# A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE REFERRALS BY GENDER, GRADE LEVEL, AND CONSEQUENCE

A Doctoral Thesis Presented to the
Faculty of the College of Education
University of Houston

In Partial Fulfillment
of the Requirements for the Degree

Doctor of Education
in Professional Leadership

by

Kristine D. Stephenson

May, 2011

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# DEDICATION

This study is dedicated to my parents, Helen and Jack Stephenson, for your constant inspiration and encouragement. Both of you were great teachers yourselves, and although you did not push me to teach, I know that I am effective as an educator because of your guidance and stories of success from the classroom. You are the two most amazing people I have ever known, and I have been fortunate to have taken this journey with your support and love.

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# A CASE STUDY ANALYSIS OF MIDDLE SCHOOL DISCIPLINE REFERRALS BY GENDER, GRADE LEVEL, AND CONSEQUENCE

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## ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to determine if office discipline referrals differ significantly by gender and grade level for middle school students, and to determine if a relationship exists between gender, discipline reason, and discipline consequence. The literature review consistently shows that boys are referred to the office and receive consequences at a much higher rate than girls, especially minority boys and those from economically disadvantaged backgrounds (Freiberg, Stein, & Parker, 1995; Jordan & Anil, 2009). Boys are also expelled and subject to zero tolerance policies at a much higher rate than girls (Planty et al., 2009; Freiberg & Reyes, 2008).

The sample population for this study was drawn from Jefferson (pseudonym)Middle School which has over 1,200 students in grades 6-8. Archival PEIMS data provided by the school district for the 2009-2010 was analyzed to determine the outcomes of office discipline entries from Jefferson Middle School. Descriptive statistics were utilized to analyze the number of referrals broken down by gender and grade level and found that males receive more referrals than females in $6^{th}$, $7^{th}$, and $8^{th}$ grade. Descriptive statistics also determined that the highest 5 reasons for discipline referrals overall were being tardy to class, disrupting class, language in the form of

refusal, refusing to work, and failure to attend discipline assignment. The highest 4 consequences issued to students were Discipline Management Class, Detention Hall, Out of School Suspension, and Saturday Detention. A Chi-square test for independence indicated a significant association between gender and reason for referral as well as between gender and discipline consequence in all grade levels. A post hoc Cramer's V indicated a small effect size between each of the variables. Implications of this study suggest that further analysis is necessary to address the association between gender, discipline referrals, and discipline consequences and to examine methods of creating positive school climates in order to impact student behavior and reduce the amount of students referred to the office.

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## Chapter One: Introduction

Over the past several decades, the educational performance of U.S. male students has fallen significantly behind that of female students (Reichert, 2006). There is a significant impact on adult males in society with 93% of all inmates in prison being male and committing the most violent crimes (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010).During the 60s and 70s school-age females were lagging in science, mathematics and college attendance. Title IX was signed in 1972, into federal law to ensure equal opportunities for girls in education, but in recent years, boys are increasingly falling behind in academic comparisons with girls, and based on the current data, the gap continues to widen. Today, the boys are falling behind in school and they are the ones who need some assistance (Kohn, 2003). Research shows that the many schools do not possess a climate that is optimal for the education of boys.

Male students are increasingly falling behind in the educational setting which is the gateway to a productive life and finding a place in society. The failure of schools to meet the educational needs of boys impacts the economy and the potential for human capital becausethese students are likely to become schools dropouts as well as failures in society. The problems such as over-diagnosis and referral to special education services, bullying, underachievement, discipline, and school violence are so pervasive that educators must question the school's approach to educating boys (Reichert & Hawley, 2006). There have been many recommendations as to what actions to take in order to support male success in the school setting, but they continue to underperform girls in many educational areas. The problem is to find the best methods to educate boys and to

impact their achievement so that more boys are successful in school and ultimately in society.

**Gender**

The declining performance of males in schools is of great concern because of the impact on schools and society. In 2007, in The Nation's Report Card on reading, female students scored 7 points higher than male students at the 4th grade level and 10 points higher at grade 8 (Lee, Grigg, & Donahue, 2007). In 2009, in The Nation's Report Card on mathematics, males score only 2 points higher than their female counterparts in both the 4th and 8th grade levels (Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, 2009). There are also a disproportionate amount of males served by special education. Boys are three times as likely as girls to receive special education services. 73% of boys receiving special education services are diagnosed with learning disabilities, and 76% are diagnosed as emotionally disturbed (Conlin, 2003). Boys continuously receive harsher disciplinary consequences at a much higher rate than girls. In 2006, 9.1% of males were suspended versus only 4.5% of females, and the number of males expelled was three times larger than the number of females in the United States (Planty et al., 2009). Boys are more likely to dropout of school than girls. In 2007, 3.7% of males and 3.3% of females between the ages of 16 and 24 were dropouts (Cataldi, Laird, KewalRamani, & Chapman, 2007). With the exception of athletics, girls also dominate in extracurricular activities such as clubs, student government, yearbook, music, and the performing arts (Conlin, 2003). Additionally, women make up 58 percent of enrollment

in two to four year colleges and they account for the majority in graduate and professional schools (Lewin, 2006).

The statistical difference between men and women in society is alarming as well. Males are almost four times as likely than women to commit suicide (Center for Disease Control and Prevention, 2009). In 2008, males were incarcerated at a rate of 15 times higher than females (Sabol, West, & Cooper, 2009), particularly those males representing minority groups. In 2005, males were 10 times as likely to commit murder as females (Bureau of Justice Statistics, 2010). The incarceration rates are closely tied with the dropout rate as 1 out of every 10 male high school dropouts (age 16-24) was institutionalized in 2006-2007(Sum, Khatiwada, McLaughlin, & Palma, 2009). If educational institutions do not meet the needs of male students, then there is a strong possibility these boys will end up becoming a statistic. Educational policies also capture males in a cycle of repeated disciplinary removals from the classroom setting.

**Discipline**

School discipline policies impact the achievement of students, especially minority boys and those students from economically disadvantaged backgrounds. Freiberg, Stein and Parker (1995), found that at "Baker" Middle School, during October 1991, males in the predominately African-American school accounted for the majority (66%) of students with two or more office referrals. In another study, Jordan and Anil (2009), test the hypothesis that student referrals to the office increase if the student is of low socioeconomic status, male, in special education classes, or black. The conclusion drawn by the authors is that "students with zero disciplinary referrals, as compared with those

with at least one referral, are proportionally whiter, female, less chronically absent, score better on standardized tests, are more gifted, and are less poor" (Jordan & Anil, 2009). The also indicated that often students who have behavior problems in school are the ones that later become dropouts, and consequently there is a significant impact on society and the economy.

Students who have disciplinary problems in school may end up in the penal system, unemployed, addicted to drugs, and incarcerated. Jordan and Anil (2009) assert that, "disproportionate discipline is just one that reduces educational opportunities, and thus human capital formation, and finally economic development" (p.421). Brantlinger (1993), found, in her study, that low-income white students in a mid-west high school reported unfair punishment and that certain students were "singled out" for discipline. These feelings about the unfair punishment that was meted out impacted students' self-esteem, their attitude toward the teacher and the school as well. The learning in the classroom is impacted by misbehaving students as teachers cease with their instruction in order to intervene with the student who is acting out. Multiple referrals for the same student may be a symptom of a much larger problem, including an ineffective learning environment. An effective learning environment takes time to create, and is one in which teachers focus on the causes of behavior for the individual (Freiberg, Stein, & Parker, 1995).

**Zero Tolerance**

Zero tolerance policies were developed as a response to concerns over violence and drugs on school campuses across the nation. The intention of zero tolerance is to

remove the subjectivity of disciplinary consequences when students participate in certain actions. Zero tolerance is defined as a "policy of punishing any infraction of a rule, regardless of accidental mistakes, ignorance, or extenuating circumstances"(Wikipedia, 2010). The National Center for Education Statistics defines zero tolerance as "a school district policy that mandates predetermined consequences or punishments for specific offenses" (1998, p. 33).The goal of a zero tolerance policy is not to rehabilitate an individual, but to deter future infractions by others.Zero tolerance policies often place so-called problem youth into the communitieswithout supervision (Mitchell, Longhurst, & Jacob, 2008). Many students who are subjected to zero tolerance policies, later become statistics in society. A review of zero tolerance policies by Freiberg and Reyes, (2008) indicates that male students are more likely to make choices that subject them to zero tolerance policies.Skager (2007) discusses the use of zero tolerance in the case of drug and alcohol abuse. Students often abuse drugs as a message of opposition to adult rules. A perception of unfair treatment confirms their feelings that adults are against them and that school is an undesirable place. He maintains that, "a difference approach is needed, one that seeks to reform and reintegrate rather than stigmatize and banish" (Skager, 2007, p. 247). The application of zero tolerance policies is not consistent from school to school, and this discrepancy has a significant impact on students who are economically disadvantaged and from minority groups. Freiberg and Reyes (2008) recommend working toward the creation of a "rational policy" which focuses on creating a more positive school climate (p.20).

A recent study 11th and 12th grade students in a high school in the Midwest found that even though zero tolerance was designed to promote a feeling of safety among

students, the students still did not feel safe in their school (McNeal & Dunbar, Jr., 2010). The students found the policy to be ineffective at their school because they felt the security was inadequate and lacked quality. The students also felt that the enforcement of the zero tolerance policy was inconsistent. 90 students were interviewed and they reported that the metal detectors were ineffective because students still were able to get through with weapons as many students were not scanned correctly. They also reported that the security guards, "care more about money than protecting us" (McNeal & Dunbar, Jr., 2010, p. 304). The students also reported that the zero tolerance policy was not effective because it was administered inconsistently. "Zero tolerance policy and its capacity to assure urban school students a sense of school safety has failed in the minds of those to whom the policy was designed to make safe" (McNeal & Dunbar, Jr., 2010, p. 306).

Texas is one of the states that has reconsidered its' zero tolerance laws due to critiques of the policy. The legislature began studying the Texas zero tolerance policy during legislative sessions in March of 2009. The legislature heard testimony from Amy Deschenes, who, despite an impeccable disciplinary record was sent to a Disciplinary Alternative Education Placement (DAEP) because a theater prop sword was found in her car. "Prompted in part by the Deschenes case, the new Texas law mandating consideration of mitigating circumstances passed overwhelmingly" (Hylton, 2009, p. 2). The new addition to Texas Education Code 37.001 instead of mandating zero tolerance for specific infractions a student commits on a school campus, now requires administrators to take certain mitigating factors into consideration when suspending a student, placing a student at a disciplinary alternative education site, expelling a student,

or sending a student to a juvenile justice alternative education placement. Campuses must now consider, "self-defense; intent or lack of intent at the time the student engaged in the conduct; a student's disciplinary history; or a disability that substantially impairs the student's ability to appreciate the wrongfulness of the student's conduct" (Texas Education Code, 2009).

**School Climate**

School climate is indicative of the learning environment. School climate refers to the quality and consistency of interpersonal interactions within the school community that influence children's cognitive, social, and psychological development (Haynes, Emmons, & Ben-Avie, 1997). School climate is also described by Freiberg (1999) as,

> the essence of a school that leads a child, a teacher, an administrator a staff member to love the school and to look forward to being there each school day. School Climate is about that quality of a school that helps each individual feel personal worth, dignity, and importance. The climate of a school can foster resilience or become a risk factor in the lives of people who work and learn in a place called school.(p. 11)

Upon entering a school, most observers notice whether or not a school has a positive or negative climate. A school with a positive climate is one in which the entire learning community takes responsibility for their actions and those of others (Freiberg, 1999). In a school with a positive climate, people are engaged and respected. The entire learning community works together to create and contribute to a shared school vision (Cohen, McCabe, Michelli, & Pickeral, 2009).

Cohen, et al., (2009) indicates it is imperative to the success of boys that all stakeholders in schools become involved in measuring school climate, studying data, and engaging in reflective practice in order to foster a healthy climate that is conducive to learning. Mcevoy and Welker (2000) found that by utilizingdata educators can examine and eliminate practices that are not working, create intervention plans for students, develop a plan to create a positive learning environment, and create staff development that focuses on the goals necessary for improving the climate. Student perceptions of school climate are directely tied to their satisfaction with school. "The most important predictors of students' satisfaction with school are students' feeling that they are treated fairly, that they feel safe and that they believe that teachers are supportive" (Samdal, Nutbeam, Wold, & Kannas, 1998, p. 383). Listening to students concerns and suggestions should be an integral part of improving school climate. If students are included in discussions about schools, then they have more buy-in to decisions that affect them because they have been afforded the opportunity to offer their opinion. Creating a positive climate that is conducive to learning for all is effective when there is a partnership between the students and staff members (Noguera, 2008). By allowing students to have a voice in decisions that affect them they will experience a sense of connectedness and belonging that is extremely important to their achievement and success in the educational setting (NcNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002).

A supportive school climate can help foster boys' academic success and by examining their relationships with boys and their own perceptions of gender, teachers can further support them in the classroom (Raider-Roth, Albert, Bircann-Barkey, Gidseg, & Murray, 2008). Male students should be be educated in school settings that they perceive

as fair and accomodating to them. Some boys, however, do not perceive teachers or consequences to be as fair to them as do female students (Nichols & Good, 1998).A study by Woolley and Bowen (2007) found that, "girls reported both higher numbers of supportive adults in their lives and higher levels of school engagement" (p. 100).

Teachers themselves believe boys to be more behaviorally challenging, especially African-American boys (Kuperminc, Leadbeater, Emmons, & Blatt, 1997). These perceptions must be examined thoroughly so that teachers can understand how their feelings and those of their students in order to build a healthy school climate that meets the needs of all students.

**School Connectedness**

**"**When students feel connected to their school, they are less likely to use substances, engage in violence, or initiate sexual activity at an early age" (NcNeely et al., 2002, p. 138). School connectedness is important for the student's emotional health as well as his or her academic success (Resnick et al., 1997; McNeely &Falci, 2004). When students perceive that teachers care about them, they feel connected to the school, and this social support impacts their emotional well-being as well as their academic performance (Resnick et al., 1997). Students experience in school impacts their successful transition into adulthood and to becoming a contributing member of society. School is where they learn how to interact face-to-face socially with others, how to develop relationships, how to view themselves, and how to grow independently (Wilson, 2004). The school setting is a microcosm of the navigation of society, and in order for

children to develop the necessary skills to become productive adults, the school is expected to provide a safe and nurturing climate.

As students get older, they begin to feel less of a sense of belonging at school and less developmental supports. A strong support system for students increases their sense of connectedness to a school. Students feel more connected if they have a voice in the creation of policies and procedures both inside and outside of the classroom. They also are more likely to feel connected to the school if the classroom material engages them and is relevant to their interests (Whitlock, 2006). Anderman's study of middle school students' development and sense of belonging found, "as students' length of tenure in middle school increased, their sense of acceptance in and connectedness to that setting decreased" (2003, p. 17). Students reported that they felt more involved at school when the tasks they were asked to perform emphasized, "personal effort, improvement, and mastery" (Anderman, 2003, p. 18). They also desired tasks to be significant, applicable and interesting to them. Findings of the study also showed that when sixth grade teachers promoted mutual respect among the students, the feelings of alienation of students declined over time (Anderman, 2003). Additionally, the results indicated that when teachers encouraged independent thinking and utilized cooperative learning, the students felt a strong sense of community. When the teacher utilized external control, the students did not report high levels of engagement. The classroom environment, therefore, significantly impacts the students' perception of school connectedness and feelings of inclusion.

**Development of Positive School Climate**

School climate is an amalgamation of interpersonal communication between and among the adults and youth and children in a school setting and is a very human endeavor. The humanist movement focuses on the capacity of the individual and his or her potential for growth (Freiberg, 1999). Abraham Maslow, one of the leading humanists, describes how "the need for belonging must be satisfied before other needs can be fulfilled" (as cited in Ma, 2003). According to Ma (2003) children, but especially boys and even more so, minority boys, need to feel that they belong in a school or in a classroom in order to perform academically and exhibit acceptable behavior. Students should be engaged in providing feedback to the decision-makers, so that they can have a clear understanding of the school climate. Educators often begin by examining the perceptions of boys and other students in the school regarding school and classroom climate in order to understand the best methods of meeting their needs. Boys who misbehave the most are of concern because, in some areas, the school is not meeting their educational needs. Students who perceive rules or teachers to be unfair may feel that they do not belong and will view school in a negative manner, consequently impacting their achievement. Teachers, therefore, have a direct impact on the formation of students' sense of belonging because school climate can be directly impacted by the staff (Ma, 2003).

