in prisons

(Sidanius et al., 2006), this study also adds to the research on the systemic factors in schools that work to sustain bias and disparate outcomes for black students (Anyon et al., 2018).

Implications for Policy

Based on my analysis, I make the following recommendations to educators and policymakers as they consider how to address systemic inequities that manifest through discipline disproportionality and lead to inequitable educational outcomes for black students. This study's findings support prior research that identify the nation's public schools as "racial spaces" that reflect the society in which they operate and manifest the inequitably allocated resources that reduce the academic success of students of black students. This study's findings encourage policymakers to consider anti-egalitarian belief systems as a contributing factor to bringing these racial spaces into educational institutions and increasing the likelihood of long term social, economic, and political challenges for black students (Blaisdell, 2016). When policymakers ignore institutional structures that sustain social hierarchy, they encourage schools to function as racialized spaces by providing white individuals with increased access to educational resources but framing this access as being due to students' individual merit. It is critical that educators recognize the systemic disadvantage black students face, and how this impacts educational opportunity.

The correlations found in this student between anti-egalitarianism and discipline outcomes speak to its relevance in terms of school-level disciplinary practices and the influence of hierarchy-enhancing behaviors at work in schools that reinforce the authority of those deemed responsible for order and control in schools (Mendez et al., 2002). Structural racism both impacts and is perpetuated by social institutions such as schools, hence schools institutionalize the racial hierarchy. As with the bias of crowds, considering systemic issues at the individual

level confounds the problem. Policymakers must accept institutional views of racism as an explanation of how inequities affect black students both in and out of school contexts. This should be followed by actions that allocate resources to attenuate black students' access to benefits from social, political, and economic policies. The approach to building anti-hierarchical policy must embrace critical pedagogy that guides educators to analyze systems of power, privilege, and oppression, and further supports educators to explore social justice issues, engage in activism, and advocate for change through intentional action within their communities.

Educational systems and the policymakers who maintain them cannot ignore their own role in racial disparity in discipline. Policymakers must recognize that schools have an outsize influence as an institution because they "allocate resources on much larger scales, more systematically, and more stably than individuals generally can" and use the lens of SDT to recognize their significant contribution to creating, maintaining, and recreating systems of group-based hierarchy that encourage discipline disproportionality (Sidanius et al., 2004, p. 847). Educational policy should concurrently address other systems that systemically contribute to discrimination against black students including the juvenile justice system, housing equity, economic opportunity, voting rights, and healthcare access. Policymakers are uniquely positioned to expand their influence and effect change at the structural level by employing a multifaceted approach that involves policy changes at various levels of government and within and among institutions.

Implications for Practice

Current research establishes that disciplinary outcomes can be largely attributed to the administrators' attitudes about school discipline, and current practices lead to a lack of educational opportunity and school engagement among black students (Skiba, Arredondo, et al.,

2014). Administrator perspectives about discipline were stronger predictors of racial disproportionality in discipline than either student demographic or behavioral characteristics (Losen and Skiba, 2010; Skiba, Chung, et. Al, 2014; Skiba and Edl, 2004).

When considering the impact of disciplinary practices that ostensibly support a reduction in disproportionality but in fact serve as reinforcers, this study also adds to the literature of actions that constitute hierarchy enhancing legitimizing beliefs in school discipline (Pratto et al., 2006). These findings contribute to the research on how schools perpetuate racial inequality without employing explicitly discriminatory laws or practices (Leonardo, 2007). This indicates that schools must consider motivations beyond simple disciplinary beliefs to effect systemic change, including the development of cultural competency training that teaches administrators to recognize and embrace the diverse backgrounds and experiences of students, especially within historically marginalized communities.

Schools are institutions that have long struggled to produce egalitarian outcomes, and it is critical that educators recognize the role of staff actions, institutional context, and the structural inequity in which schools exist to alter practices and improve results (Astor et al., 1999; Watts & Erevelles, 2004). The challenge of schools mirroring racial spaces must be acknowledged directly, and educators need to understand the research that neither socioeconomic disadvantage nor differing rates of misbehavior account for racial disparities in exclusionary discipline rates, and do not provide sufficient explanation for the overrepresentation of black students in the application of exclusionary discipline (Bradshaw et al., 2010; Losen & Skiba, 2010; McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; Rausch & Skiba, 2005; Skiba, Arredondo, et al., 2014; Skiba et al., 2002; Wallace et al., 2008; Wu et al., 1982). Anti-bias and anti-racism education can help administrators

