EXCLUSIONARY DISCIPLINE PLACEMENTS

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

Lisa S. Meeks

Houston, Texas

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my best friend who I was lucky to marry, Dr. Evan Meeks.

Thanks for the many times you supported and encouraged me to work on this research

study rather than do what I really wanted to do, spend time with you. Because of your

belief in me, we are finally "even".

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"Never place a period where God had placed a comma." -Gracie Allen

Though only my name appears on the cover of this dissertation, so many others helped me through this process place a *comma* when I wanted to place a *period*. Thanks to all of you who helped make this experience possible. Because of each of you, but most of all the Man upstairs, it is time to place a *period* at the end of this *chapter*.

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And to the students who continue to receive exclusionary discipline placements…

It is my personal, not necessarily professional, belief that if you all had received half as great an upbringing as I did, you would not be in such a predicament. However, I strongly believe, both personally and professionally, that with intrinsic drive from you and with the help of further research, a better way to change student behavior does exist. Even though this research is complete, it is my heart's desire to continue to strive to help find that solution.

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And the man who holds my hand…when I need it most…

Evan, tears of joy and thankfulness roll down my cheeks as I type this. I am thankful that God blessed me by making you my best friend, confidant, personal comedian, and most of all, husband. Anyone who really knows me, knows how wonderful you are simply by the fact that you put up with me, all while making me truly happy. Throughout this process, you knew when to let me cry, make me laugh, get me out of the office, or simply give me alone time; I never would have been able to finish this dissertation without you. How you unwaveringly trust me and my decisions is an absolute gift. Your belief in me made it possible for us to be, Dr. and Dr. Meeks, but believe me when I say I take much more pride and honor in being, Mrs. Evan Meeks. I love you, Babycakes

And, lastly, to the author of this dissertation…

DONE…in Red-Bottomed Heels!

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ABSTRACT

School discipline has been and is still an issue in schools. Today, in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, alternative disciplinary placement, and expulsion are the most commonly used disciplinary consequences for student misbehaviors (Allman & Slate, 2010). Researchers (e.g., Evanson, Justinger, Pelischek, & Shulz, 2009; Rodney, Crafter, Rodney, & Mupier, 1999; Smith, 2005) have concluded that excluding students from the learning environment may be harmful to their academic achievement.

In this quantitative research, data from a large suburban Texas school district, with an emphasis on a freshmen class of 539 students, were analyzed to determine the extent to which student demographic variables and school-related variables could predict student receipt of in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or any disciplinary consequence. Through use of Ordinary Least Squares Regression (OLS) using a backward elimination technique procedures, statistically significant regression models were revealed. One variable, number of discipline referrals, was present in all of the statistically significant results. Each time, number of discipline referrals constituted the variable with the highest degree of importance in the regression equation. Similarly, in each analysis, number of discipline referrals from school had the strongest relationship with the dependent variable (i.e., days spent in in-school suspension, days spent in out-of-school suspension, and days spent in any disciplinary consequence). Students who received discipline referrals more often were more likely to experience significantly more days in in-school suspension, in out-of-school suspension, and in any disciplinary

consequence than were students who received less or no discipline referrals. Absence from school was statistically significant in four of the six regressions. Students who were absent more often were more likely to receive OSS and any disciplinary consequence. The variable of meeting the TAKS Math standard was a statistically significant predictor in one of the statistically significant results. Students who failed to meet the TAKS Math standard were more likely to experience significantly more days in in-school suspension than were students who met the TAKS Math standard. Other variables that appeared in at least one statistically significant analysis were enrollment in special education, failing to met the TAKS Reading standard, and gender. These variables were identified as being much less important than were the variables of number of discipline referrals, school absences, and meeting the TAKS Math standard.

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Chapter I

Introduction

The 1960s were viewed as a time of rebellion: Civil rights movement, the
Vietnam protest, and the women's movement corresponded with a time of youth
rebellion (Adams, 2000). One-room schoolhouse practices no longer were effective with
the free-spirited youth (Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994). Flourishing public education
facilities, increased enrollment, and student rebellion meant new discipline guidelines
needed to be developed and implemented (Adams, 2000; Reigeluth & Garfinkle, 1994).
Various court cases helped shift disciplinary techniques, especially to replace corporal
punishment (Adams, 2000; *Goss v. Lopez*, 1975; *Wood v. Strickland*, 1975). Changes in
the administration of corporal punishment are one of many modifications in education
over the past decades (Adams, 2000; Fenning & Bohanon-Edmonson, 2006; Greenberg,
1999).