Maslow asserts that "much disturbance in children and adolescents can be understood as a consequence of the uncertainty of adults about their values (1962, p. 83)." Teachers have a significant influence on the development of students' values through both direct and indirect methods. Teachers directly influence students' values

through their teaching, and they indirectly influence students' values by their relationships with the students where values are communicated (Day & van Veen, 1999). The objective of effective teaching must be for the improvement of students instead of the implementation of lower content expectations to facilitate control of the classroom. "Good teaching is underpinned not only by caring, skilled application of technique, possession and communication of appropriate knowledge but also by interventions that are based upon a keen awareness of change" (Day & van Veen, 1999, p. 106). Andrew Martin, in his exploration of motivational factors, identifies practices that work well with boys. One of the factors he cited as critical for a student's sucess in a particular class is his rapport with the teacher (Martin, 2003). If boys are uninterested in the material or in the way it is conveyed, they disengage and either become inattentive or disruptive. An effective teacher will not allow students to become disengaged; so he or she will adjust the lesson so that it meets the needs of the learners (Reichert & Hawley, 2010).

**Necessary Conditions for Learning**

Students have unique learning needs within a classroom setting and teachers should be aware of gender in the classroom, but not hindered by their perceptions of gender. Boys often gain more corrective teacher attention in the classroom due to their active nature (Durant & McDonald, 2005). As a result, boys, especially those from minority and low socio-economic groups, are missing significant amounts of classroom instruction due to the amount of time they are spending being referred to the office. **"**The entire classroom is interrupted while the teacher stops to react to the disruptive student(s) and write the referral" (Freiberg, 1999, p. 437). Educatorsshould examine their teaching

methods as well as their perceptions of what creates an effective learning environment. Much teacher training is focused on assisting teachers in creating the optimal learning environment to account for the needs of all children in each of their classrooms. In classrooms across America, teachers are challenged with balancing engaging activities in the classroom with preparing for high-stakes testing. Basically, teachers have the structure for what they must teach, but the best method is left up to the teacher. Each classroom environment has different needs and it is the teacher's role to assess and determine how to set up his or her classroom to effectively meet the needs of all learners. Feedback collected from the class can be examined so that the students have input into determining the most successful learning environment for their particular class (Teddlie & Meza, 1999). The ideal classroom environment will incorporate the learning needs of all students so that optimal learning will occur. Students can teach the instructor the best methods to use with them, so they are a reliable source of data to be explored.

**Safe Environments**

Students not only need to feel safe in a classroom, but feel that they have a significant relationship with the teacher in order to perform in the classroom. Boys especially are more engaged in the classroom when they have a relationship with the teacher. As part of a global study Michael Reichert and Richard Hawley worked for the International Boys' Schools Coalition (IBSC) in order to identify and share best practices for meeting the needs of boys in the classroom. They selected eighteen members schools from six countries all over the world in order to find out how boys learn best. The boys feel safe to learn in classrooms where their interaction with the teacher is a relational one.

The study found that, “boys sustain their engagement in the classroom business when they feel held in a positive, trusting relationship to their teacher” (Reichert & Hawley, 2010, p. 223). Teachers play a role of great magnitude in fostering the success of boys and all students and boys especially, “report that the teacher is a major factor in how they view the class and their participation in it” (James, 2007, p. 165).

### Managment and Safe Environments

In order to address students’ needs, teachers are encouraged to utilize the appropriate management style in the classroom. Slocumb (2004) describes three types of teachers and the impact their classroom management style has on students. He provided sterotypical names for three types of teachers, which are brick-wall, jellyfish, and backbone. He finds that the most effective type of teacher uses a backbone style. The backbone style of teaching, which requires the teacher to be firm but fair, is one in which the students’ opinions are valued, and they are able to participate in a democratic-type of classroom. This teacher’s style also allows the students to avoid embarrassment in front of the class. It is imperative for teachers to attempt to understand the unique needs of boys, such as the fact that boys will avoid shame at all costs (Slocumb, 2004). Teachers use shame to control students in a classroom and their methods can take on many forms such as sarcasm, blame-type phrasing, or subtle and outward verbal aggression (Neu & Weinfeld, 2007). Boys have anxiety about being accepted and recognized in schools (Reichert & Kurilloff, 2004), and if they feel that they are going to be subjected to humiliation in the classroom, they will disengage from the lesson or act out accordingly. When a boy has been embarrassed by the teacher he will often react in a negative manner

toward that teacher (Neu & Weinfeld, 2007). A boy must respect the teacher and in order for him to do so, the teacher should establish a classroom environment in which a boy feels safe from shame in order to learn.

Slocumb (2004) describes the voices that students hear and the messages these voices send students. There are three types of voices that adults use including the parent voice, the child voice, and the adult voice. The parent voice tells students what they should or must do and is often judgmental in nature. The child voice is one of powerlessness and victimization. Often one using the child voice will resort to begging students or blaming them for failures. The adult voice is the most powerful voice to use with students because adults who use this voice are trying to help the student explore why he or she chose to behave a certain way. The adult voice has a lack of judgmental words. Boys, especially those from situations of poverty, possess an aversion to the parent or child voice, and the use of either of these voices in the classroom results in a losing situation for the student. All people need validation, not accusations or criticism, and children are no exception. When students feel valued, they will respond in a more positive manner, and this is why the use of the adult voice is most effective in the classroom and school setting (Slocumb, 2004).

Another method of creating an engaging classroom for all students is by examining current trends and future job requirements and adjusting the pedagogy accordingly. When most of the educators of today were in school, technology and other systems were not utilized in the classroom, nor were they considered an integral part of society. Today, however, students utilize technology on a daily basis, and information is readily available at the tip of one's fingers. United States schools are not creating

learners who will be able to compete with the rest of the world. What exists today in schools is more testing and more educators are spending time teaching to the tests (Wagner, 2008). Since all students have access to the same amount of information as students in the United States, it is important to develop learners who are more creative with their thinking. Carl Rogers (1962) states that, "self and personality emerge from experience, rather than experience being translated or twisted to fit a preconceived self-structure"(p. 43). Boys, and all students, learn most effectively when learning from experience rather than through rote memorization or taking notes on what the teacher deems to be the necessary information. If students construct their own meaning, the learning is relevant, and they feel comfortable in the educational setting then they are more likely to be engaged and motivated to learn. Rogers also discusses effective classroom settings where students and teachers are able to learn together because the teacher takes on more of a facilitator role. This facilitator recognizes the individual talents of his or her students and would be able appeal to their interests, host effective inquiry, and inspire creativity (Rogers, 1974). A classroom that is motivating and engaging to the learner, will positively impact academic performance.

**Gendered Assumptions and Learning Needs**

Teachers are expected to be conscious of assumptions about gender and not allow their gendered expectations to play into classroom instruction. Teachers sometimes base learning expectations on generalizations about the stereotypical interests of boys and girls. These stereotypes, that often go unexamined by teachers, limit classroom instruction because students are not allowed to explore other alternatives to what is

expected for them to produce (Sanford, 2005). In a study completed by Sanford (2005), she found that teachers expectations often included gendered stereotypes that were reinforced in the classroom, so boys and girls were not allowed to explore ideas or products beyond those of the teachers realm of expectation. Teachers sometimes divide or encourage tasks or assignments according to gender instead of allowing students to choose. For example, teachers might direct students to choose to read certain types of books based on their gender (Gray & Leith, 2004).

# Chapter Two: Literature Review

## Introduction

The following is a selected literature review that focuses on students and contains articles, studies, and data to illustrate the concerns for students that exist in schools and classrooms as well as the impact this problem has on society. The literature review is presentedin a tabular format describes the study/purpose and the summary of the findings. The review focuses on school climate as it impacts learning and what type of school climate is most conducive to boys' educational success as well as the success of all students. The literature is divided into four sections: "Gender," "Discipline and Zero Tolerance," "School Climate and School Connectedness," and "Necessary Conditions for Learning."

The first section, "Gender," examines the gap that exists between boys and girls. This gap includes a disparity between males and females in reading and math scores, special education referrals, discipline, dropouts, participation in extracurricular activities, and enrollment in two to four year colleges as well as graduate and professional schools. The section also describes the impact on society when these male and female students become adults. The section illustrates the problem by showing gendered data on rates of suicide, incarceration, and murder. Data for males is much higher than females in all three categories. This section ties to the next section because many of the males who are referred to the office for discipline are the future societal statistics.

The next section, "Discipline and Zero Tolerance," focuses on articles that illustrate how school discipline policies impact the achievement of boys, especially

minority boys and those from low income backgrounds. This section discusses focuses on how many of these students feel that punishments are unfairly applied and have more unfavorable opinions of their schooling experiences. The section also illustrates how zero tolerance discipline policies do not treat students as individuals, allow for considerations, nor are they designed to teach students responsible behavior. The section recommends studies of discipline data and involving the learning community into examining the root of the problems that cause students, especially boys, to be subjected to harsh consequences.

The third section, "School Climate and School Connectedness," examines school climate and how a positive school climate can create an environment that fosters student success because students feel connected to the school. The students in a school with a positive school climate trust and respect each other and the adults, they work together to solve problems and discuss concerns, they feel safe, and they achieve and are successful in the learning environment. The section also describes ways of creating a positive school climate and how this nurturing environment creates a sense of connectedness.

The literature shows that if students are misbehaving in school, then their educational needs are not being met. They have a need for belonging and the staff has a direct impact on whether a student will be engaged in school or not.

The final section, "Necessary Conditions for Learning," describes effective environments to facilitate learning and how to best meet the needs of all students and their specific learning needs in the classroom by engaging them in their learning, offering them the correct kind of support, and examining gendered assumptions about them. The section discusses the use of relational style and how this can engage students in the

classroom. Teachers' management styles are also described as well as the way they speak with students and how this can influence the students' performance in the classroom. The section also discusses the impact of creating an engaging classroom how teachers gendered assumptions can impact learning.

The selected literature review represents the significant research that has impacted my comprehension of the topics associated with understanding how to meet the needs of students in the school setting. The literature review has also assisted me in further developing my topic with necessary supporting information from various sources. The literature review encompasses differing viewpoints and recommendations from a great deal of sources concerned with the impact of school climate and discipline on the success or failure of male and female students.

Table 1

*Literature Review: Gender*

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Reichert, M. C., & Hawley, R. A. (2006, October 25). Confronting the "boy problem": A self-study approach to deepen schools' moral stance. Teachers College Record. Retrieved from http://www.tcrecord.org | This article examines the educational concerns of boys by summarizing a various articles and studies about meeting the needs of boys in school. | The authors recommend using data and boys' perceptions to create schools that better meet their educational and developmental needs. |
| Kohn, D. (2003, May 25). The gender gap: Boys lagging. CBS News, Inc. Retrieved From http://www.cbsnews.com/stories/10/31/60minutes/main527678.shtml | This article summarizes a news report from CBS by Lesley Stahl. The article describes how girls are outperforming boys academically and in the job market. | The article attributes the disparity to instructional methods in the classroom as well as gendered expectations. |
| Conlin, M. (2003, May 26). The new gender gap: From kindergarten to grad school, boys are becoming the second sex. *Business Week*. Retrieved from http://www.businessweek.com/magazine/content/03_21/b3834001_mz001.htm | This article describes how the gender gap is growing and how girls are beginning to dominate the majority of extracurricular activities with the exception of athletics. | The author states that in order to better understand why the gender gap is growing, companies, educators, and the government must examine and explore the various causes and structure school settings accordingly. |
| Lewin, T. (2006, July 9). At colleges, women are leaving men in the dust. *New York Times*. Retrieved from http://www.nytimes.com/2006/07/09/education/09college.html | This article explores the reasons behind why women are beginning to surpass men at the college level and the impact on society. There are more women than men enrolled in colleges across the nation. | Colleges must make it their goal to attract more men, be flexible in their requirements for acceptance, and enroll more men. Despite the higher numbers of women in college, men continue to receive higher pay and more promotions. |

Table 1 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Sum, A., Khatiwada, I., McLaughlin, J., & Palma, S. (2009, October). The consequences of dropping out of high school. Boston, MA: Center for Labor Market Studies. | This research paper provides a series of statistics tied to dropping out of high school in the United States. The paper describes the consequences of dropping out for these students as well as the impact on society. | Dropouts have a high rate of incarceration and social problems, especially men and blacks. |

Table 2

*Literature Review: Discipline and Zero Tolerance*

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Freiberg, H. J., Stein, T. A., & Parker, G. (1995, August). Discipline referrals in an urban middle school: Implications for discipline and instruction. *Education and Urban Society*, *27*(4), 421-440. | This article looks at discipline problems in middle school and discusses a study of discipline referral data collected from a middle school in October 1991. | Males represent the most discipline referrals in this study and others. They are more likely to be suspended from school. Classroom referrals account for the majority of discipline. The most common consequence for discipline referrals was after school detention, Saturday detention, and in-school suspension. Teachers practice management techniques that do not treat students as individuals or examine underlying causes of misbehavior. Punitive measures sometimes work short term, but they do not help students develop responsible behavior. |
| Jordan, J. L., & Anil, B. (2009, August). Race, gender, school discipline, and human capital effects. *Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics*, *41*(2), 419-429. | This research article is a quantitative study investigating the frequency of office referrals among students in the 8th grade. The data is collected from students in a rural/suburban school district in Georgia between the years 2006-2008. | Student referrals to the office are higher if the student is of low socioeconomic status, male, in special education classes, or black. |

Table 2 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Brantlinger, E. (1993). Adolescents' interpretation of social class influences onschooling. *Journal of Classroom Interaction*, *28*(1), 1-12. | This qualitative study examines the disparity of perceptions about schooling between high-income and low-income students from interviews with 40 low-income students and 34 high-income students. The article describes the feelings of these students about their school experiences, discipline, perceptions of teachers' favoritism, tracking, and the power they have to change what happens to them at school. | Low income students had a more negative view of their schooling experiences. They felt that discipline was harsher for them, that they were tracked, that teachers did not favor them as much as the high-income students, and they were powerless to change what happened to them at school. |
| Freiberg, H. J., & Reyes, A. (2008). Zero tolerance: A reconsideration of practice and policy. In T. L. Good (Ed.), *21st century education: A reference handbook* (pp. 149-160). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc. | This article is an examination of zero tolerance policies and their impact on students. | Zero tolerance policies are not implemented consistently and they negatively impact student achievement. Schools should re-evaluate zero tolerance policies, connect with the community, work to build a positive school climate, create student involvement, and develop prevention programs for bullying and school violence. |
| Curwin, R. L., &Mendler, A. N. (1999). Zero tolerance for zero tolerance. *Phi Delta Kappan*, *81*(2), 119. | This article describes the impact of a zero tolerance policy on students and why such a harsh policy is not effective. | Establish a "tough as necessary" discipline policy by involving all members of the school community in the creation of the guidelines. |

Table 2 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Mitchell, M., Longhurst, J., & Jacob, D. (2008). It starts with us: Confronting a climate of violence in our schools and communities, we often try to solve new problems with old methods and mindsets. Successful approaches go beyond zero tolerance to transform the cultures of disrespect. *Reclaiming Children and Youth*, *17*(1), 14-23. Retrieved from http://questia.com/reader/printPaginator1223 | This article explores incidents of violence in schools and their causes. The article also describes how zero tolerance policies provide a solution, but they do not get to the root of the problem. | The article recommends utilizing "The Five Shifts" in order to understand what causes students to act out with violence and to focus on creating a positive, caring culture in schools. |
| Skager, R. (2007). *More effective and humane youth policy starts by treating youth with respect*. Paper presented at the Proceedingsof Persistently Safe Schools:The 2007 NationalConference on SafeSchools | This article advocates for a less harsh discipline policy that has a goal of reformation rather than punishment. The author describes the practice of restorative justice and how it has been successfully used in many schools in order to create a more positive school climate and reduce the amount of disciplinary incidents. | Restorative justice helps the offenders explore rationales behind their behavior and learn from their mistakes. Restorative practices have showed positive results in several middle and high schools who have piloted the program. |
| McNeal, L., & Dunbar, C., Jr. (2010). In the eyes of the beholder: Urban student perceptions of zero tolerance policy. *Urban Education*, *45*(3), 293-311. doi: 10.1177/0042085910364475 | This is a qualitative study which examines the perceptions of 11$^{th}$ and 12$^{th}$ grade students in a Midwestern urban school about the policy of zero tolerance. | The students find the zero tolerance policy to be meted out inconsistently, they find that security at the school is below par, and they believe the security officers to be lacking in quality. Despite the implementation of a zero tolerance policy, students still feel unsafe. |