address their own biases, understand the impact of systemic racism on student outcomes, and develop strategies for creating inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Schools cannot effectively address racial discipline disparities without first recognizing and addressing the longstanding influence of hierarchical power structures (Carter, Skiba, Arredondo, and Pollock , 2017). Building an understanding among educators of the interconnected nature of social stratification, bias, and the institutional inequities that persist in education may help to develop behaviors that promote an increase in hierarchy-attenuating behaviors both within and outside of school buildings. Systemic inequities can only be reduced through a recognition of one's own anti-egalitarian beliefs and how they, whether made as conscious choices or not, perpetuate disadvantage for the black students they committed to serve.

Exclusionary discipline must be recognized as an independent developmental risk factor, and this understanding should guide how schools begin to address the endemic problem of discipline disproportionality and its short and long-term negative outcomes (Council on School Health, 2013). Schools should implement systems to develop restorative practices as an alternative to traditional disciplinary outcomes that often lead to suspension and expulsion (Curran, 2019). By moving administrators away from punitive discipline and instead focusing on repairing harm, building relationships, and promoting accountability, restorative practices additionally address the concern of school exclusion among black students by fostering a sense of belonging and community within schools. Establishing meaningful partnerships with families and communities can assist administrators in developing culturally responsive approaches to communication and engagement that respect and honor the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of families. This can in turn shape administrators' understanding of the community and increase

their empathy and responsiveness to hierarchy-attenuating practices that manifest increased equity and access for black students.

A focused effort to increase the diversity among educators is critical to combating dysconscious racism in schools, because this lack of representative bureaucracy predicts discipline disparities and creates a space for white norms to dominate and legitimizing myths to thrive (Armstrong and Wildman, 2008; Grissom et al., 2009). If not addressed through intentional action, these racial and cultural differences can manifest as the grouping of black students as an "out-group," associated with negative stereotypes and harmful societal bias that serve to justify harsher punitive discipline. Professional development that teaches educators to identify and embrace diversity as connected to inclusive actions that combat hierarchy could prove helpful. Administrators should receive specific training on dysconscious racism and its tacit prioritization of white norms and become aware that discipline decisions have the potential to be impacted by these beliefs. Professional development must incorporate an analysis of disaggregated data including academic achievement and disciplinary actions to identify black disproportionality and the manifestation of legitimizing myths to justify disparate outcomes. This data should be used consistently by schools to inform decision-making, monitor progress, and hold administrators and the institution accountable for achieving equity goals.

Recommendations for Future Research

In consideration of potential avenues for future research, it would be ideal to replicate this study with a comprehensive set of exclusionary discipline data to enable a closer examination of the incidents and circumstances that precede the application of suspension or expulsion. This could prove helpful in exploring how subjective and objective behavior offenses are addressed when considering anti-egalitarian attitudes, as research has established that the

nature of the offense is closely connected to disproportionality. Skiba et al. (2002) found that exclusionary discipline was more often applied to white students for more objective offenses (e.g. vandalism, obscene language, smoking) while black students were referred more often for subjective behaviors such as excessive noise, threat, and loitering. When bringing the lens of hierarchy to discipline, subjective offenses can manifest bias through administrative actions such as selective enforcement, when violations of a policy committed by a student who is a member of the dominant group are overlooked, while strictly enforcing the policy against a student who is a member of a subordinate group. Additional research is needed on administrators' application of disciplinary practices, because when considered in partnership with anti-egalitarianism and the application of white norms, the findings of this study indicate seemingly hierarchy-attenuating practices exacerbate the issue of disproportionality (Kafka, 2011; Marcucci, 2020). I further recommend a study that explores how the trends observed in this study vary according to administrator demographics.

Harnessing a larger sample size would strengthen the model and allow for more statistically significant findings. Building on research findings on the "wisdom of crowds," or the idea that the collective judgement of a group better reflects the truth than any one individual's answer (Clemen, 1989; Page, 2007; Surowiecki ,2004), greater numbers of responses would better measure aggregate judgement and identify the central tendency of the distribution (Payne et al., 2017). The current research could then be extended by applying the estimated regression coefficients to new data, enabling researchers to predict the outcome variable for different scenarios or populations. I recommend a study that controls transiency rates and SES to add depth to the model and better measure the impact of school-level factors on disproportionality as these variables have been shown to influence the application of discipline.