As a result, school discipline had many changes in the 1970s (Adams, 2000).
Congress mandated the Safe School Study to deal with concerns about violence,
disruption, and vandalism (Fenning & Bohanon-Edmonson, 2006; National School
Resource Network [NSRN], 1980). The National School Resource Network (NSRN)
(1980) conducted the Safe School Study. Highlighted in the study were the frequency of
crime in elementary and secondary schools. Alleged to help schools lessen the crimes,
NSRN shared solutions that had been successful in schools. Researchers for NSRN
(1980) concluded that violence had decreased from previous years, nevertheless concerns
about crime remained. *Codes of conduct*, recommended by the NSRN (1980), were

created to ensure consistent and clear rules. The NSRN (1980) created a handbook to communicate discipline policies and procedures (Fenning & Bohanon-Edmonson, 2006).

Codes were designed to define a school's disciplinary philosophy. These codes were intended to define expected behavior and to provide clear consequences for infractions (Gushee, 1984). Discipline codes were also meant to highlight student and staff responsibilities and rights, so mutual respect would be apparent in schools (Fenning & Bohanon-Edmonson, 2006).

Such changes in school discipline also brought changes to alternative discipline programs (Fitzpatrick, Sanders, & Worthen, 2004; Lange & Sletten, 2002). Alternative settings in public education have existed since the beginning of American education. Teachers have sent disruptive students out of the room; however, a designated area was not provided for these students. When President Johnson's Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965 focused the emphasis of excellence with the humanistic goal of equity, discipline alternative settings were defined (Lange & Sletten, 2002). Educational settings have differed according to race, gender, and social class, but starting in the 1960s, alternative settings for discipline became a norm (Lange & Sletten, 2002).

In this overview, the problem statement, purpose of the study, and method of the study will be examined. The 13 variables along with the discipline options that will be examined in the study will be identified later in the Methodology section of this study. The purpose of the study is to determine the extent to which relationships are present among demographic and school-related variables and student placements in various disciplinary settings. It would be beneficial for educators to be aware of such relationships before an infraction occurs, particularly if the relationships are predictive in

nature. As such, this information could help schools to be proactive in facilitating the success of discipline-prone students.

Problem Statement

More than 40 years after the passage of the Elementary and Secondary School Act, discipline is still an issue in schools. The Phi Delta Kappa / Gallup Public Opinion Poll has surveyed the public for the past 39 years, asking them to identify the biggest problems in public schools (Rose & Gallup, 2007). Throughout four decades, discipline has been perceived by the public as one of the top problems in American public schools. One belief is that school administrators hold back from disciplining to the fullest-extent for fear of potential parent repercussion (Bennett, 1999). Another concern is the high-stake accountability ratings cause schools to compromise consequences rather than taking a "hit" on an accountability indicator (Texas Education Agency, 2006).

Through that time new disciplinary actions have been created. Today, in-school suspension (ISS), out-of-school suspension (OSS), alternative exclusionary discipline program (DAEP), and expulsion are the most common used disciplinary consequences for student misconduct (Allman & Slate, 2011). Expulsion, in the case of this study, refers to a student being sent to juvenile justice alternative program (JJAEP), and is the last resort for school discipline. All of these forms of discipline exclude students from their scheduled learning day.

In a recent study conducted in Texas, nearly one million students' discipline data for six consecutive years was analyzed. All secondary public schools were included in the investigation, and within all of the students' secondary school years, 54% received ISS, 31% received OSS, 15% were assigned to DAEP, and 8% were sent to JJAEP.

Thought these percentages may be regarded as being high, the most alarming factor is that from all of these placements, only 3% were mandatory placements, meaning, the state law mandated suspensions or expulsions for specific conduct. This fact means 97% of these placements were at the discretion of school officials (Fabelo, Thompson, Plotkin, Carmichael, Marchbanks, & Booth, 2011).