Table 2 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Hylton, H. (2009). *Texas* eases 'zero-tolerance' laws. *Time*. Retrieved from http://www.time.com/time/nation/article/0,8599,1927441,00.html | The purpose of this article is to report on how Texas revamped its' zero tolerance laws in 2009. | The Deschenes' case in 2009, spurred the Texas Legislature to take a second look at its' zero tolerance policies. After hearing testimony and examining the current policy, the Legislature enacted a new law which requires administrators to examine four factors in each case. Administrators must now look at self-defense, intent or lack of intent, the disciplinary history of the student, and the student's disability. |
| Texas Education Code, § 37.001 (2009). | Section 37.001 of the Texas Education Code is the portion that determines discipline policy and practice. Texas Education Code 37.001 contains laws that each school in Texas must adhere to when disciplining students and creating the district code of conduct. | The portion of the code that was utilized for this study is the new addition as of 2009 which allows mitigating factors must be considered when administering discipline. Four factors must be considered when suspending, expelling, or placing a student either in a disciplinary alternative education setting or in a juvenile justice education setting. The factors that must be considered are self-defense, intent or lack or intent, the student's disciplinary history, and whether the student's disability impaired his or her ability to control the conduct for which he or she is being disciplined. |

Table 3

*Literature Review: School Climate and School Connectedness*

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Haynes, N. M., Emmons, C., & Ben-Avie, M. (1997). School climate as a factor in student adjustment and achievement. *Journal of Educational and Psychological Consultation*, *8*(3), 321-328. | This article contains a literature review of current articles written about school climate, and a description of the findings of a national random sample of middle and high school students and their perceptions of school climate. | The authors found that students care about what happens in their schools across the United States, and they want more people who treat them with respect in the school and more people with whom they can share thoughts and perceptions. They do not see suspension as fair in all cases and it is used too frequently for minor and major offenses. The authors recommend more studies of school climate in the future. |
| Samdal, O., Nutbeam, D., Wold, B., &Kannas, L. (1998). Achieving health and educational goals through schools--a study of the importance of the school climate and the students' satisfaction with school. Health Education and Research: Theory & *Practice*, *13*(3), 383-397. Retrieved from http://her.oxfordjournals.org | This article reviews data from Finland, Latvia, Norway, and Slovakia to determine how students' perception of climate impacts their satisfaction with school. The subjects are 11-, 13- and 15-year old-students. | The study shows that a positive relationship between students and teachers is paramount to fostering student success. Also, important predictors of students' satisfaction with school are that they feel they are safe, treated fairly, and the teachers are supportive. |

Table 3 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Freiberg, H. J., & Stein, T. A. (1999). Measuring, improving and sustaining healthy learning environments. In H. J. Freiberg, *School Climate: Measuring, improving and sustaining healthy learning environments* (pp. 11-29). Abingdon: Routledge Falmer. | This chapter describes the aspects of school climate and looks at ways to assess, impact, and maintain a healthy learning environment. | The climate can be a risk factor or create a place where students want to learn. Climate data can be collected directly or indirectly and gives information so that improvement can occur. Schools must continuously study the data and ask questions so that a healthy climate can be created and maintained. |
| Cohen, J., McCabe, E. M., Michelli, N. M., & Pickeral, T. (2009, January). School climate: Research, policy, practice and teacher education. *Teachers College Record*, *111*(1), 180-213. | This article views the relationship between research on school climate, educational policy, school improvement, and teacher education. | Academic achievement, teacher retention, discipline concerns, and students' development are all impacted by school climate, and a positive school climate is indicative of success in all of these areas. All stakeholders must be involved in decision-making, and measuring school climate can assist in reflective practice for educators and promote a healthy climate for learning. |

Table 3 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Mcevoy, A., & Welker, R. (2000, Fall). Antisocial behavior, academic failure, and school climate: A critical review. *Journal of Emotional and Behavioral Disorders*, *8*(3), 130-135. doi: 10.1177/106342660000800301 | This article examines the relationship between school climate, academic failure of students, and antisocial behavior among students. | The authors recommend five promising practices for schools: eliminate/modify practices that are not working to address academic needs and antisocial behavior, establish early identification for students in need, develop a school-wide approach to create a positive learning climate based on research, make staff development a top priority and relate it to goals and programs, and find ways to facilitate more child and adult contact time. |
| Noguera, P. A. (2008). Introduction. In *The trouble with black boys: And other reflections on race, equity, and the future of public education* (pp. xi-xxxviii). San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass. | The introduction to this book describes the problems facing black men and how these problems begin in school. | Assumptions are often made about black males that tie them up in a cycle of failure. They are often unsupported and are not nurtured in schools and many continue to experience failure in several areas. Noguera acknowledges that there are other groups who are suffering as well and advocates for a public school system which creates equity for all. |

Table 3 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| McNeely, C. A., Nonnemaker, J. M., & Blum, R. W. (2002, April). Promoting school connectedness: Evidence from the national longitudinal study of adolescent health. *Journal of School Health*, *72*(4), 138-146. | This study examines ways in which students feel connected to school and the school environment in order to recommend ways to promote more connectedness to the school setting. | If students are allowed involvement in decision-making and they have significant relationships with the adults in a school, then the climate is positively affected. Students who participate in activities at school, have higher grades, good attendance, and feel more connected to school. A school environment that creates a sense of belonging in the students may positively impact the students' health. |
| Raider-Roth, M. B., Albert, M. K., Bircann-Barkey, I., Gidseg, E., & Murray, T. (2008). Teaching boys: A relational puzzle. *Teachers College Record*, *110*(2), 443-481. | This study investigated the relationship boys have with their teachers and how this relationship can support boys' success in school. | Teachers' perceptions of gender and their own identity can shape boys school experiences. When teachers investigate their own feelings and how they impact boys' learning, they are able to be supportive of boys' school success. |
| Nichols, S. L., & Good, T. L. (1998). Students' perceptions of fairness in schools: A gender analysis. *Teachers College Record*, *100*(2), 369-401. | This study examined whether schools are perceived as equally fair by male and female students. | Junior high and high school male students found schools and teachers to be less fair than female students. The male students also perceived school rules and consequences as less fair than female students. |

Table 3 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Kuperminc, G. P., Leadbeater, B. J., & Blatt, S. J. (1997). Perceived school climate and difficulties in the social adjustment of middle school students. *Applied Developmental Science*, *1*(2), 76-88. doi: 10.1207/s1532480xads0102_2 | This study sets out to examine the ways in which school climate impacts middle school students' social adjustment. The study examined 499 sixth and seventh grade students as part of a longitudinal study which assessed students' by gender for depression and problem behavior. | Boys with more negative climate perceptions may be the ones who receive discipline more often. African-American boys are perceived by their teachers as more behaviorally challenging, and teachers believed boys in general had more externalizing problems. School climate may have an influence on boys' behavioral and emotional adjustment especially if these boys are from underprivileged backgrounds. |
| Resnick, M. D., Bearman, P. S., Blum, R. W., Bauman, K. E., Harris, K. M., Jones, J., Tabor, J., ... Udry, J. R. (1997). Protecting adolescents from harm: Findings from the National Longitudinal Study on Adolescent Health. *The Journal of the American Medical Association*, *278*(10), 823-832. | The authors analyzed collected interview data from the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health to identify risk and protective factors for students at home, school and the individual level. | The perception of school connectedness protected students from many risk-taking behaviors, such as drug use, suicide, violent behavior, and engaging in sexual activity at an earlier age. |
| McNeely, C., &Falci, C. (2004, September). School connectedness and the transition into and out of health-risk behavior among adolescents: A comparison of social belonging and teacher support. *Journal of School Health*, *74*(7), 284-292. | This study examines perceived teacher support and social belonging and their impact on six adolescent health-risk behaviors. | Students who perceive that teachers care about them are less likely to engage in health-risk behaviors. Students who enjoy going to school and feel to be a part of school (social belonging) are not protected from engaging in health-risk behaviors. |

Table 3 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Wilson, D. (2004, September). The interface of school climate and school connectedness and relationships with aggression and victimization. *Journal of School Health*, *74*(7), 293-299. | This study is a summary of data from the Safe-Communities-Safe Schools initiative. The effects of school connectedness and climate are compared according to their impact on aggression and victimization. | A positive school climate is not always indicative of a reduction of aggression and victimization. The risk is also not always increased by a negative school climate. School climate and connectedness must be studied in order to create the most effective learning environment for students. |
| Freiberg, H. J. (1999). Introduction. In H. J. Freiberg (Ed.), *Perceiving, behaving, becoming: Lessons learned* (pp. vii-xv). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. | Freiberg introduces the book and discusses why we should study the foundation of education from the past and how the humanists have impacted education. | Meeting the needs of the modern learner is a continuous and evolving process. By studying the past, one can better understand the educational future. |
| Ma, X. (2003, July-August). Sense of belonging in school: Can schools make a difference? . *The Journal of Educational Research*, *96*(6), 340-356. | The author used surveys from 6th grade students and 8th grade students in 92 schools in New Brunswick, Canada to describe differences among the schools and their students regarding the students' sense of belonging to school. | Students who possessed a higher sense of self esteem felt as if they were connected to school and had a better attitude toward school. School climate, rather than school context, was the most important component of a sense of belonging. Teachers play a crucial role in the development of school climate and students' sense of belonging. |

Table 3 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Maslow, A. H. (1962). Some basic propositions of a growth of self-actualization psychology. In H. J. Freiberg (Ed.), *Perceiving, behaving, becoming: Lessons learned* (pp. 73-89). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. | Maslow describes his basic propositions and how they tie to creating the optimal educational environment. | The knowledge of these basic propositions has implications for the future of education and students. |
| Day, C., & Van Veen, D. (1999). Maslow and a place called school. In H. J. Freiberg (Ed.), *Perceiving, behaving, becoming: Lessons learned* (pp. 105-115). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. | The authors explore Maslow's proposals from 1962 to determine if they are still relevant to current educational practices and schools. | Teachers must be lifelong learners in order to be most effective. They must use sound judgment as well as knowing themselves and the students. Teachers must be more than just people who deliver curriculum. They must create significant connections in order to make learning relevant. |
| Martin, A. J. (2003). Boys and motivation. *The Australian Educational Researcher*, *30*(3), 43-65. | This study examines the difference in motivation between boys and girls. | Teaching practices were identified that motivated and engaged boys the most. The most critical of all of the teaching practices was the students' relationship with his teacher. |
| Woolley, M. E., & Bowen, G. L. (2007, January). In the context of risk: Supportive adults and the school engagement of middle school students. *Family Relations*, *56*(1), 92-104. | This study examined the amount of supportive and caring adults in at-risk middle school students' lives and the impact on their engagement at school. | At-risk students are more successful in school when they have supportive and caring adults in their lives. Girls report higher numbers of supportive and caring adults and being more engaged in school. |

Table 3 Continued

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Reichert, M., & Hawley, R. (2010, January). Reaching boys: An international study of effective teaching practices. *Phi Delta Kappan*, 35-40. | This article examines the most effective methods for engaging and teaching boys in the classroom. | Boys learn most effectively when they have a relationship with a teacher who is fair and kind. They also learn most effectively with a teacher who adjusts and adapts the lessons over time to meet their needs. Finally, boys learn most effectively when the instruction engages and maintains their interest. |
| Whitlock, J. L. (2006). Youth perceptions of life at school: Contextual correlates of school connectedness in adolescence. *Applied Developmental Science*, *10*(1), 13-29. doi: 10.1207/s1532480xads1001_2 | This study examined the relationship between 8th, 10th, and 12th grade students' perceptions of school connectedness and developmental supports. | Students feel more connected to school when they are allowed to have input into the development and implementation of school policies. They also feel more connected if the classroom material peaks their interests. Disconnectedness from school increases with student age and grade level. |
| Anderman, L. H. (2003, Fall). Academic and social perceptions as predictors of change in middle school students' sense of school belonging. *The Journal of Experimental Education*, *72*(1), 5-22. Retrieved from http://www.jstor.org/stable/20152724 | This study examined the change in middle school students' sense of belonging as it related to grades, motivation, and whether or not teachers promoted respect in their classrooms. | As grade level increased students sense of belonging depreciated. When lessons in class were more task oriented, significant, applicable, and interesting, the students reported a greater sense of belonging. Sixth grade teachers' encouragement of mutual respect in the classroom also caused students to feel more connected to school. |

Table 4

*Literature Review: Necessary Conditions for Learning*

| Reference | Study/Purpose | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Durant, S., & McDonald, J. (2005, October). Gender issues in the elementary classroom: Does equity exist? *The Texas Science Teacher*, 38-41. | This article examines elementary science classrooms to determine whether gender disparity or equity exists. | Boys were more off task than girls and received more teacher attention than girls. Boys received more corrective attention yet were praised more than girls. Girls, however, were asked more higher level questions. |
| Teddlie, C., & Meza, J. (1999). Using informal and formal measures to create classroom profiles. In H. J. Freiberg (Ed.), *School climate: Measuring, improving and sustaining healthy learning environments* (pp. 48-64). New York, NY: Routledge Falmer. | This chapter describes how teachers and administrators can collect data to examine the schools' climate. | Teacher and administrator profiles of school climate can be studied in order to facilitate change and foster growth. |
| Reichert, M., & Hawley, R. (2010). *Reaching boys, teaching boys: Strategies that work -- and why*. San Franciso, CA: Jossey-Bass. | This book describes various methods for educators on how to best meet the needs of boys. The recommendations are results of a 2007-2008 study. | Boys are best engaged in the classroom when they have a relationship with the teacher. The authors interviewed hundreds of boys all over the world and this finding is applicable to all. |
| James, A. N. (2007). *Teaching the male brain: How boys think, feel, and learn in school*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press. | James describes the best ways to work with boys by differentiating teaching strategies to help them succeed in the classroom. | Boys' relationships with teachers are paramount to their success at school. |

Table 4 Continued

| Reference | Description | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Slocumb, P. D. (2004). *Boys in crisis*. Highlands: aha! Process, Inc. | Slocumb describes three types of teachers and the impact of their classroom management style on student performance and behavior. | The most effective style of teaching is a backbone style because it encourages a democratic classroom in which students share opinions and are involved in decision-making in the classroom. |
| Slocumb, P. D. (2004). *Boys in crisis*. Highlands: aha! Process, Inc. | Slocumb describes the impact of shame on a boy. | Boys must have respect for the teacher and must feel safe in order to learn. |
| Neu, T. W., &Weinfeld, R. (2007). *Helping boys succeed in school*. Waco, TX: Prufrock Press. | This book describes strategies for parents and teachers to utilize in order to meet the needs of boys. | Teachers use shame to control a classroom and often when a student is embarrassed in front of the class, he will react in a negative manner. |
| Slocumb, P. D. (2004). *Boys in crisis*. Highlands: aha! Process, Inc. | Slocumb describes the voices that adults use and the messages that students interpret from the use of these voices. | The most effective voice to use is the adult voice because this voice causes students to feel valued and they will respond in a more positive manner. |
| Reichert, M. C., &Kuriloff, P. (2004, March). Boys' selves: Identity and anxiety in the looking glass school of life. *Teachers College Record*, *106*(3), 544-573. | This study explores boys' anxiety in the school setting. | Boys who felt they belonged and who had a better self-concept performed better academically. Schools should explore students' feelings about their social relations. |

Table 4 Continued

| Reference | Description | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Wagner, T. (2008). *The global achievement gap*. New York, NY: Basic Books. | This book describes the global achievement gap that faces students in the United States when they are compared with students from other countries. | Testing dominates schools and teachers spend great amounts of time teaching to the test rather than developing necessary skills for students to be successful in the global economy. |
| Rogers, C. R. (1962).Toward becoming a fully functioning person. In H. J. Freiberg (Ed.), *Perceiving, behaving, becoming: Lessons learned* (pp. 37-51). Alexandria, VA: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development. | Rogers explores the necessary components for a person to become a fully functioning, productive member of society. | People must emerge and grow from experience rather than being expected to fit into a pre-conceived mold. |
| Rogers, C. R. (1974). Questions I would ask myself if I were a teacher. *Education*, *95*(2), 134-139. | Rogers discusses the most effective classroom settings. Students and teachers learn together when the teacher takes on more of a facilitator role. | The facilitator then recognizes students' individual talents and is able to appeal to their interests, host effective inquiry, and inspire creativity. |
| Sanford, K. (2005, December). Gendered literacy experiences: The effects of expectation and opportunity for boys' and girls' learning. *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, *49*(4), 302-315. | This article examines the impact of gendered literacy expectations on boys' and girls' learning experiences. | Teachers sometimes base learning expectations on their stereotypical generalizations of interests of boys and girls. If these go unexamined, boys and girls are allowed only to produce what the teacher expects of them. |

Table 4 Continued

| Reference | Description | Findings |
|---|---|---|
| Gray, C., &Leith, H. (2004, March). Perpetuating gender stereotypes in the classroom: A teacher perspective. *Educational Studies*, 30(1), 3-17. | This article presents findings from a study by the Equality Commission for Northern Ireland which explores gender equity in the classroom and if teacher training adequately prepares teachers to handle gender issues. | The majority of teachers did not feel they were adequately prepared to handle gender issues, but they were aware of them anyway and tried to address them. There were some stereotypical beliefs of gender held by teachers and they did not feel the curriculum delivered gender equality. |

**Summary**

The findings that have been summarized in the literature review have provided direction and valuable information for the development of a thesis study. The purpose of this study is to find out why the gender gap is increasing, and to look at discipline data in order to have a better understanding of interventions that should occur. The Educational Equity Concepts Organization developed the Raising and Educating Healthy Boys Project in 2000, and they created several focus group studies to determine perceptions of boys and explore possible solutions for change. The focus groups concluded that boys are not faring well in school, but strategies for change were not well organized and scattered (Froschl & Sprung, 2005). The literature review suggests that boys receive more discipline referrals and harsher consequences than girls. In a study by Nichols and Good (1998), male students consistently rated their schools far lower with regard to fairness than female students, and this exploration of discipline data will further examine the discipline of boys and girls so that recommendations for school and classroom interventions can be made.