This study addresses just a few of the factors that contribute to schools' role in institutionalizing the social and racial hierarchy, however Powell (2008) states that efforts to identify the impact of a particular moment of decision understate the cumulative effects of discrimination. Van Laar and Sidanius (2001) identified three processes within SDT that contribute to the academic achievement gap that also could prove meaningful to disproportionality in exclusionary discipline: 1) distribution of resources; 2) direct and indirect discrimination by individuals and educational institutions; and 3) behavioral interactions between dominants and subordinates. Studies that further examine how these distinct processes interact with the application of exclusionary discipline in school settings and would provide insight into the persistence of disproportionality that ultimately limits black students' access to academic success and a quality education, two of the strongest indicators of upward social mobility (Gregory et al., 2017; Sullivan et al., 2013; Van Laar & Sidanius, 2001). Further research on the components of educational institutions that both result from and contribute to the social rules and ideologies that create economic, political, and social inequality for black students would be helpful to develop professional development to build understanding around this issue (Apple, 2012; Leonardo, 2009). Additionally, further studies that consider a larger network of influences grounded in critical theory would assist policymakers in understanding and dismantling the components of social hierarchy that provide the groundwork for systemic inequity.

Conclusion

It is well-established in literature that significant disparities exist in the application of exclusionary discipline toward black students. This differential treatment cannot be attributed to greater frequency or severity of misconduct and leads to a host of short- and long-term proximal issues. Discipline disproportionality must be considered in relation to institutional and societal

power structures that contribute to its persistence despite mandates, policies, and rhetoric aimed at reducing its presence in schools. This study provided insight on how administrators' disciplinary decisions interact with bias, power, and hierarchy by examining the contribution of antiegalitarian beliefs and disciplinary practices to the disproportionate discipline of black students. It was hypothesized that antiegalitarian attitudes would be significantly and positively correlated with the presence of an exclusionary discipline gap and punitive disciplinary practices. The initial regression models that examined disciplinary practices and anti-egalitarianism independent of one another showed low correlation with exclusionary discipline gaps, however when matched in a full regression model, significant correlations were identified with disproportionality. Positive correlations emerged between discipline gaps and anti-egalitarianism, system practices, anti-suspension practices, and preventative practices when holding other variables constant. The low p-values for the coefficients associated with these predictor variables suggested that they have a statistically significant effect on exclusionary discipline, providing evidence against the null hypotheses by demonstrating that relationships exist between the predictor and outcome variables.

Administrators' anti-egalitarian attitudes manifest as hierarchy-enhancing behaviors in relation to exclusionary discipline gaps, and influence seemingly hierarchy-attenuating disciplinary practices to manifest as predictors of increased disproportionality. This represents a new addition to the literature as no prior study has examined the simultaneous influences of social dominance egalitarian measures and disciplinary practices on the application of exclusionary discipline toward black students at the school level. The findings support the notion that schools as institutions indeed contribute to existing hierarchical structures that inequitably distribute resources, produce social inequality, and favor the dominant structure

through policies and practices that subjugate black students. It is critical that education systems accept discipline disproportionality is inextricably linked to existing power structures as manifested through administrators' anti-egalitarian attitudes and disciplinary practices. Intentional steps must be taken to combat these forces at the institutional level if schools are to ever manifest improved outcomes for black students. Every student deserves an equitable educational experience that provides pathways for engagement, achievement, and long-term success.

Appendix A: SDO-E Scale, Modified For Educators

Rated using a Likert scale (1 = *strongly oppose* to 7 = *strongly favor*)

Pro-trait anti-egalitarianism:

1. We should not push for group equality.
2. We shouldn't try to guarantee that every student has the same quality of life.
3. It is unjust to try to make student groups equal.
4. Group equality should not be our primary goal.

Con-trait anti-egalitarianism:

5. We should work to give all students an equal chance to succeed.
6. We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different students.
7. No matter how much effort it takes, we ought to strive to ensure that all students have the same chance in life.
8. Group equality among students should be our ideal.