Researchers (e.g., Association of Supervision and Curriculum Development [ASCD], 2007; Luiselli, Putnam, Handler, & Feinberg, 2005) have suggested that for students to be successful, they need emotional, physical, and ethical support along with a chance to be creative while cognitively developing. However, not all student needs can possibly be met while being confined to a specific area. Can students who are removed from their regular learning environment, succeed to full potential? Little research has been dedicated to studying the effects, if any, of removing students from their assigned classroom(s) setting(s).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to determine the extent to which relationships are present between student demographic characteristics and school-related characteristics and assignment to exclusionary discipline placements. It is important for educators to examine specific indicators that may be predictive of students being likely to become discipline issues. Student variables included in this study are: (a) gender, (b) being overage, (c) TAKS Reading met standard, (d) TAKS Math met standard, (e) economically disadvantaged, (f) ethnicity, (g) Limited English Proficient, (h) special education enrollment, (i) gifted/talented, (j) at risk, (k) absences, (l) number of discipline referrals, and (m) prior exclusionary discipline placement.

The No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 required a safe environment at all schools (U.S. Government, 2001). Part of the act mandates that all states receiving federal funds report safety data, and each state must identify dangerous schools (Public Law 107-110, 2001; U.S. Government, 2001). This regulation has caused school districts to generate reporting systems for documenting and archiving student discipline data (Skiba, Peterson, & Williams, 1997). Now, 10 years later, data on discipline can be used to help predict students at risk of receiving school discipline.

If certain variables can be delineated that permit predictions of students who are likely to misbehave, exclusionary discipline can possibly be prevented or, at least, placements can be made to minimize negative effects on student learning and development. Researchers (e.g., Dupper & Bosch, 1996; Kaufman, 2001) have concluded that excluding students from the learning environment may be harmful to their academic achievement. Other researchers have documented the presence of relationships between race and gender and disciplinary placements (Andrews, Taylor, Gunter, & Slate, 2001; Ehrenberg, Goldhaber, & Brewer, 1995; McFadden & Marsh, 1992; NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 2005; Skiba, Michael, Nardo, & Peterson, 2002). Researchers (e.g., Cooley, 1995; Fabelo et al., 2001; Fowler & Rose, 2011; Katsiyannis & Maag, 1998) have also highlighted that special education students are disciplined at a higher rate than their non-special education peers. In this study, the researcher will present results of an examination of the relationships between disciplinary consequences and student demographic variables and school-related variables among freshmen students enrolled in a Texas public suburban high school.

Research Questions

The research questions addressed in the study focused on the critical areas described above including:

1. Which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict exclusionary discipline consequences?

   a. Which student variables best predict the exclusionary discipline consequence of in-school suspension?

   b. Which student variables best predict the exclusionary discipline consequence of out-of-school suspension?

   c. Which student variables best predict student receipt of any exclusionary discipline consequence?

2. For students who received an in-school suspension disciplinary consequence, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days spent in ISS?

3. For students who received an out-of-school suspension, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient,

special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days in OSS?

4. For students who received any exclusionary discipline consequence, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days in exclusionary discipline consequences?

Method

An Ordinary Least Squares Regression (OLS) using a backward elimination technique analysis non-experimental design was used for this study because many variables were analyzed. The focus was on the relationship between disciplinary placements and each of 13 independent variables. More specifically, the analysis indicated the extent to which the typical value of disciplinary placements changes when any one of the independent variables is varied, while the other independent variables are held fixed. The four settings of exclusionary discipline were ISS, OSS, DAEP, and expulsion. For this study, students expelled are sent to JJAEP.

Initially a correlational analysis was used to determine the relationship(s), if any, between the variables and exclusionary discipline placements. Then, an Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination technique analysis was used to examine different factors that influence the likelihood of student exclusionary discipline.

Backward elimination analyses begin with all variables and tests them one by one for statistical significance. Any variable that was not statistically significant was deleted.

Participants in this study were high school ninth grade students enrolled in a high school in a suburban district located in Southeast Texas, during the 2010-2011 school year. This studied district is currently an accredited, "Recognized" district, however, it was an "Exemplary" district during the 2010-2011 school year. The average district enrollment is 13,000 high school students per school year. The school is an accredited, Academically Acceptable 4-A high school with a total of 1,686 students.

Data on the 13 variables were collected from Public Education Information Management (PEIMS) and the Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS). Results from the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) test, administered yearly to all students who are enrolled in a high school in the state of Texas, are documented in the AEIS report. Discipline consequences students received throughout the year are reported on PEIMS report.