# Chapter Three: Methodology

## Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to determine if office discipline referrals differ significantly by gender and grade levels at Jefferson (pseudonym)Middle School which has over 1,200 students in grades 6-8. The study also determined if the reasons and consequences for the discipline referrals were differentiated by grade and gender. PEIMS (Public Education Information Management System) data provided by the school district was analyzed to determine the outcomes of office discipline entries from Jefferson Middle School.

This study may provide school administrators a better understanding of the consistency of application that leads to office discipline referrals across grade levels and by gender at the middle school level. Possible recommendations could provide directions towards the types of policies and practices needed to afford equitable application of determining if a discipline referral is appropriate and what consequences for discipline referrals may be necessary. The goal of this study is to (a) provide insight into the issue of whether there are differential consequences for boys and girls for the same infractions, and (b) determine if grade levels show any progression of infractions by gender. This chapter describes the methods that will be used to investigate these questions and is organized into the following subsections: (1) sample, (2) data collection procedures,(3) district discipline referral review process, (4)research design, (5)data analysis, (6) limitations, (7) summary and (8) primary research questions.

**Sample**

During the 2009-2010 school year, Jefferson Middle School had 1,213 students in grades 6, 7, and 8 and the sample was derived from discipline data for these 1,213 students. The demographics of Jefferson Middle School for the school year being studied as of June 2, 2010 (the last day of school) were as follows:

African-American – 26.3%

Hispanic – 56.5%

White – 13.8%

Native American – 0.4%

Asian, Pacific Islander – 3.1%

Economically Disadvantaged – 67.7%

Table 5 provides the breakdown of the population of Jefferson Middle School by grade level and gender:

Table 5

*Population of Jefferson Middle School Divided by Grade Level and Gender*

| Grade Level | Female | Male | Total Population |
|---|---|---|---|
| 6th | 200 | 210 | 410 |
| 7th | 217 | 216 | 433 |
| 8th | 165 | 205 | 370 |
| | 582 | 631 | 1213 |

The students who are included in the study sample, must meet the following criteria:

- The student was enrolled in Jefferson middle school during the 2009-2010 school year.
- The student received an office discipline referral during the 2009-2010 school year at Jefferson middle school.

**Data Collection Procedures**

The number of office discipline referrals a student received for the 2009-2010 school year was used to measure discipline. Office discipline referrals can be written for either minor or major infractions. The discipline referrals are turned in to the assistant principals' office by the teacher. The teachers are expected to handle some of the minor infractions within their own classrooms, but when the behavior of a student persists, or the teacher determines that the behavior is severe enough, the student is written up on an office discipline referral so that he or she can be assigned a consequence by one of the assistant principals.

When the student is referred to the assistant principals' office, an assistant principal meets with the student and discusses the incident(s), assigns a consequence, and calls the parents. Certain more severe misbehaviors (e.g. weapons, drugs, felonies) can result in placement at an alternative school or expulsion. Level IV and V misbehaviors designated by the Code of Conduct are automatic placements at an alternative campus or expulsions. Level III disciplinary incidents are placements at an alternative campus and can be assigned at the discretion of the assistant principal.

District Discipline Referral Review Process

Once the assistant principal assigns the disciplinary consequence for a student, he or she turns the information over to a secretary in the assistant principals' office. The secretary enters the data into the computer system and the incident is assigned a code and a short description is included. The secretary also enters the assigned consequence as well as the time and location. This data is reviewed by a district office and once again by the secretary before it is entered into PEIMS (Public Education Information Management System) which is the state data collection system. This data is compiled for the entire school year and cannot be changed once the school year has ended. The archival data utilized in this study has been taken from the data that was reported to the state during the 2009-2010 school year. School discipline data which was analyzed, included, but was not limited to, the following coded infractions and consequences:

Table 6

*Discipline Infractions*

| Category | Coded Infraction |
|---|---|
| Inappropriate Peer Interaction | Fighting<br>Language/Gestures (cursing, shouting, taunting)<br>Inappropriate physical contact (shoving, tripping) |
| Inappropriate Adult Interaction | Language (arguing, cursing, refusing)<br>Physical contact (hitting, kicking, pushing) |
| Breaking Class Rules/School Rules/Bus Rules | Tardy (to class or campus)<br>Skipping/Truancy (class or school)<br>Excessive Talking, disrupting class, acting out<br>Refusal to do class/homework or participate<br>Bringing inappropriate materials/objects (nuisance/offensive items, razors, cell phones, IPods, PSP, etc.)<br>Dress code violation<br>Smoking/Tobacco violation<br>Theft<br>Vandalism/criminal mischief (student property)<br>Nuisance Behavior (running, throwing any item, loud)<br>Dishonesty (cheating/forgery/perjury/lying)<br>Not attending discipline assignment<br>Misuse of district technology |
| Mandatory Alternative Education Placement | Felony Conduct<br>Assault (student)<br>Alcohol (possession, use, under influence)<br>Marijuana<br>Controlled Substance/Dangerous Drug |
| Discretionary Alternative Education Placement | Persistent Misbehavior<br>Level III Single Serious Infraction |
| Mandatory Expulsion | Aggravated Assault of another student |

Table 7

*Discipline Consequences*

| Action Taken |
|---|
| In-School Suspension/Discipline Management Class |
| Suspension |
| Bus Removal |
| Behavior Contract |
| Computer Privileges Revoked/Suspended |
| Detention Hall |
| Lunch Detention |
| Saturday Detention |
| Peer Mediation |
| AM Discipline Management Class |
| PM Discipline Management Class |
| Conference/Warning (written/verbal/incident report) |
| Other (citation, arrest, police report) |
| Placed (Disciplinary Alternative Education Placement) |
| Expelled |

The data for this study which was collected from Jefferson Middle School was office discipline data that is reported by the school and district and recorded in PEIMS (Public Education Information Management System) for the 2009-2010 school year. The independent variable in this study is gender separated by grade level and the dependent variables are office discipline referrals, coded reasons, and consequences derived from office discipline referrals.

**Research Design**

This research is designed to identify differences in discipline consequences and reasons when data from students in one middle school are separated by gender and grade level. The study is a quantitative data study of archival data from middle school students; therefore, it is non-experimental quantitative research. Quantitative research is broken

down into several more specific types of research and one type of quantitative research is correlational research. This study is correlational because the research is designed to show a correlation between gender divided by grade level and office discipline referral reasons and consequences. This correlational study is ex post fact research. Ex post research analyzes the variables from retrospective data in order to determine relationships. "Correlational research that is ex post facto research focuses on the relationships between variables as they occur in natural settings" (Wiersma&Jurs, 2009, p. 190). The measure of correlation is referred to as the correlation coefficient, which is "an index of the extent of relationship between two variables that can take on values from -1.00 through 0 to +1.00, inclusive" (Wiersma&Jurs, 2009, p. 389). Basically, if the absolute value of the coefficient is greater, then there is a stronger relationship between the variables. In this study, archival office discipline data has been studied to determine if there is a correlation between gender and the type of consequences issued for the same offense and if grade level influences differential consequences.

**Data Analysis**

In order to answer the research questions, the quantitative data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Descriptive statistics were used in the study to determine the number of office referrals by grade level and gender. A Pearson Chi-Square test of independence was implemented to determine the relationship between the categories of discipline reasons and consequences and gender of students broken down by grade level for the highest discipline infractions and for the highest consequences. The criterion level for determining statistical significance was a

ninety-five percent confidence level ($p<.05$). To further determine effect size Cramer's V was utilized for the statistical analysis. Cramer's V, which takes into account the degrees of freedom, is always used for tables larger than 2 by 2. In this case, Cramer's V was used to determine effect size because both the tables comparing gender with discipline infraction and gender with discipline consequence were larger than 2 by 2. In this study, the criterion for judging effect size is as follows: large = .50 or more, medium = .30 and above, and small = less than .10 (Pallant, 2007).

**Limitations**

No study is without limitations, and possible challenges to the validity of this study can be identified. Since the data is entered by a secretary, there could be errors in the actual data due to mis-entry of the office discipline information. Additionally, assistant principals, who process the discipline referrals, could interpret the coding of the infractions differently, so the grade level data could differ. The assistant principals also may issue consequences that are not consistent with each other because the choice of consequence contains a certain amount of subjectivity. Another limitation of this study is that only the categories with the most infractions will show a significant relationship between the variables. Some categories will only include a few infractions so there would not be enough information to be able to conclusively determine an association between the variables. Finally, a limitation of any correlational research study is that trends and relationships may emerge between the variables, but the researcher cannot prove that the relationship between the variables signifies a cause and effect relationship (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2010). Despite the limitations of the study, it seeks deeper

knowledge of trends and relationships with respect to the topic, and the significance of the contributions to the field remain preserved.

**Summary**

This study is educationally significant because there will be a greater understanding of discipline referral differences between males and females. The literature shows that males are falling behind girls in schools and that there is a need to explore reasons behind the decline. A greater understanding of discipline referral patterns can assist educators with information in creating an environment that is more conducive to learning. The intention is to work toward the creation of an educational setting that meets the needs of all learners, and the research included in this study will further that goal. The study impacts teachers because, through the study, they are provided with information that can be translated into better practice in classrooms and schools. Teacherscan learn, through the study, what types of discipline students are receiving and the reasons for the discipline, so they can implement interventions in the classroom and the school. Through the information provided, teachers should be able to participate in discourse about their teaching methods and to implement plans to help create more engaging settings. The information gathered from the study can play an integral role in creating effective staff development for teachers and positive interventions for students.

Through the analysis of data from this study, assistant principals who administer the discipline can examine whether or not discipline is administered consistently across grade levels and by gender. The study can lead assistant principals to work toward more

conversations about application of appropriate consequences for discipline infractions. Assistant principals are trained to understand that discipline is cumulative and that consequences are to be administered based on the consideration of a variety of factors, but they are not often given data which shows the consistency or lack of consistency of application of discipline broken down by gender and grade levels. This study provides assistant principals data to assist them in a reflection of their application of consequences for the same infractions across grade levels so that in the future, they can develop more uniformity when students are referred to the office.

**Primary Research Questions**

In order to further the goal of providing more in-depth knowledge of the patterns of office discipline referrals, this study focused on the following questions:

- Are there gender differences in the number of discipline referrals for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in Jefferson Middle School?
- What are the coded reasons and consequences assigned to discipline referrals for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in Jefferson Middle School?
- Are there gender differences for the categorical reasons and consequences assigned in Jefferson Middle School?

For the proposed research, archival discipline data from the 2009-2010 school year was analyzed. The reasons for discipline and the consequences were compared across grade levels and by gender.

## Chapter 4: Results of the Study

The primary purpose of this study was to examine office discipline referrals from Jefferson middle school and to determine if they differ significantly by gender and grade level. The study also sought to find out what the coded reasons and consequences were for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students at Jefferson Middle School and to note gender differences for these categorical reasons and consequences. The total sample consisted of 1,213 students enrolled at Jefferson middle school during the 2009-2010 school year. Each of the students included in the study received an office referral during the 2009-2010 school year. Archival data from the 2009-2010 school year was analyzed in order to answer the following questions: Are there gender differences in the number of discipline referrals for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in Jefferson Middle School? What are the coded reasons and consequences assigned to the discipline referrals for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students in Jefferson middle school? Are there gender differences for the categorical reasons and consequences assigned in Jefferson middle school?

The statistical analysis of the data included descriptive statistics illustrating student discipline data broken down by grade, gender, ethnicity, and description. A Pearson Chi-Square test of independence was utilized to determine if there was a significant difference between gender and discipline reason. The top ten most frequent discipline reasons were used for comparison in the statistical analysis and are as follows:

- Excessive talking, disrupting class, acting out
- Inappropriate physical contact
- Language (arguing, cursing, refusing)

- Language/gestures (cursing, taunting, shouting)
- Not attending discipline assignment
- Nuisance behavior (running, throwing any item, loud)
- Refusal to do class/homework or participate
- Skipping/truancy (class or school)
- Tardy (to class or campus)

The Pearson Chi-Square test of independence was also implemented to determine if there was a significant difference between gender and discipline consequence. The most frequent discipline consequences were utilized as variables for the purpose of comparison and these variables are as follows:

- Detention hall
- Discipline management class
- Out of school suspension
- Saturday detention

In order to determine if the Pearson Chi-Square test showed a small, moderate, or large effect size, a Cramer's V test was completed post hoc. The Cramer's V statistic ranges from zero to +1.00. Values closer to zero indicate a weaker relationship between variables, while those closer to +1.00 indicate a stronger relationship. Effect size in this study was measured according to the following criteria: small effect size = .01, medium effect size = .30 and large effect size = .50 (Pallant, 2007).

Table 8 provides a breakdown of the total number of discipline referrals by gender at Jefferson middle school. The total number of referrals for all students at Jefferson middle school was 3,610 with females accounting for 1,351 of those and males

accounting for 2259. When broken down by percent, females received 37.4 percent of all referrals and males received 62.6 percent of all referrals. The table shows that 6th grade students received 1,007 referrals for the year with females accounting for 371 referrals and males 636. 6th grade females accounted for 10.3 percent of all referrals while males accounted for 17.6 percent. 7th grade students received 1,275 referrals for the year with females accounting for 565 and males accounting for 710. 7th grade females accounted for 15.6 percent of all referrals and males accounted for 19.7 percent of all referrals. 8th grade females received 415 referrals and males received 913 referrals. In 8th grade, females accounted for 11.5 percent of all referrals, while males accounted for 25.3 percent of all referrals.

When broken down by grade level and percentage of referrals by grade level only, females accounted for 36.8 percent of all referrals in the 6th grade, while males represented 63.2 percent. Seventh grade percentages divided by gender were closer as 44.3 percent of referrals belonged to females and 55.7 percent were received by males. Eighth grade males received more than double the amount of office referrals with 69 percent, while females received 31 percent. The results indicate that 8th grade students received the highest percentage of referrals and across the grade levels, males received more referrals than females.

Table 8

*Discipline Referrals Broken Down by Gender and Grade*

| Grade Level | Female Frequency | Percent of Total Referrals | Male Frequency | Percent of Total Referrals | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 6th | 371 | 10.3 (36.8) | 636 | 17.6 (63.2) | 1,007 | 27.9 |
| 7th | 565 | 15.6 (44.3) | 710 | 19.7 (55.7) | 1,275 | 35.3 |
| 8th | 415 | 11.5 (31.0) | 913 | 25.3 (69.0) | 1,328 | 36.8 |
| Total | 1,351 | 37.4 | 2,259 | 62.6 | 3,610 | 100.0 |

NOTE: Percentage of total referrals within gender and grade level is in parenthesis.

Table 9 provides a breakdown of referrals by ethnicity/race. The results of this breakdown show that Hispanic/Latino students received the highest percentage of office referrals at 53.6 percent, while Black or African American students received the second highest percentage of office referrals at 32.0 percent. Within these categories, Hispanic/Latino males received more discipline referrals as they accounted for 32.1 percent of all referrals and 59.9 percent of referrals within their ethnic group. Hispanic/Latino females accounted for 21.5 percent of all referrals and 40.1 percent of referrals within their ethnic group. Black or African American males were seen in the office more frequently for referrals than black or African American females. Black or African American males accounted for 18.9 percent of all referrals and 59 percent of referrals within the ethnic group, while females accounted for 13.1 percent ofthe total number of referrals and 41 percent within their ethnic group.