Appendix B: Administrator Disciplinary Practices Survey

Rated using a Likert scale (1 = *strongly oppose* to 5 = *strongly favor*)

A. Attitude Toward Discipline in General

- I feel that getting to know students individually is an important part of discipline.*
- Although it would be nice to get to know students on an individual basis, especially those who need help, my duties as an administrator simply don't allow me the time.
- I feel it is critical to work with parents before suspending a student from school.
- Regardless of the severity of a student's behavior, my objective as an administrator is to keep all students in school.
- The primary purpose of discipline is to teach appropriate skills to the disciplined student.
- Students should receive some recognition or reward for appropriate behavior.
- It is sad but true that, in order to meet increasingly high standards of academic accountability, some students will probably have to be removed from school.
- The majority of this school's discipline problems could be solved if we could only remove the most persistent troublemakers.
- Schools cannot afford to tolerate students who disrupt the learning environment.

B. Awareness and Enforcement of Disciplinary Procedures

- My school keeps detailed records regarding student suspension and expulsion.*
- Teachers at my school are aware of school disciplinary practices.*
- I believe students at my school are aware of school disciplinary policies.*

- Violence is getting worse at my school.
- Disciplinary policies are strictly enforced in my school.

C. Beliefs concerning Suspension/Expulsion and Zero Tolerance

- Out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future.
- Zero tolerance makes a significant contribution to maintaining order at my school.
- I believe suspension and expulsion allow students time away from school that encourages them to think about their behavior.
- Suspension and expulsion do not really solve discipline problems.
- Out-of-school suspension is a necessary tool for maintaining school order.
- Zero tolerance sends a clear message to disruptive students about appropriate behaviors in school.
- Students who are suspended or expelled are only getting more time on the streets that will enable them to get in more trouble.
- I believe suspension is unnecessary if we provide a positive school climate and challenging instruction.
- Out-of-school suspension is used at this school only as a last resort.
- Regardless of whether it is effective, suspension is virtually our only option in disciplining disruptive students.
- Certain students are not gaining anything from school and disrupt the learning environment for others. In such a case, the use of suspension and expulsion is justified to preserve the learning environment for students who wish to learn.
- Zero tolerance increases the number of students being suspended or expelled.

D. Beliefs about Responsibility for Handling Student Misbehaviors

- The primary responsibility for teaching children how to behave appropriately in school belongs to parents.
- Teachers ought to be able to manage the majority of students' misbehavior in their classroom.*
- Most if not all discipline problems come from inadequacies in the student's home situation.
- Schools must take responsibility for teaching students how to get along and behave appropriately in school.

E. Attitude toward Differential Discipline of Disadvantaged Students or Students with Disabilities

- Teachers at this school were for the most part adequately trained by their teacher-training program to handle problems of misbehavior and discipline.
- I need additional resources to increase my school's capacity to reduce and prevent troublesome behaviors.
- Disciplining disruptive students is time consuming and interferes with other important functions of the school.

F. Resources Available for Discipline

- Suspensions and expulsions hurt students by removing them from academic learning time.
- In-school suspension is a viable alternative disciplinary practice to suspension and expulsion

- Please rate the extent to which the following programs are used in maintaining discipline and promoting safety in your school:
    - Social skills and conflict resolution training for all students
    - Individual behavior plans or programs for disruptive students
    - Counseling or therapy
    - Peer Mediation
    - In-class telephones for reporting behavior problems
    - In-service training and workshops for teachers on classroom management
    - Metal detector and/or video technology
    - Bullying prevention programs
    - Security guard, resource officer, or police presence
    - Instruction in social skill, problem-solving, or violence prevention
    - Anger management training*
- I believe that putting in place prevention programs (e.g., bullying programs, conflict resolution, improved classroom management) can reduce the need for suspension and expulsion.
- Time spent on prevention programs or individualized behavior programming is wasted if students are not willing to take responsibility for their behavior.
- Prevention programs would be a useful addition at our school, but there simply is not enough time in the day.
- I have noticed that time spend in developing and implementing prevention programs pays off in terms of decreased disruption and disciplinary incidents.

G. Attitude toward and Availability of Prevention Strategies as an Alternative to Exclusion

- Students with disabilities who engage in disruptive behavior need a different approach to discipline than students in general education.
- Repeat offenders should receive more severe disciplinary consequences than first time offenders.
- A student's academic record should be taken into account in assigning disciplinary consequences.
- Students with disabilities account for a disproportionate amount of the time spent on discipline at this school.
- Disciplinary regulations for students with disabilities create a separate system of discipline that makes it more difficult to enforce discipline at this school.
- Disadvantaged students require a different approach to discipline than other students.
- Student from different ethnic backgrounds have different emotional and behavioral needs.
- Suspension and expulsion are unfair to minority students.
- Disciplinary consequences should be scaled in proportion to the severity of the problem behavior.*
- Conversations with students referred to the office are important, and should be factored into most decisions about disciplinary consequences.

*Question excluded from factor grouping and subsequent regression analysis

Appendix C: Persisting Inequity Survey

Informed Consent

The purpose of this research project is to examine the disciplinary practices of school-based administrators toward black students as compared to white students. You are invited to participate in this research project because you are a high school-based administrator. Data from this survey will help identify attitudes or practices that lead to student disciplinary outcomes. School districts may utilize the findings to develop successful strategies and professional development programs for school administrators to administer equitable disciplinary practices. Your participation in this research study is voluntary. Participants will not be compensated. You may choose not to participate. If you decide to participate in this research survey, you may withdraw at any time. If you decide not to participate in this study or if you withdraw from participating, you will not be penalized. This survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Your responses to this survey will be confidential and will not collect identifying information such as name or email address. Survey results will be aggregated, and no individual respondents will be identified. For questions regarding the rights of research subjects, any complaints or comments regarding the manner in which the study is being conducted you may contact the UNLV Office of Research Integrity – Human Subjects at 702-895-0020, or via email at IRB@unlv.edu."

Clicking on the "agree" button below indicates that:

• you have read the above information

• you voluntarily agree to participate

• you are at least 18 years of age

If you do not wish to participate in the research study, please decline participation by clicking on the "disagree" button.

- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree

Q1 Name of high school at which you are currently employed as a Principal, Assistant Principal, or Student Success Coordinator:

Q2 Were you an administrator at this site during the 2022-2023 school year?

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

Survey Introduction

The following questions ask about the degree to which you favor/oppose the following statements on school discipline. Please answer honestly.

Q3 I feel that getting to know students individually is an important part of discipline.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q4 Although it would be nice to get to know students on an individual basis, especially those who need help, my duties as an administrator simply don’t allow me the time.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q5 I feel it is critical to work with parents before suspending a student from school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q6 Regardless of the severity of a student's behavior, my objective as an administrator is to keep all students in school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q7 The primary purpose of discipline is to teach appropriate skills to the disciplined student.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q8 Students should receive some recognition or reward for appropriate behavior.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q9 It is sad but true that, in order to meet increasingly high standards of academic accountability, some students will probably have to be removed from school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q10 The majority of this school's discipline problems could be solved if we could only remove the most persistent troublemakers.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q11 We should not push for group equality.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Slightly Oppose
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Slightly Favor
- 6 - Somewhat Favor
- 7 - Strongly Favor

Q12 Schools cannot afford to tolerate students who disrupt the learning environment.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q13 My school keeps detailed records regarding student suspension and expulsion.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q14 Teachers at my school are aware of school disciplinary practices.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q15 I believe students at my school are aware of school disciplinary policies.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q16 It is unjust to try to make students equal.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Slightly Oppose
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Slightly Favor
- 6 - Somewhat Favor
- 7 - Strongly Favor

Q17 Violence is getting worse at my school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q18 Disciplinary policies are strictly enforced in my school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q19 Out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q20 Zero tolerance makes a significant contribution to maintaining order at my school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q21 I believe suspension and expulsion allow students time away from school that encourages them to think about their behavior.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q22 Suspension and expulsion do not really solve discipline problems.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q23 Out-of-school suspension is a necessary tool for maintaining school order.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q24 Zero tolerance sends a clear message to disruptive students about appropriate behaviors in school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q25 Students who are suspended or expelled are only getting more time on the streets that will enable them to get in more trouble.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q26 I believe suspension is unnecessary if we provide a positive school climate and challenging instruction.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q27 We should do what we can to equalize conditions for different students.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Slightly Oppose
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Slightly Favor
- 6 - Somewhat Favor
- 7 - Strongly Favor