Table 9

*Discipline Referrals Broken Down by Ethnicity/Race, Grade Level, and Gender*

| Ethnicity/Race Divided by Grade | Female Frequency | Female Percent of Total (Female Percent of Ethnic Group) | Male Frequency | Male Percent of Total (Male Percent of Ethnic Group) | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| American Indian or Alaska Native | 3 | .1 (100.0) | 0 | 0 | 3 | .1 |
| Grade 6 | 0 | .0 | 0 | .0 | 0 | .0 |

| | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Grade 7 | 2 | .05 (67.0) | 0 | .0 | 2 | .05 |
| Grade 8 | 1 | .05 (33.0) | 0 | .0 | 1 | .05 |
| Asian | 4 | .1 (10.5) | 34 | 1.0 (89.5) | 38 | 1.1 |
| Grade 6 | 0 | .0 | 8 | .2 (21.1) | 8 | .2 |
| Grade 7 | 4 | .1 (10.5) | 7 | .2 (18.4) | 11 | .3 |
| Grade 8 | 0 | .0 | 19 | .6 (50.0) | 19 | .6 |

Table 9 Continued

| Ethnicity/Race Divided by Grade | Female Frequency | Female Percent of Total (Female Percent of Ethnic Group) | Male Frequency | Male Percent of Total (Male Percent of Ethnic Group) | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Black/African American | 472 | 13.1 (41.0) | 685 | 18.9 (59.0) | 1,157 | 32.0 |
| Grade 6 | 194 | 5.4 (50.0) | 194 | 5.3 (50.0) | 388 | 10.8 |
| Grade 7 | 156 | 4.3 (38.9) | 245 | 6.8 (61.1) | 401 | 11.1 |
| Grade 8 | 122 | 3.4 (33.2) | 246 | 6.8 (66.8) | 368 | 10.8 |
| *Error | 19 | .5 (25.0) | 57 | 1.6 (75.0) | 76 | 2.1 |
| Hispanic/Latino Grade 6 | 776 | 21.5 (40.1) | 1,159 | 32.1 (59.9) | 1,935 | 53.6 |
| Grade 7 | 155 | 4.3 (40.2) | 231 | 6.4 (59.8) | 386 | 10.7 |
| Grade 8 | 374 | 10.4 (49.6) | 380 | 10.5 (50.4) | 754 | 20.9 |
|  | 247 | 6.8 (31.1) | 548 | 15.2 (68.9) | 795 | 22.0 |

Table 9 Continued

| Ethnicity/Race Divided by Grade | Female Frequency | Female Percent of Total (Female Percent of Ethnic Group) | Male Frequency | Male Percent of Total (Male Percent of Ethnic Group) | Cumulative Frequency | Cumulative Percent |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Two or more Races | 7 | .2 (10.9) | 57 | 1.6 (89.1) | 64 | 1.8 |
| Grade 6 | 0 | .0 | 52 | 1.4 (81.3) | 52 | 1.4 |
| Grade 7 | 5 | .1 (71.4) | 2 | .1 (28.6) | 7 | .2 |
| Grade 8 | 2 | .1 (40.0) | 3 | .1 (60.0) | 5 | .2 |
| White | 70 | 1.9 (21.0) | 267 | 7.4 (79.0) | 337 | 9.3 |
| Grade 6 | 15 | .4 (11.6) | 114 | 3.2 (88.4) | 129 | 3.6 |
| Grade 7 | 18 | .5 (21.0) | 69 | 1.9 (79.0) | 87 | 2.4 |
| Grade 8 | 37 | 1.0 (30.6) | 84 | 2.3 (69.4) | 121 | 3.3 |
| Total | 1,351 | 37.4 | 2,259 | 62.6 | 3,610 | 100.0 |

*During the 2010-2011 school year, the demographic categories for reporting Ethnicity/Race changed and when the data was converted for previous years, errors occurred.
*NOTE: Numbers in parentheses represent percentage of total referrals within ethnic group divided by gender and grade level.

Table 10 shows a description of all coded disciplinary incidents for 6th grade divided by gender. The table shows that in 6th grade overall, males received more office referrals than females. Males in 6th grade had higher numbers of discipline incidents in all of the categories except for dishonesty, persistent misbehavior, and serious misbehavior. Males and females in 6th grade received equal numbers of office referrals for marijuana and for theft.

Table 10

*Descriptive Analysis of Discipline Infractions for 6th Grade by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Assault (Student) | Count | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Bringing Inappropriate Materials/Objects | Count | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | % within Desc | 25.0% | 75.0% | 100.0% |
| Dishonesty (cheating/forgery/lying) | Count | 2 | 1 | 3 |
| | % within Desc | 66.7% | 33.3% | 100.0% |
| Excessive Talking Out/Disrupting | Count | 70 | 189 | 259 |
| | % within Desc | 27.0% | 73.0% | 100.0% |
| Fighting | Count | 17 | 20 | 37 |
| | % within Desc | 45.9% | 54.1% | 100.0% |
| Inappropriate Physical Contact | Count | 23 | 44 | 67 |
| | % within Desc | 34.3% | 65.7% | 100.0% |
| Language (Refusing) | Count | 38 | 58 | 96 |
| | % within Desc | 39.6% | 60.4% | 100.0% |

Table 10 Continued

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language/Gestures | Count | 21 | 27 | 48 |
| | % within Desc | 43.8% | 56.3% | 100.0% |
| Marijuana | Count | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Misuse of District Technology | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Not Attending Discipline Assignment | Count | 38 | 63 | 101 |
| | % within Desc | 37.6% | 62.4% | 100.0% |
| Nuisance Behavior | Count | 13 | 33 | 46 |
| | % within Desc | 28.3% | 71.7% | 100.0% |
| Persistent Misbehavior | Count | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | % within Desc | 100.0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| Physical Contact | Count | 2 | 7 | 9 |
| | % within Desc | 22.2% | 77.8% | 100.0% |
| Refuses to Work | Count | 16 | 41 | 57 |
| | % within Desc | 28.1% | 71.9% | 100.0% |
| Serious Misbehavior | Count | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| | % within Desc | 100.0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| Skipping/Truancy | Count | 13 | 14 | 27 |
| | % within Desc | 48.1% | 51.9% | 100.0% |
| Tardy (Class/Campus) | Count | 105 | 123 | 228 |
| | % within Desc | 46.1% | 53.9% | 100.0% |
| Theft | Count | 5 | 5 | 10 |
| | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Vandalism/Criminal Mischief (School) | Count | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| | % within Desc | 33.3% | 66.7% | 100.0% |

Table 10 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Vandalism/Criminal Mischief (Student Property) | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 371 | 636 | 1,007 |
| | | % within Desc | 36.8% | 63.2% | 100.0% |

Table 11 shows disciplinary consequences divided by gender for 6th grade students. Males overall received more discipline consequences than females. Males were assigned Saturday Detention, Discipline Management Class, and Detention hall at significantly higher rates than females. Females in 6th grade received higher amounts of Alternative Education Placements, Bus Removal, and Lunch Detention. Sixth grade boys and girls were almost equal in the amount of times they were assigned Out of School Suspension. Boys were suspended 44 times versus girls who were suspended 42 times.

Table 11

*Descriptive Analysis of Discipline Consequences for 6th Grade by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Alternative Education Placement | Count | 3 | 2 | 5 |
| | % within Desc | 60.0% | 40.0% | 100.0% |
| AM Discipline Management Class | Count | 7 | 15 | 22 |
| | % within Desc | 31.8% | 68.2% | 100.0% |
| Bus Removal | Count | 5 | 3 | 8 |
| | % within Desc | 62.5% | 37.5% | 100.0% |
| Detention Hall | Count | 116 | 239 | 355 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | % within Desc | 32.7% | 67.3% | 100.0% |

Table 11 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Discipline Management Class | Count | 123 | 187 | 310 |
| | | % within Desc | 39.7% | 60.3% | 100.0% |
| | Lunch Detention | Count | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| | | % within Desc | 100.0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| | Other | Count | 2 | 23 | 25 |
| | | % within Desc | 8.0% | 92.0% | 100.0% |
| | Out of School Suspension | Count | 42 | 44 | 86 |
| | | % within Desc | 48.8% | 51.2% | 100.0% |
| | PM Discipline Management Class | Count | 5 | 14 | 19 |
| | | % within Desc | 26.3% | 73.7% | 100.0% |
| | Saturday Detention | Count | 50 | 78 | 128 |
| | | % within Desc | 39.1% | 60.9% | 100.0% |
| | Warning | Count | 13 | 31 | 44 |
| | | % within Desc | 29.5% | 70.5% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 371 | 636 | 1,007 |
| | | % within Desc | 36.8% | 63.2% | 100.0% |

Table 12 shows a description of all coded disciplinary incidents for 7th grade divided by gender. The table shows that in 7th grade overall, males received more office referrals than females. Males in 7th grade had higher numbers of discipline incidents in almost all categories. Females in 7th grade, however, were referred to the office more times than males for dishonesty (cheating, forgery, perjury, lying), marijuana, refusing to work, skipping class or school, being tardy to class, and for theft. The males received

significantly higher numbers of referrals in the areas of refusing to work, nuisance behavior, and excessive talking out and disruption.

Table 12

*Descriptive Analysis of Discipline Infractions for 7th Grade by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Aggravated Assault/Student | Count | 0 | 2 | 2 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Bringing Inappropriate Objects | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Dishonesty | Count | 4 | 3 | 7 |
| | % within Desc | 57.1% | 42.9% | 100.0% |
| Excessive Talking, Disrupting Class, Acting Out | Count | 94 | 169 | 263 |
| | % within Desc | 35.7% | 64.3% | 100.0% |
| Fighting | Count | 11 | 15 | 26 |
| | % within Desc | 42.3% | 57.7% | 100.0% |
| Inappropriate Physical Contact | Count | 19 | 68 | 87 |
| | % within Desc | 21.8% | 78.2% | 100.0% |
| Language (Refusing) | Count | 61 | 90 | 151 |
| | % within Desc | 40.4% | 59.6% | 100.0% |
| Language/Gestures | Count | 12 | 42 | 54 |
| | % within Desc | 22.2% | 77.8% | 100.0% |
| Marijuana | Count | 6 | 0 | 6 |
| | % within Desc | 100.0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| Misuse of District Technology | Count | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | % within Desc | 25.0% | 75.0% | 100.0% |

Table 12 Continued

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Not Attending Discipline Assignment | Count | 32 | 57 | 89 |
| | % within Desc | 36.0% | 64.0% | 100.0% |
| Nuisance Behavior | Count | 25 | 36 | 61 |
| | % within Desc | 41.0% | 59.0% | 100.0% |
| Persistent Misbehavior | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Physical Contact | Count | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Refuses to Work | Count | 77 | 65 | 142 |
| | % within Desc | 54.2% | 45.8% | 100.0% |
| Serious Misbehavior | Count | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Skipping/Truancy | Count | 30 | 7 | 37 |
| | % within Desc | 81.1% | 18.9% | 100.0% |
| Smoking/Tobacco | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Tardy (Class/Campus) | Count | 181 | 139 | 320 |
| | % within Desc | 56.6% | 43.4% | 100.0% |
| Theft | Count | 8 | 3 | 11 |
| | % within Desc | 72.7% | 27.3% | 100.0% |
| *Tru 3 Do Not Use (Data Entry Error) | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Vandalism/Criminal Mischief (School Property) | Count | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |

Table 12 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Vandalism/Criminal Mischief (Student Property) | Count | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 565 | 710 | 1,275 |
| | | % within Desc | 44.3% | 55.7% | 100.0% |

Table 13 shows disciplinary consequences divided by gender for 7th grade students. Males overall received more discipline consequences than females. Males received higher consequences in most of the categories, but females were received more consequences in the areas of Alternative Education Placements, Detention Hall, and PM (afternoon) Discipline Management Class.

Table 13

*Descriptive Analysis of Discipline Consequences for 7th Grade by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | |
| Alternative Education Placement | Count | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| | % within Desc | 71.4% | 28.6% | 100.0% |
| AM Discipline Management Class | Count | 8 | 9 | 17 |
| | % within Desc | 47.1% | 52.9% | 100.0% |
| Bus Removal | Count | 2 | 6 | 8 |
| | % within Desc | 25.0% | 75.0% | 100.0% |
| Detention Hall | Count | 238 | 211 | 449 |
| | % within Desc | 53.0% | 47.0% | 100.0% |
| Discipline Management Class | Count | 176 | 271 | 447 |
| | % within Desc | 39.4% | 60.6% | 100.0% |

Table 13 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Expelled/Juvenile Justice Education Placement | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| | Other | Count | 11 | 47 | 58 |
| | | % within Desc | 19.0% | 81.0% | 100.0% |
| | Out of School Suspension | Count | 32 | 72 | 104 |
| | | % within Desc | 30.8% | 69.2% | 100.0% |
| | PM Discipline Management Class | Count | 6 | 4 | 10 |
| | | % within Desc | 60.0% | 40.0% | 100.0% |
| | Saturday Detention | Count | 70 | 63 | 133 |
| | | % within Desc | 52.6% | 47.4% | 100.0% |
| | Warning | Count | 17 | 24 | 41 |
| | | % within Desc | 41.5% | 58.5% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 565 | 710 | 1,275 |
| | | % within Desc | 44.3% | 55.7% | 100.0% |

Table 14 shows a description of all coded disciplinary incidents for 8th grade divided by gender. The table shows that in 8th grade overall, males received more office referrals than females. Males in 8th grade had higher numbers of discipline incidents in all categories except for in two cases. In the two cases, females were referred to the office more times for being in possession or under the influence of alcohol and the one student who was referred to the office for dress code violation was a female.

Table 14

*Descriptive Analysis of Discipline Infractions for 8th Grade by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Alcohol (30-Day) | Count | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| | % within Desc | 100.0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| Assault (Student) | Count | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Bringing Inappropriate Objects | Count | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Controlled Substance/Dangerous Drug | Count | 2 | 5 | 7 |
| | % within Desc | 28.6% | 71.4% | 100.0% |
| Dishonesty | Count | 2 | 4 | 6 |
| | % within Desc | 33.3% | 66.7% | 100.0% |
| Dress Code Violation | Count | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | % within Desc | 100.0% | .0% | 100.0% |
| Excessive Talking, Disrupting Class, Acting Out | Count | 77 | 178 | 255 |
| | % within Desc | 30.2% | 69.8% | 100.0% |
| Felony Conduct | Count | 2 | 2 | 4 |
| | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Fighting | Count | 5 | 12 | 17 |
| | % within Desc | 29.4% | 70.6% | 100.0% |
| Inappropriate Physical Contact | Count | 16 | 60 | 76 |
| | % within Desc | 21.1% | 78.9% | 100.0% |
| Language (Refusing) | Count | 46 | 102 | 148 |
| | % within Desc | 31.1% | 68.9% | 100.0% |

Table 14 Continued

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Language/Gestures | Count | 7 | 31 | 38 |
| | % within Desc | 18.4% | 81.6% | 100.0% |
| Marijuana | Count | 0 | 8 | 8 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Misuse of District Technology | Count | 1 | 6 | 7 |
| | % within Desc | 14.3% | 85.7% | 100.0% |
| Not Attending Discipline Assignment | Count | 32 | 81 | 113 |
| | % within Desc | 28.3% | 71.7% | 100.0% |
| Nuisance Behavior | Count | 30 | 69 | 99 |
| | % within Desc | 30.3% | 69.7% | 100.0% |
| Physical Contact | Count | 0 | 5 | 5 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Refusing to Work | Count | 29 | 79 | 108 |
| | % within Desc | 26.9% | 73.1% | 100.0% |
| Serious Misbehavior | Count | 2 | 17 | 19 |
| | % within Desc | 10.5% | 89.5% | 100.0% |
| Skipping/Truancy | Count | 21 | 21 | 42 |
| | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| Tardy (Class/Campus) | Count | 134 | 219 | 353 |
| | % within Desc | 38.0% | 62.0% | 100.0% |
| Theft | Count | 1 | 3 | 4 |
| | % within Desc | 25.0% | 75.0% | 100.0% |

Table 14 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Vandalism Criminal Mischief (School Property) | Count | 0 | 4 | 4 |
| | | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 415 | 913 | 1,328 |
| | | % within Desc | 31.3% | 68.8% | 100.0% |

Table 15 shows disciplinary consequences divided by gender for 8th grade students. Males overall received more discipline consequences than females. Males received higher consequences in all categories except for with the assignment of AM Discipline Management Class and Lunch Detention. Females were assigned more days of AM (Morning) Discipline Management Class than males. Only two days of Lunch Detention were assigned and males and females served one day each.

Table 15

*Descriptive Analysis of Discipline Consequences for 8th Grade by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Alternative Education Placement | Count | 6 | 18 | 24 |
| | % within Desc | 25.0% | 75.0% | 100.0% |
| AM Discipline Management Class | Count | 5 | 2 | 7 |
| | % within Desc | 71.4% | 28.6% | 100.0% |
| Bus Removal | Count | 0 | 3 | 3 |
| | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| Detention Hall | Count | 135 | 258 | 393 |
| | % within Desc | 34.4% | 65.6% | 100.0% |

Table 15 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Discipline Management Class | Count | 166 | 353 | 519 |
| | | % within Desc | 32.0% | 68.0% | 100.0% |
| | Expelled/Juvenile Justice Education Placement | Count | 0 | 1 | 1 |
| | | % within Desc | .0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |
| | Lunch Detention | Count | 1 | 1 | 2 |
| | | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| | Other | Count | 7 | 40 | 47 |
| | | % within Desc | 14.9% | 85.1% | 100.0% |
| | Out of School Suspension | Count | 26 | 92 | 118 |
| | | % within Desc | 22.0% | 78.0% | 100.0% |
| | PM Discipline Management Class | Count | 5 | 8 | 13 |
| | | % within Desc | 38.5% | 61.5% | 100.0% |
| | Saturday Detention | Count | 40 | 62 | 102 |
| | | % within Desc | 39.2% | 60.8% | 100.0% |
| | Warning | Count | 24 | 75 | 99 |
| | | % within Desc | 24.2% | 75.8% | 100.0% |
| Total | | Count | 415 | 913 | 1,328 |
| | | % within Desc | 31.3% | 68.8% | 100.0% |

Table 16 shows the highest disciplinary incidents at Jefferson middle school. These incidents were used in the comparison of gender and its relationship to disciplinary incident for each of the grade levels. A Pearson Chi-Square test determined that there was a significant relationship between gender and discipline incident for the 6th grade students $\chi^2(8, N=929) = 25.40$, $p = .001$. Each of the infractions listed in the table were more likely to be committed by a male than a female. Cramer's V was utilized to determine the strength of the relationship between the two variables. The effect size was

+.165 and since this is less than .30 (scale: small = .01, medium = .30, large = .50), it signifies that there is a small relationship between gender and discipline reason (Pallant, 2007). Figure 1 graphically illustrates the highest infractions for 6th grade students divided by gender.

Table 16

*Highest Discipline Infractions for 6th Grade Students Divided by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Tardy (Class/Campus) | Count | 105 | 123 | 228 |
| | % within Desc | 46.1% | 53.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 31.2% | 20.8% | 24.5% |
| Skipping/Truancy | Count | 13 | 14 | 27 |
| | % within Desc | 48.1% | 51.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 3.9% | 2.4% | 2.9% |
| Refuses to Work | Count | 16 | 41 | 57 |
| | % within Desc | 28.1% | 71.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 4.7% | 6.9% | 6.1% |
| Nuisance Behavior | Count | 13 | 33 | 46 |
| | % within Desc | 28.3% | 71.7% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 3.9% | 5.6% | 5.0% |
| Not Attending Discipline Assignment | Count | 38 | 63 | 101 |
| | % within Desc | 37.6% | 62.4% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 11.3% | 10.6% | 10.9% |
| Language/Gestures | Count | 21 | 27 | 48 |
| | % within Desc | 43.8% | 56.3% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 6.2% | 4.6% | 5.2% |

Table 16 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Language (Refusing) | Count | 38 | 58 | 96 |
| | | % within Desc | 39.6% | 60.4% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 11.3% | 9.8% | 10.3% |
| | Inappropriate Physical Contact | Count | 23 | 44 | 67 |
| | | % within Desc | 34.3% | 65.7% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 6.8% | 7.4% | 7.2% |
| | Excessive Talking Out/Disrupting | Count | 70 | 189 | 259 |
| | | % within Desc | 27.0% | 73.0% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 20.8% | 31.9% | 27.9% |
| Total | | Count | 337 | 592 | 929 |
| | | % within Desc | 36.3% | 63.7% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

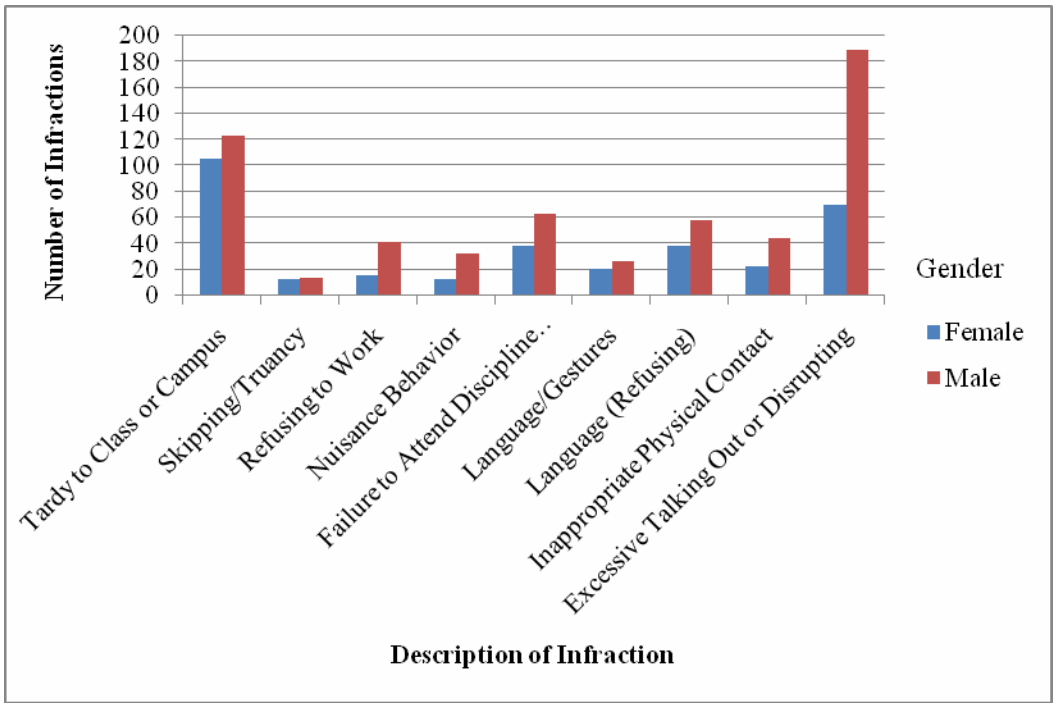


*Figure 1.* Highest discipline infractions for 6th grade students divided by gender.

Table 17 shows the highest discipline infractions at Jefferson middle school for 7th grade students divided by gender. The highest discipline infractions were used in the comparison of gender and its relationship to discipline infraction for each of the grade levels. A Pearson Chi-Square test determined that there was a significant relationship between gender and discipline infraction for 7th grade students $\chi^2(8, N = 1204) = 85.49, p = .000$). The only areas where female committed more infractions than males were being tardy to class or campus, skipping or truancy, and refusing to work. When Cramer's V was utilized, the effect size was +.266 which signified that the relationship between gender and discipline reason leaned more toward being medium by using the following scale: small = 01, medium = .30, and large = .50 (Pallant, 2007). Figure 2 illustrates the relationship between gender and discipline infraction in 7th grade.

Table 17

*Highest Discipline Infractions for 7th Grade Students Divided by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Tardy (Class/Campus) | Count | 181 | 139 | 320 |
| | % within Desc | 56.6% | 43.4% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 34.1% | 20.7% | 26.6% |
| Skipping/Truancy | Count | 30 | 7 | 37 |
| | % within Desc | 81.1% | 18.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 5.6% | 1.0% | 3.1% |
| Refuses to Work | Count | 77 | 65 | 142 |
| | % within Desc | 54.2% | 45.8% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 14.5% | 9.7% | 11.8% |

Table 17 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Nuisance Behavior | Count | 25 | 36 | 61 |
| | | % within Desc | 41.0% | 59.0% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 4.7% | 5.3% | 5.1% |
| | Not Attending Discipline Assignment | Count | 32 | 57 | 89 |
| | | % within Desc | 36.0% | 64.0% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 6.0% | 8.5% | 7.4% |
| | Language/Gestures | Count | 12 | 42 | 54 |
| | | % within Desc | 22.2% | 77.8% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 2.3% | 6.2% | 4.5% |
| | Language (Refusing) | Count | 61 | 90 | 151 |
| | | % within Desc | 40.4% | 59.6% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 11.5% | 13.4% | 12.5% |
| | Inappropriate Physical Contact | Count | 19 | 68 | 87 |
| | | % within Desc | 21.8% | 78.2% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 3.6% | 10.1% | 7.2% |
| | Excessive Talking Out/Disrupting | Count | 94 | 169 | 263 |
| | | % within Desc | 35.7% | 64.3% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 17.7% | 25.1% | 21.8% |
| Total | | Count | 531 | 673 | 1,204 |
| | | % within Desc | 44.1% | 55.9% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

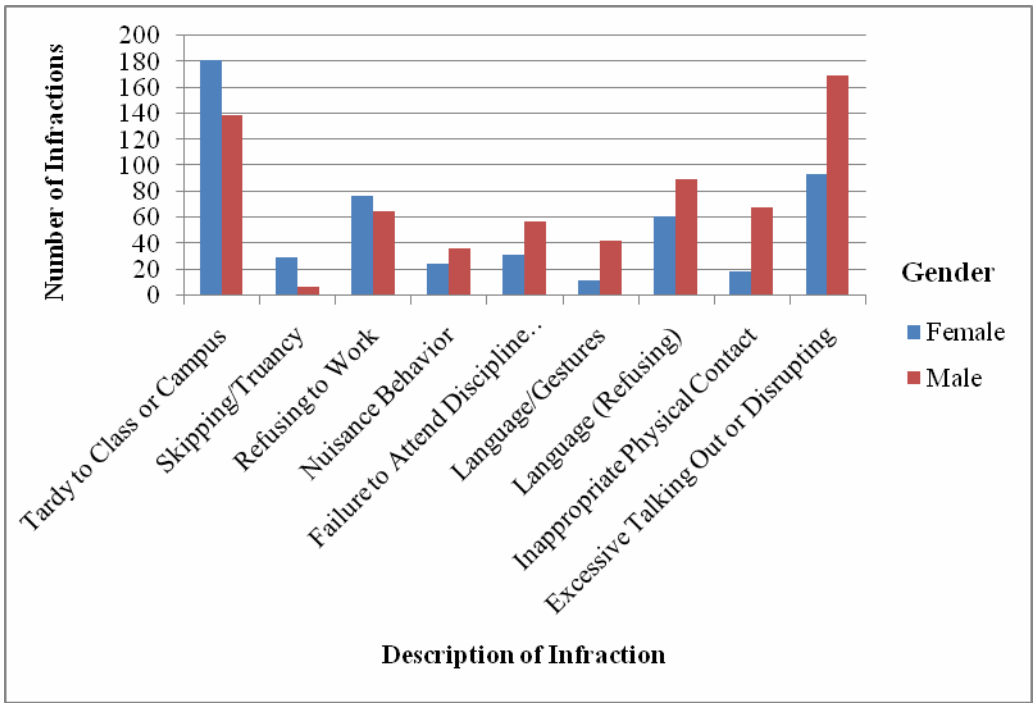


*Figure 2.* Highest discipline infractions for 7th grade students divided by gender.

Table 18 shows the highest discipline infractions at Jefferson middle school for 8th grade students divided by gender. The highest discipline infractions were used in the comparison of gender and its relationship to discipline infraction for each of the grade levels. A Pearson Chi-Square test determined that there was a significant relationship between gender and discipline infraction for 8th grade students $\chi^2(8, N = 1232) = 22.06$, $p = .005$). All infractions except for skipping and truancy were more likely to be committed by 8th grade males. Males and females were equal in the amount of times they skipped or were truant from school. When Cramer's V was utilized, the effect size was +.134 which signified that the relationship between gender and discipline reason was small using the following scale: small = .01, medium = .30, large = .50 (Pallant, 2007). Figure 3 illustrates the findings in a graphical format.

Table 18

*Highest Discipline Infractions for 8th Grade Students Divided by Gender*

| Description | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Tardy (Class/Campus) | Count | 134 | 219 | 353 |
| | % within Desc | 38.0% | 62.0% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 34.2% | 26.1% | 28.7% |
| Skipping/Truancy | Count | 21 | 21 | 42 |
| | % within Desc | 50.0% | 50.0% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 5.4% | 2.5% | 3.4% |
| Refuses to Work | Count | 29 | 79 | 108 |
| | % within Desc | 26.9% | 73.1% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 7.4% | 9.4% | 8.8% |
| Nuisance Behavior | Count | 30 | 69 | 99 |
| | % within Desc | 30.3% | 69.7% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 7.7% | 8.2% | 8.0% |
| Not Attending Discipline Assignment | Count | 32 | 81 | 113 |
| | % within Desc | 28.3% | 71.7% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 8.2% | 9.6% | 9.2% |
| Language/Gestures | Count | 7 | 31 | 38 |
| | % within Desc | 18.4% | 81.6% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 1.8% | 3.7% | 3.1% |
| Language (Refusing) | Count | 46 | 102 | 148 |
| | % within Desc | 31.1% | 68.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 11.7% | 12.1% | 12.0% |
| Inappropriate Physical Contact | Count | 16 | 60 | 76 |
| | % within Desc | 21.1% | 78.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 4.1% | 7.1% | 6.2% |

Table 18 Continued

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Excessive Talking Out/Disrupting | Count | 77 | 178 | 255 |
| | | % within Desc | 30.2% | 69.8% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 19.6% | 21.2% | 20.7% |
| Total | | Count | 392 | 840 | 1,232 |
| | | % within Desc | 31.8% | 68.2% | 100.0% |
| | | % within Gender | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

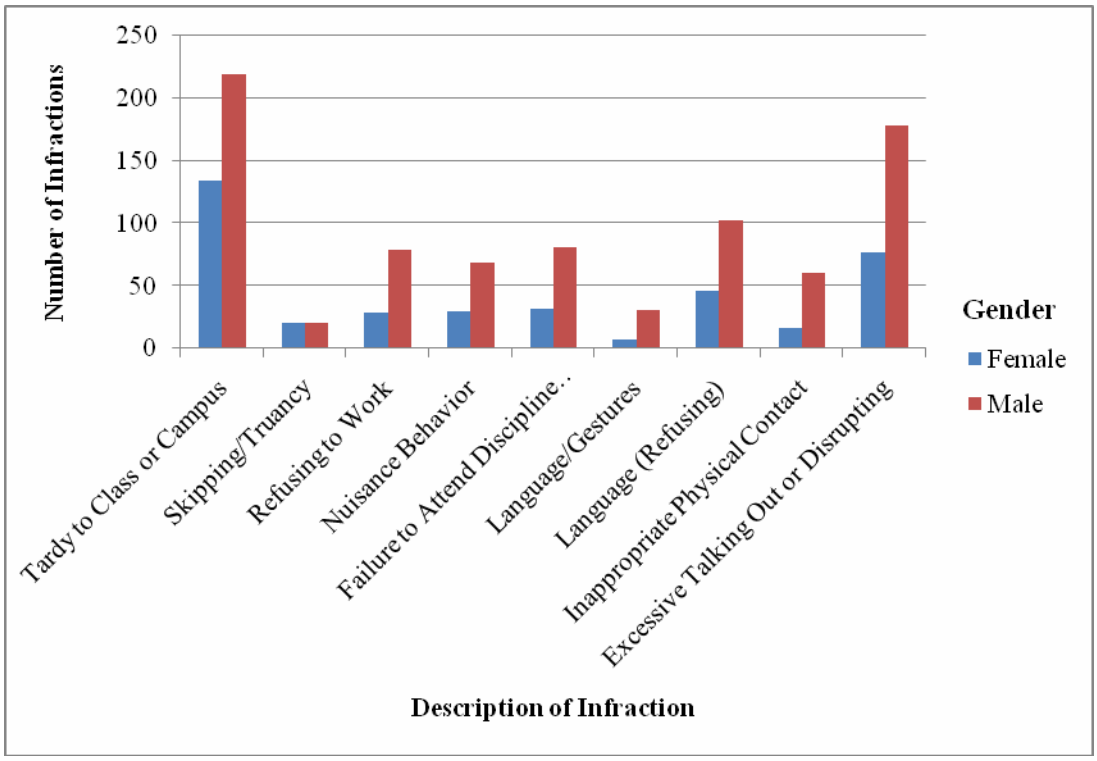


*Figure 3.* Highest discipline infractions for 8th grade students divided by gender.

Table 19 shows the highest discipline consequences assigned to 6th grade students with the most frequency. The highest discipline consequences were used in the comparison of gender and its relationship to discipline consequences for each of the grade levels. A Pearson Chi-Square test determined that there was a significant relationship between gender and discipline consequence for 6th grade students $\chi^2(3, N = 879) = 8.98, p = .030)$. Sixth grade males were more likely to receive each of the consequences than females. When Cramer's V was utilized, the effect size was +.101 which signified that the relationship between gender and discipline consequence was small using the following scale: small = .01, medium = .30, and large = .50 (Pallant, 2007). Figure 4 illustrates the relationship between gender and consequence.