Q28 Out-of-school suspension is used at this school only as a last resort.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q29 Regardless of whether it is effective, suspension is virtually our only option in disciplining disruptive students.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q30 Certain students are not gaining anything from school and disrupt the learning environment for others. In such a case, the use of suspension and expulsion is justified to preserve the learning environment for students who wish to learn.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q31 Zero tolerance increases the number of students being suspended or expelled.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q32 The primary responsibility for teaching children how to behave appropriately in school belongs to parents.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q33 We shouldn't try to guarantee that every student has the same quality of life.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Slightly Oppose
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Slightly Favor
- 6 - Somewhat Favor
- 7 - Strongly Favor

Q34 Teachers ought to be able to manage the majority of students' misbehavior in their classroom.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q35 Most if not all discipline problems come from inadequacies in the student's home situation.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q36 Schools must take responsibility for teaching students how to get along and behave appropriately in school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q37 Teachers at this school were for the most part adequately trained by their teacher-training program to handle problems of misbehavior and discipline.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q38 I need additional resources to increase my school's capacity to reduce and prevent troublesome behaviors.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q39 Disciplining disruptive students is time consuming and interferes with other important functions of the school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q40 No matter how much effort it takes, we ought to strive to ensure that all students have the same chance in life.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Slightly Oppose
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Slightly Favor
- 6 - Somewhat Favor
- 7 - Strongly Favor

Q41 Suspensions and expulsions hurt students by removing them from academic learning time.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q42 In-school suspension is a viable alternative disciplinary practice to suspension and expulsion.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q43 I believe that putting in place prevention programs (e.g., bullying programs, conflict resolution, improved classroom management) can reduce the need for suspension and expulsion.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q44 Time spent on prevention programs or individualized behavior programming is wasted if students are not willing to take responsibility for their behavior.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q45 Group equality should not be our primary goal.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Slightly Oppose
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Slightly Favor
- 6 - Somewhat Favor
- 7 - Strongly Favor

Q46 Prevention programs would be a useful addition at our school, but there simply is not enough time in the day.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q47 I have noticed that time spend in developing and implementing prevention programs pays off in terms of decreased disruption and disciplinary incidents.

- ○ 1 - Strongly Oppose
- ○ 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- ○ 3 - Neutral
- ○ 4 - Somewhat Favor
- ○ 5 - Strongly Favor

Q48 Please rate the extent to which the following programs are used in maintaining discipline and promoting safety in your school:

	Never	Sometimes	About half the time	Most of the time	Always
Social skills and conflict resolution training for all students	○	○	○	○	○
Individual behavior plans or programs for disruptive students	○	○	○	○	○
Counseling or therapy	○	○	○	○	○
Peer Mediation	○	○	○	○	○
In-class telephones for reporting behavior problems	○	○	○	○	○
In-service training and workshops for teachers on classroom management	○	○	○	○	○
Metal detector and/or video technology	○	○	○	○	○
Bullying prevention programs	○	○	○	○	○
Security guard, resource officer, or police presence	○	○	○	○	○
Instruction in social skill, problem-solving, or violence prevention	○	○	○	○	○

Anger management training	○	○	○	○	○

Q49 Students with disabilities who engage in disruptive behavior need a different approach to discipline than students in general education.

- ○ 1 - Strongly Oppose
- ○ 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- ○ 3 - Neutral
- ○ 4 - Somewhat Favor
- ○ 5 - Strongly Favor

Q50 Group equality among students should be our ideal.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Slightly Oppose
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Slightly Favor
- 6 - Somewhat Favor
- 7 - Strongly Favor

Q51 Repeat offenders should receive more severe disciplinary consequences than first time offenders.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q52 A student's academic record should be taken into account in assigning disciplinary consequences.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q53 Students with disabilities account for a disproportionate amount of the time spent on discipline at this school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q54 Disciplinary regulations for students with disabilities create a separate system of discipline that makes it more difficult to enforce discipline at this school.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q55 Disadvantaged students require a different approach to discipline than other students.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q56 We should work to give all students an equal chance to succeed.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Slightly Oppose
- 4 - Neutral
- 5 - Slightly Favor
- 6 - Somewhat Favor
- 7 - Strongly Favor

Q57 Students from different ethnic backgrounds have different emotional and behavioral needs.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q58 Suspension and expulsion are unfair to minority students.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q59 Disciplinary consequences should be scaled in proportion to the severity of the problem behavior.

- 1 - Strongly Oppose
- 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- 3 - Neutral
- 4 - Somewhat Favor
- 5 - Strongly Favor

Q60 Conversations with students referred to the office are important, and should be factored into most decisions about disciplinary consequences.