Table 19

*Highest Discipline Consequences for 6th Grade Divided by Gender*

| Consequence | | Gender | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | |
| Saturday Detention | Count | 50 | 78 | 128 |
| | % within Desc | 39.1% | 60.9% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 15.1% | 14.2% | 14.6% |
| Out of School Suspension | Count | 42 | 44 | 86 |
| | % within Desc | 48.8% | 51.2% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 12.7% | 8.0% | 9.8% |
| Discipline Management Class | Count | 123 | 187 | 310 |
| | % within Desc | 39.7% | 60.3% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 37.2% | 34.1% | 35.3% |
| Detention Hall | Count | 116 | 239 | 355 |
| | % within Desc | 32.7% | 67.3% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 35.0% | 43.6% | 40.4% |
| Total | Count | 331 | 548 | 879 |
| | % within Desc | 37.7% | 62.3% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

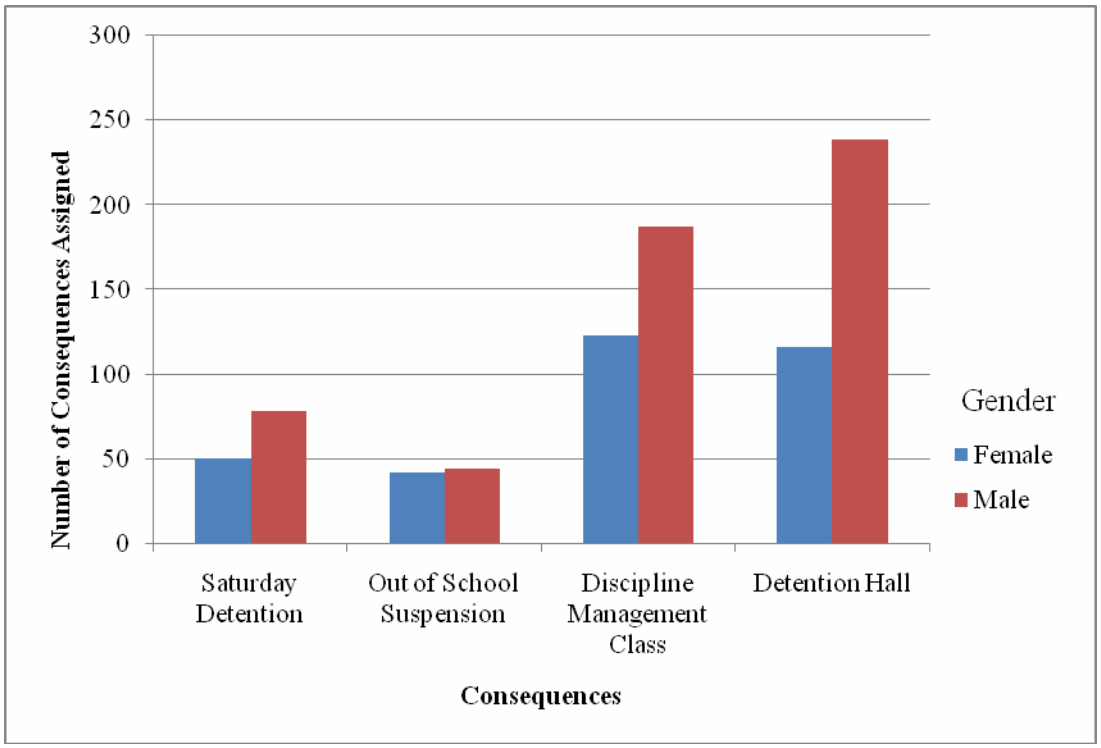


*Figure 4.* Highest consequences assigned to 6th grade students divided by gender.

Table 20 shows the highest discipline consequences assigned to 7th grade students. The highest discipline consequences were used in the comparison of gender and its relationship to discipline consequence for each of the grade levels. A Pearson Chi-Square test determined that there was a significant relationship between gender and discipline consequence for 7th grade students $\chi^2(3, N = 1133) = 28.79, p = .000)$. When disciplinary consequences were issued, males were more likely to receive Out of School Suspension, Discipline Management Class, and Detention Hall, but females were more likely to receive Saturday Detention. When Cramer's V was utilized, the effect size was +.159 which signified that the relationship between gender and discipline consequence was small using the following scale: small = .01, medium = .30, and large = .50 (Pallant,

2007). Figure 5 illustrates the relationship between 7th grade gender and discipline consequence.

Table 20

*Highest Discipline Consequences Assigned to 7th Grade Divided by Gender*

| Consequence | | Gender | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | Total |
| Saturday Detention | Count | 70 | 63 | 133 |
| | % within Desc | 52.6% | 47.4% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 13.6% | 10.2% | 11.7% |
| Out of School Suspension | Count | 32 | 72 | 104 |
| | % within Desc | 30.8% | 69.2% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 6.2% | 11.7% | 9.2% |
| Discipline Management Class | Count | 176 | 271 | 447 |
| | % within Desc | 39.4% | 60.6% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 34.1% | 43.9% | 39.5% |
| Detention Hall | Count | 238 | 211 | 449 |
| | % within Desc | 53.0% | 47.0% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 46.1% | 34.2% | 39.6% |
| Total | Count | 516 | 617 | 1,133 |
| | % within Desc | 45.5% | 54.5% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

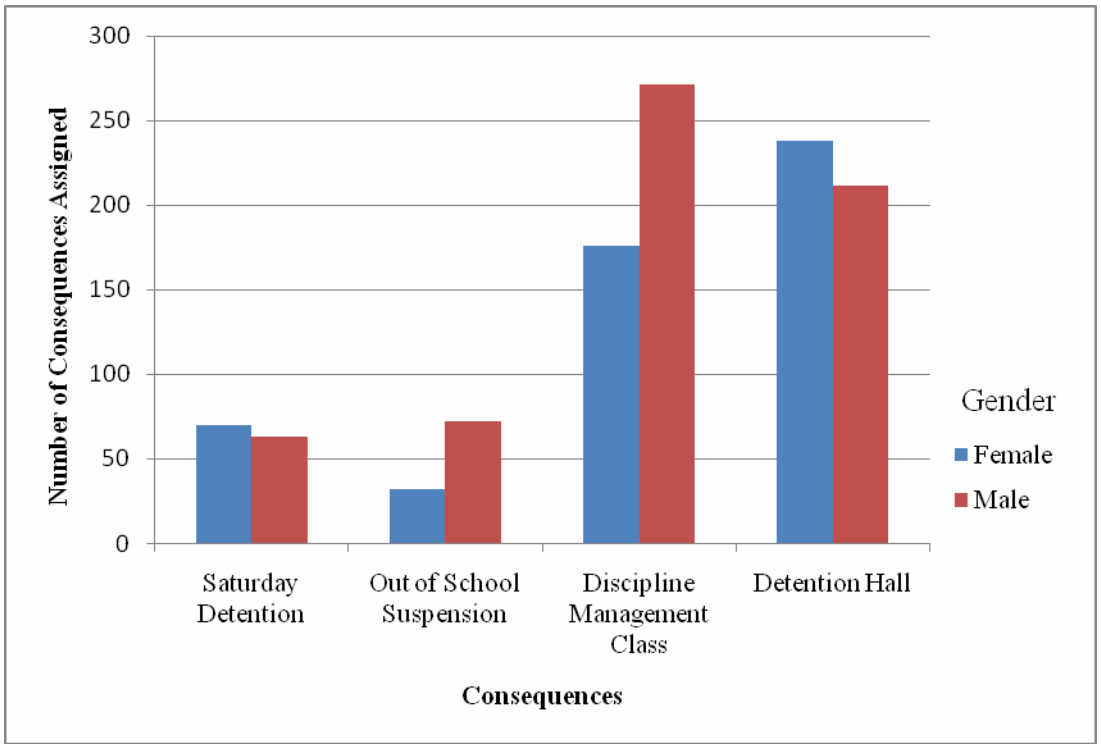


*Figure 5.* Highest consequences assigned to 7th grade students divided by gender.

Table 21 shows the highest discipline consequences assigned to 8th grade students. The highest discipline consequences were used in the comparison of gender and its relationship to discipline consequence for each of the grade levels. A Pearson Chi-Square test determined that there was a significant relationship between gender and discipline consequence for 6th grade students $\chi^2(3, N = 1132) = 8.67$, $p = .034$. Males in 8th grade received higher consequences than females in all areas. When Cramer's V was utilized, the effect size was +.088 which signified that the relationship between gender and discipline consequence was small using the following scale: small = .01, medium = .30, and large = .50 (Pallant, 2007). Figure 5 illustrates the fact that males received more discipline consequences in each of the highest areas.

Table 21

*Highest Discipline Consequences Assigned to 8th Grade Divided by Gender*

| | | Gender | | Total |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | | F | M | |
| Saturday Detention | Count | 40 | 62 | 102 |
| | % within Desc | 39.2% | 60.8% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 10.9% | 8.1% | 9.0% |
| Out of School Suspension | Count | 26 | 92 | 118 |
| | % within Desc | 22.0% | 78.0% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 7.1% | 12.0% | 10.4% |
| Discipline Management Class | Count | 166 | 353 | 519 |
| | % within Desc | 32.0% | 68.0% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 45.2% | 46.1% | 45.8% |
| Detention Hall | Count | 135 | 258 | 393 |
| | % within Desc | 34.4% | 65.6% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 36.8% | 33.7% | 34.7% |
| Total | Count | 367 | 765 | 1132 |
| | % within Desc | 32.4% | 67.6% | 100.0% |
| | % within Gender | 100.0% | 100.0% | 100.0% |

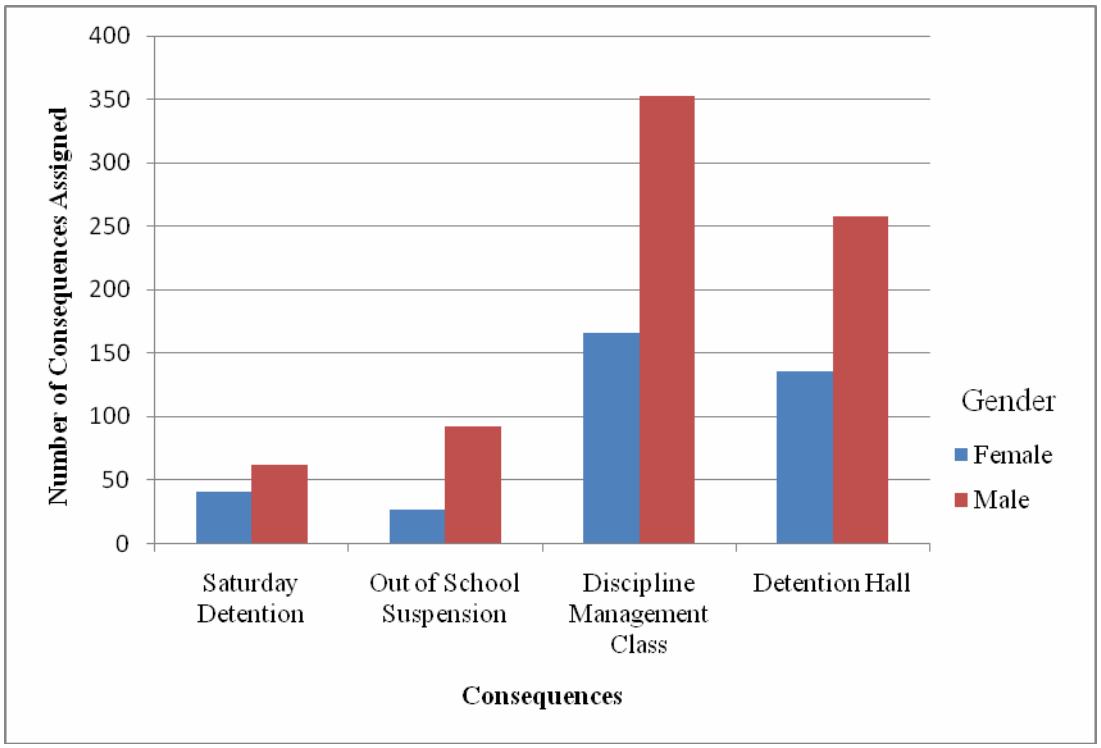


*Figure 6.* Highest consequences assigned to 8th grade students divided by gender.

Table 22 shows the location of discipline incidents. The classroom setting was where the highest amount of discipline incidents occurred, followed by the gym/locker room, and then the hall. Figure 7 is a graphical representation of the discipline incident locations.

Table 22

*Discipline Incident Location Report for Jefferson Middle School 2009-2010*

| Location of Incident | Total Number of Incidents | Percent |
|---|---|---|
| Unknown | 4 | .1 |
| Bus | 78 | 2.3 |
| Classroom | 2950 | 84.3 |
| Commons (Cafeteria) | 54 | 1.5 |
| Campus Grounds | 25 | .7 |
| Gym/Locker Room | 233 | 6.7 |
| Hall | 133 | 3.8 |
| Office Area | 4 | .1 |
| Restroom | 18 | .5 |
| Total | 3,499 | 100 |

***NOTE:** Discipline location numbers differ from total incident number due to possible errors in discipline entry or lack of entry of discipline location for each incident.

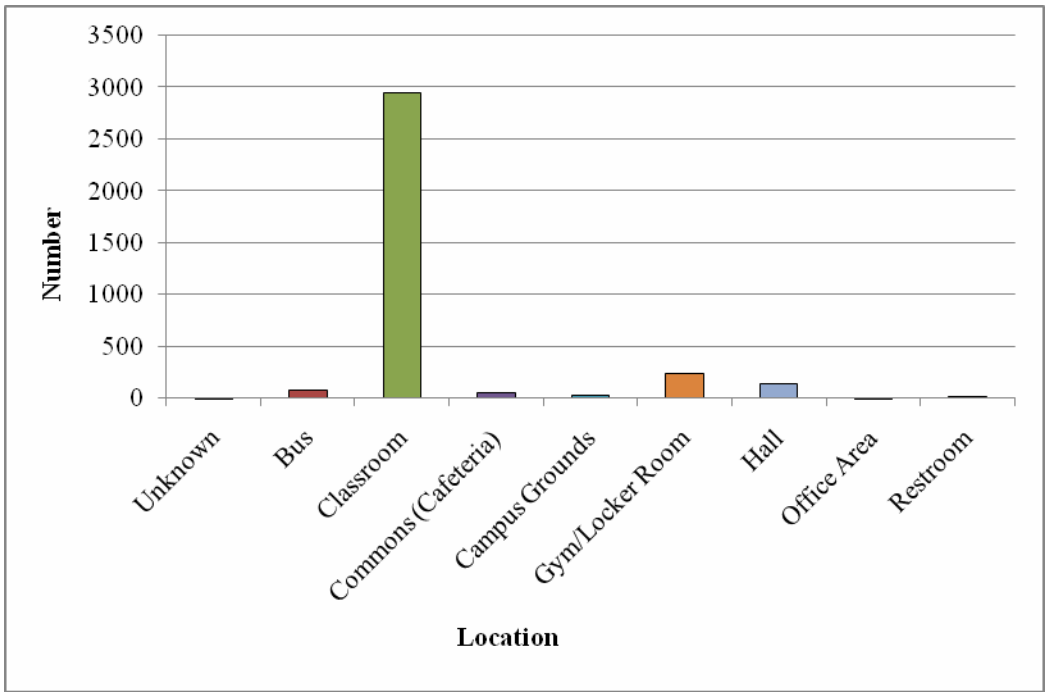


*Figure 7.* Location of discipline incidents.

**Summary of Findings**

The purpose of this study is to determine if office discipline referrals differ significantly by gender and grade level for middle school students, and to determine if a relationship exists between gender, discipline reason, and discipline consequence. After a thorough examination of the data, it can be concluded that there are gender differences in the number of discipline referrals for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade students. Sixth grade males received 63.2 percent of the total number of all office referrals while females received 36.8 percent. Seventh grade males received 55.7 percent of all office referrals while females received 44.3 percent. Eighth grade males received 69.0 percent of all office referrals while females received 31.0 percent. When this number is broken down by ethnicity, black or African American males and Hispanic/Latino males received the

highest amount of office referrals. Hispanic/Latino males received 32.1 percent of all office referrals and black or African American males received 18.9 percent of all office referrals. The next highest ethnic group represented was white males who received 7.4 percent of all office referrals.

When discipline incidents were analyzed across the grade levels, 6th, 7th, and 8th graders were referred to the office for some of the same incidents. Across the grade levels, as stated before, males received more office referrals. In 6th grade, males received higher numbers of office referrals in all areas except for dishonesty, persistent misbehavior, and serious misbehavior. Females represented 2/3 of the referrals for dishonesty. Two females were referred for persistent misbehavior and serious misbehavior, while no males were referred in either of these categories. Sixth grade males and females were each referred 2 times for using, possessing, or being under the influence of marijuana and 5 times each for theft.