- ○ 1 - Strongly Oppose
- ○ 2 - Somewhat Oppose
- ○ 3 - Neutral
- ○ 4 - Somewhat Favor
- ○ 5 - Strongly Favor

Appendix D: Factor Loadings on Disciplinary Practice Scale (Factors & Items)

Factor 1: Discipline to Maintain System Efficiency (SYSTEM)

- Disciplinary regulations for students with disabilities create a separate system of discipline that makes it more difficult to enforce discipline at this school.
- Disciplining disruptive students is time consuming and interferes with other important functions in the schools.
- Although it would be nice to get to know students on an individual basis, especially those who need help, my duties as an administrator simply don't allow me the time.
- I need additional resources to increase my school's capacity to reduce and prevent troublesome behaviors.
- Certain students are not gaining anything from school and disrupt the learning environment for others. In such a case the use of suspension and expulsion is justified.
- Regardless of whether it is effective, suspension is virtually our only option in disciplining disruptive students.
- Violence is getting worse in my school.
- It is sad but true that, in order to meet increasingly high standards of academic accountability, some students will probably have to be removed from school.
- Prevention programs would be a useful addition at our school, but there is simply not enough time in the day.
- The majority of this school's discipline problems could be solved if we could only remove the most persistent troublemakers.
- Schools cannot afford to tolerate students who disrupt the learning environment.

- Students with disabilities account for a disproportionate amount of the time spent on discipline at this school.
- Most if not all discipline problems come from inadequacies in the student's home situation.

Factor 2: Suspension as Ineffective and Unnecessary (ANTISUSP)

- Students who are suspended or expelled are only getting more time on the streets that will enable them to get in more trouble.
- Out-of-school suspension makes students less likely to misbehave in the future.
- I believe suspension and expulsion allow students ttime away from school that encourages them to think about their behavior.
- Suspension and expulsion do not really solve discipline problems.
- I believe suspension is unnecessary if we provide a positive school climate and challenging instruction.
- Out-of-school suspension is a necessary tool for maintaining social order.
- Suspensions and expulsions hurt students by removing them from academic learning time.
- Repeat offenders should receive more severe disciplinary consequences than first-time offenders.
- Regardless of the severity of a student's behavior, my objective as a principal is to keep all students in school.
- Suspension and expulsion are unfair to minority students.

Factor 3: Willingness to Make Adaptations in Discipline (ADAPT)

- Disadvantaged students require a different approach to discipline than other students.

- Students with disabilities who engage in disruptive behavior need a different approach to discipline than students in general education.
- Students from different ethnic backgrounds have different emotional and behavioral needs.
- A student's academic record should be taken into account in assigning disciplinary consequences.

Factor 4: Support of Zero Tolerance Policies (ZERO)

- Zero tolerance sends a clear message to disruptive students about appropriate behaviors in school.
- Zero tolerance makes a significant contribution to maintaining order at my school.
- Disciplinary policies are strictly enforced at my school.
- Zero tolerance increases the number of students being suspended or expelled.

Factor 5: Support of Prevention Policies, Programs, and Strategies (PREVENT)

- I have noticed that time spend in developing and implementing prevention programs pays off in terms of decreased disruption and disciplinary incidents.
- I believe that putting in place prevention programs (e.g. bullying programs, conflict resolution) can reduce the need for suspension or expulsion.
- Time spent on prevention programs or individualized behavior programming is wasted if students are not willing to take responsibility for their behavior.
- Out-of-school suspension is used at this school only as a last resort.
- In-school suspension is a viable alternative disciplinary practice to suspension and expulsion.
- I feel it is critical to work with parents before suspending a student from school.

- Schools must take responsibility for teaching students how to get along and behave appropriately in school.
- The primary responsibility for teaching children how to behave appropriately in school belongs to parents.

Factor 6: Discipline as a Tool to Teach Appropriate Behavior or Social Skills (TEACH)

- The primary purpose of discipline is to teach appropriate skills to the disciplined student.
- Conversations with students referred to the office are important and should be factored into most decisions about disciplinary consequences.
- Teachers at this school were for the most part adequately trained by their teacher-training program to handle problems of misbehavior and discipline.
- Students should receive some recognition or reward for appropriate behavior.

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