When 6th grade consequences were examined, males received more discipline consequences than females. Males received more assignments of Saturday Detention, Discipline Management Class, and Detention Hall, while females received more Alternative Education Placements, Bus Removals, and Lunch Detentions. Sixth grade boys were only suspended two more times than girls. Boys received 44 Out of School Suspensions and girls 42.

Seventh grade females were referred to the office more times than males in several categories. Females were referred more times for dishonesty (cheating, forgery, perjury, lying), marijuana (possession, use of, under the influence), refusal to work, skipping/truancy of class or school, being tardy to class, and for theft. Males were

referred at significantly higher rates for language (refusing), language/gestures, inappropriate physical contact, nuisance behavior, and excessive talking or acting out. Males in 7th grade were only referred four more times than females for fighting. When consequences were examined, males received more consequences than females, but females received more discipline consequences in the areas of Alternative Education Placements, Detention Hall, and PM (afternoon) Discipline Management Class.

When 8th grade coded disciplinary incidents were examined, males overall received more office referrals than females. Males had higher numbers of discipline referrals in all categories except for in two areas. Five females were referred to the office for being in possession of or under the influence of alcohol and one female was referred to the office for a dress code violation while no males were referred for dress code violations. When discipline consequences were analyzed, males received more consequences than females. Females, however, served five days of AM (morning) Discipline Management Class while males served two. Males and females served equal days of Lunch Detention at one day each.

The highest number of discipline infractions was analyzed for all grade levels using a Pearson Chi-Square test of independence. The test determined that for all grade levels, gender and discipline infraction possessed a significant relationship. The discipline incidents that were used for comparison were being tardy (class or campus), skipping/truancy, refusing to work, nuisance behavior, not attending discipline assignment, language/gestures, language (refusing), inappropriate physical contact, and excessive talking or acting out. After the Pearson Chi-Square determined that the

relationship between gender and discipline infraction was significant, a Cramer's V indicated that the effect size for each grade level was small to moderate.

The highest number of discipline consequences was also analyzed for 6th, 7th, and 8th grade using a Pearson Chi-Square test of independence. The test determined that for each grade level, gender and discipline consequence were significantly related. The discipline consequences that were compared were Saturday Detention, Out of School Suspension, Discipline Management Class, and Detention Hall. After the Pearson Chi-Square determined that for each grade level, discipline and consequence were significantly related, a Cramer's V indicated small to moderate effect sizes for each grade level.

When the most serious consequences were examined for all grade levels, the study found that males served more days of suspension than girls. When examining grade levels, the higher the grade, the more days of suspension males served. Females served less days of suspension as the three grade levels were compared. Males in 6th grade served 44 days of suspension, males in 7th grade served 72 days of suspension, and males in 8th grade served 92 days of suspension for a total of 92 days. Females in 6th grade served 42 days of suspension, females in 7th grade served 32 days, and in 8th grade, females served 26 days for a total of 100 days. When Alternative Education Placements were examined, 22 males were placed at a Disciplinary Alternative Education setting, while only 14 females were placed at a Disciplinary Alternative Education setting. These numbers also were higher at each grade level. The only two expulsions to the Juvenile Justice Alternative Education program were both males.

Finally, the study examined the location of discipline incidents at Jefferson Middle School. The data showed that 84.3 percent of all discipline incidents occurred in the classroom. The next highest area where discipline incidents occurred was in the gym or the locker room at 6.7 percent. The hallway accounted for 3.8 percent of all incidents, 2.3 percent of all incidents occurred on the bus, 1.5 percent occurred in the cafeteria, .7 percent on the campus grounds, .5 percent occurred in the restroom, and .1 percent each occurred in the office area or were unknown in location. The location report does not break down the incidents by type of infraction.

## Chapter 5: Conclusions and Recommendations

One of the most significant conclusions that can be drawn from this study is that males are referred to the office and receive more discipline consequences than females. According to the literature, this is a national problem and not just a local problem and is of growing concern. This study is consistent with other studies that have found males receiving more discipline referrals and consequences than girls (Freiberg et al., 1995; Jordan & Anil, 2009). Today, the needs of females are being met in the educational setting, while male students are falling behind. The literature shows that the failure to meet the needs of male students also impacts society as these males often become dropouts, commit suicide, commit homicide, and are highly represented in the penal system. The loss of educated males in society creates a loss of revenue for the nation as well.

This study is consistent with national statistics of suspensions and expulsions. At Jefferson Middle School, 32.5 percent of females were suspended and 67.5 percent of males were suspended. National data from 2006 shows that 9.1 percent of males were suspended versus only 4.5 percent of females, while 3 times the number of males was expelled (Planty et al., 2009). This study found that the two students who were expelled were both males, representing 100 percent of the students who were expelled overall. One other statistic that arises from the study is that 61 percent of the students who were sent to an Alternative Education Placement were males while 39 percent were females.

Schools should be meeting the needs of both males and females and should implement practices that support the success of all students. Males, however, need more

assistance because not only are they falling behind in elementary, middle, and high school, but they are also falling behind in two to four year colleges, graduate, and professional schools. Many schools are not geared toward the unique needs and interests of boys. The literature found that boys do not find teachers or discipline to be as fair as girls and girls report more school engagement (Nichols & Good, 1998; Woolley & Bowen, 2007). This perception would be supported by the data from this study as boys in the study received more discipline and, therefore, missed significantly more days of instruction because they were serving discipline consequences that took them out of the classroom setting.

One recommendation for the school that may help males become more successful in the classroom is to hire more male teachers. Males are underrepresented as classroom teachers in schools, and Jefferson Middle School is no exception. Jefferson has 22 male teachers which account for 25.9 percent of the teaching staff, and 62.9 female teachers which account for 74.1 percent of the teaching staff. This statistic is consistent with the national ratio of male to female teachers. National data shows that 24.1 percent of all teachers are male and 75.9 percent of teachers are female (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2009). Male students may relate more to male teachers because they have commonalities which can influence male students to be successful in the classroom. Often males who play sports have coaches who are male, but they do not experience classroom teachers who are male. Female teachers are likely to enforce behavioral expectations influenced by their gender upon male students. There are female teachers who experience success teaching males, but it would be advantageous for male students

to have more male educators who demonstrate appropriate behavior, establish an effective classroom climate, and serve as role models.

A portion of the study that was inconsistent with the rest of the discipline data findings was that in some areas, females committed more infractions than males. Sixth grade females exhibited higher incidences of misbehavior in the areas of dishonesty, serious misbehavior, and persistent misbehavior. Seventh grade females were referred to the office more times than males for dishonesty (cheating, forgery, perjury, lying), marijuana, refusing to work, skipping class or school, being tardy to class, and for theft. 8th grade females were referred more times for possession or being under the influence of alcohol and for dress code. Females in 6th and 7th grade also received higher amounts of placements at the Alternative Learning Center.

Most of the data for the study consistently supports the fact that males are referred to the office more than females. Since there are a few areas where girls are referred more than boys, the school should examine these anomalies. An examination of girls' rationales behind why they commit these infractions with more frequency than boys would allow the school to understand their perspectives and be able to implement some interventions. The school should create focus groups of 6th and 7th grade girls to discuss these areas of misbehavior. The 7th grade girls had more incidences of misbehavior that were higher than boys, so 7th grade girls' opinions would be especially valuable to a comprehension of the differences in misbehavior. The focus groups of girls can also help to create solutions with the administration and teachers to further prevent or reduce these areas of misbehavior.

One of the ways that any teacher can be successful with all students is to ensure that a safe and relational learning environment is in place to support all students. Students should not feel that they are going to be victims in the classroom of sarcasm or teachers' anger. The literature supports the fact that students learn best when they have a rapport with the teacher. When students, especially boys, experience shame or humiliation in the classroom, they will often act out or disengage from the lesson. Power struggles often emerge between teachers who attempt to control the classroom with punitive measures and students who perceive these teachers to be unfair. Boys are often disciplined for talking back to a teacher, cursing at a teacher, or walking out of the classroom when they are upset. Sometimes these incidents can become violent in nature and students will never become aggressive with teachers who they respect.

Another recommendation for Jefferson Middle School would be to offer staff development opportunities that focus on educating teachers about the unique needs of boys and how to engage them in the classroom. The staff development should focus on fostering success in all students, but the differences in development and learning between boys and girls should be explored. Educators should also engage in educational discourse and examine their perceptions of boys. The teachers should be aware of gender in the classroom and they should explore their perceptions of gender so that preconceived notions or gender stereotypes do not hinder the educational setting. The literature shows that often students are not allowed to explore alternatives other than what is expected for them based on their gender. All students should have options as to what ideas they explore or assignments they choose rather than being pinned down by gendered assumptions.

Jefferson middle school has already implemented some campus-based interventions due to their concern over discipline numbers in the years prior to 2009-2010. The school-wide program that is already in place consists of setting uniform behavioral expectations for students as well as for the adults. The staff developed these expectations and they continue to be modified as needed. These expectations are posted throughout the school and in each teacher's classroom. These expectations are reviewed with students during the advisory period and one of the roles of staff members is to model the expectations consistently. A committee of staff members meets once per month to review discipline data, discuss concerns, and develop solutions. The committee members include administrators, teachers, and paraprofessionals, but the monthly meetings are open to any staff member who wishes to attend.

The committee consists of staff members, but one recommendation would be to create a student committee that meets regularly to discuss concerns in the school as well as provides input into the universal expectations and disciplinary concerns. Research shows that students feel more of a sense of connectedness to school if they are allowed to have input and involvement in the creation of policies and procedures both inside and outside of the classroom (Whitlock, 2006). By creating a student committee, the students would feel that they too, have a voice in decisions being made at their school and there would be more buy-in to the establishment of the expectations. The student committee should also meet regularly with the staff committee so that they can collaborate on ideas as well as decisions.

Another recommendation for the school would be to assess the school and classroom climate. Freiberg and Stein state that, "continuous improvement requires

continuous information about the learner and learning environment" (1999, p. 24). The climate should be measured throughout the following school years so effective improvement can occur. Change is always a guarantee, and the school climate changes constantly, so areas of effectiveness and ineffectiveness should be addressed in order for interventions to be implemented. The students, staff, and administration should be surveyed using a tested school climate instrument designed for secondary schools in order to gather valuable data about their perceptions of the school climate. The students play an integral part in the school climate analysis because their perceptions of school climate are directly tied to their satisfaction with school. Students and staff members should collaborate on methods of improving school climate. When students are involved in the discussion about their school, they have more buy-in to decisions, thus impacting their sense of school connectedness and ultimately their achievement and success in a positive way (Noguera, 2008; McNeely, Nonnemaker, & Blum, 2002).

According to the data from Jefferson middle school, 84% of all discipline incidents occur in the classroom. This percentage is significant because over three-fourths of all incidents in Jefferson middle school are occurring within the classroom where students should be engaged in their learning. This percentage is also significant and a surprise as many studies show that the majority of discipline incidents occur outside of the classroom This percentage is also significant because it indicates that teachers are spending portions of their class time referring students to the office that causes students to lose valuable instructional time (Freiberg & Stein, 1999). The students who are subject to the discipline for these referrals are also missing instructional time when they are sent out of class, called to the office by an administrator, spend time in the

Discipline Management Class, or serve days of suspension. The teachers who are writing the majority of the referrals should examine their classroom structure and management in order to create a setting that is conducive to learning and reducing the amount of referrals to the office. The classroom portion of the "Classroom and School Climate Survey for Secondary School Teachers" (Freiberg, H.J., 2003) may provide valuable feedback to the teachers about their classroom environment.

Another important fact that arises out of the study of Jefferson middle school's data is that 7 percent of the teachers are beginning teachers and 50.6 percent of the teachers have between 1 and 5 years of experience. The rest of the data breaks down to show that 12.9 percent of the teachers have 6-10 years of experience, 18 percent have 11-20 years of experience, and 11.4 percent have 20 or more years of experience. The teachers with 5 or less years of experience do not have as many strategies in their teaching repertoire as the teachers who have been teaching for more years, and this could impact their classroom management. These teachers should collaborate with other teachers in order to learn more instructional strategies to implement in their classrooms. According to Freiberg and Driscoll (2005), "collaboration among teachers has become the most effective approach for reflection and professional growth" (p. 5). The teachers with more years of experience can also learn from the teachers with less experience, so the process can impact student learning in both the veteran teachers' classroom as well as the more inexperienced teachers' classroom. When the teachers are utilizing effective strategies to engage students in the classroom,fewer students are referred to the office.

Multiple referrals often signify a greater concern in whichthe classroom environment may not be conducive to student success. Successful educators have to

work diligently to create an effective learning environment. The teachers in the school are often seen exercising punitive means of control that do not take into account unique differences of students or examine the cause of a students' misbehavior (Freiberg et al., 1995). The teachers who exercise this type of punitive control are using zero tolerance policies in the classroom because they punish for any infraction of a rule, regardless of the circumstances. Brophy (2001) states that "effective classroom management goes hand in hand with effective instruction and that it primarily involves teaching willing students what to do before the fact rather than applying 'discipline' following misconduct" (p. 236). Students' sense of belonging is tied to their feeling of inclusion in the classroom environment. If they feel a sense of community and interest in what is being taught, then they are more likely to be engaged in their learning (Anderman, 2006). The students' relationship with the teacher is also paramount to his or her success in the classroom, and through this relationship, the teacher is able to significantly influence the students in the classroom (Day & van Veen, 1999; Martin, 2003).

The teachers at Jefferson middle school should be working diligently to create relational and engaging environments in their classrooms. The number of students being referred to the office from the classroom suggests that multiple classroom environments are ones where the teacher utilizes external control and creates a punitive management system. Students learn valuable skills in school that they carry with them as successful adults. Self-guidance is a valuable skill that students learn in effective classrooms (Brophy, 2001) and in order to promote this, teachers should take into account students' needs and incorporate their input. Feedback from fellow teachers, coaches, and appraisers should also be taken into consideration by the teachers when examining their

classroom structure and management style. If the students are valued and respected by the teacher, then they are more likely to feel satisfied with school and contribute to the development of a positive school climate.

Zero tolerance and unequal discipline are also factors that keep boys from achieving success in school and in society. Assistant principals should frequently analyze data to ensure that consequences are being meted out fairly between boys and girls. Suspension and discipline management class at Jefferson middle school was used as a disciplinary consequence at a higher rate for boys. The assistant principals should meet as a team and engage in discourse as they analyze the data so that they can exercise consistency. They should also work with teachers who are referring high numbers of male students to the office so that they are aware of this fact. These teachers should be referred to their supervisor so that they can look at the data and work toward utilizing management strategies that keep boys from being referred so often. The assistant principals should analyze each case where a zero tolerance policy could be used for disciplinary action and determine whether mitigating factors would allow the student leniency in the situation.

Finally, errors were found when the data was studied. There was also some inconsistency with coding of discipline reasons and consequences. The assistant principals should look at the inconsistencies in the coding of reasons and consequences and have open dialogue about how they code each incident and consequence. Throughout the year, the assistant principals should discuss coding of consequences and reasons in order to maintain consistency. The secretaries who enter the data, should also be included in discussions of coding of reasons and consequences so that they can enter

the codes correctly once the discipline referrals are turned in to the office by the assistant principals. Once the data is entered, it is sent back to the campus before it is reported into PEIMS by the district. The secretaries should double check the data entry forms that are sent back and the assistant principals should also check the entries for errors before the reports are finalized.

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# APPENDIX A: CPHS APPROVAL

UNIVERSITY of HOUSTON

COMMITTEES FOR THE PROTECTION OF HUMAN SUBJECTS

November 4, 2010

Ms. Kristine Stephenson
c/o Dr. H. Jerome Freiberg
Curriculum and Instruction

Dear Ms. Stephenson:

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "Middle School Office Referrals by Gender and Grade Level" was conducted on November 1, 2010.

In accordance with institutional guidelines, your project is exempt under **category 4.**

As long as you continue using procedures described in this project, you do not have to reapply for review.* Any modification of this approved protocol will require review and approval by the Committee.

If you have any questions, please contact Alicia Vargas at (713) 743-9215.

Sincerely yours,

Enrique Valdez, Jr.
Director, Research Compliance

*Approvals for exempt protocols will be valid for 5 years beyond the approval date. Approval for this project will expire **October 1, 2015**. If the project is completed prior to this date, a final report should be filed to close the protocol. If the project will continue after this date, you will need to reapply for approval if you wish to avoid an interruption of your data collection.

Protocol Number: 11095-EX

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