<div align="center">**Significance of the Study**</div>

Through this investigation, relationships between out-of-classroom disciplinary placements and the 13 independent variables previously delineated were determined. Educators need to understand these relationships better to evaluate discipline consequences, especially school exclusion discipline placements. Unfortunately, little research on the effectiveness of exclusionary discipline consequences is available. This study may help educators to understand better variables that predict student misbehavior. Through determining these variables, interventions could be developed to reduce the assignment of disciplinary consequences. Results of this investigation will provide

information concerning relationships of variables with exclusionary discipline placement, as well as their relative degree of importance. Moreover, statistical results provide information concerning the extent to which variables were predictive of student assignment to exclusionary discipline placement. This information could help districts proactively target predictive variables before the infraction and discipline occurs, therefore, reducing discipline infractions. Reduction in disciplinary incidents could not only improve student achievement, but also could enhance the overall school experience for students, teachers, administrators, parents and the school community.

Definition of Terms

Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS)

The AEIS contains a wide range of data on the performance of students, schools, and districts compiled annually by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The information in this annual database includes school and district accountability rating.

Disciplinary Alternative Education Program (DAEP)

This term refers to a district-determined alternative instructional program for students who are removed from their regular classes for discretionary or mandatory disciplinary reasons. Students in this study who are placed in DAEP are bused to an alternative school.

Economically Disadvantaged (Eco Dis)

Students who are eligible for free or reduced-price lunch based on family income limits constitute the sample of students who are designated as economically disadvantaged in this study. Information regarding economically disadvantaged is present in the AEIS.

Exclusionary Discipline Placement

Students placed in a setting outside of their designated scheduled classrooms as a disciplinary consequence of inappropriate behavior have received an exclusionary discipline placement.

In-School Suspension (ISS)

This term refers to students who are placed in this on-campus program for discipline. This placement is short term in nature, with the longest consecutive placement being five days. Students receive class work from their teachers to be completed in the secluded classroom.

Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program (JJAEP)

This phrase refers to an alternative education program for students who are expelled from school. Students in this study who are sent to JJAEP report to an alternative campus.

Out-of-School Suspension (OSS)

Students are suspended from school and are not allowed to be on any district property during the suspended time when they receive an OSS. The longest consecutive placement is three days for out-of-school suspension.

Overage

A student whose age on September 1 is two or more years over the grade level plus five years is regarded as being overage. For example, a ninth grade student who is 16 on September 1st of his/her freshman year would be considered overage (i.e., 9 (the grade) + 5 = 14.) The student's age is 16, which is two years over the grade plus 5.

Public Education Information Management System (PEIMS)

All data, from student demographic and academic performance to personnel, financial, and organizational information, requested and received by the Texas Education Agency are present in this database. These PEIMS data are used to compile AEIS reports.

Referral

A school staff member may create a referral to the school's administrative office for a student due to a discipline issue.

Chapter II

Review of Literature

Discipline has been, and will continue to be, a factor in education. Defiant students affect themselves, other students, and educators (Barth, 2004; Berliner, 1990; Kohn, 2004; Maeroff, 1998; Skiba & Peterson, 2000). Effective school discipline is a necessary for successful learning to take place (Faircloth, 2005; Holliday, 2005; Ruder, 2006; Sze, 2005). How can a teacher educate a classroom disturbed by discipline problems? How can a student truly develop if he is constrained by classroom discipline procedures? Procedures, policies, and even laws have been put in place in hopes to create better school discipline practices and systems. This literature review of school discipline is divided into six sections: (a) Historical Overview, (b) *Zero-tolerance*/Current practices, (c) Exclusionary Discipline, (d) Detrimental Effects of Exclusionary Discipline, (e) Pupil Control Ideologies, and (f) Ninth Grade.

First, an overview is provided of the history of discipline cases that helped mold current discipline procedures and practices. Then *zero tolerance* is reviewed because that has been an important topic in more recent decades, and current practices are analyzed to understand better the process of receiving school discipline. Next, exclusionary discipline and the detrimental effects of exclusionary discipline were reviewed in detail to help the reader understand the need for this study. Lastly, the data used for this research were from 9th grade students, thus it is important to examine the research literature covering the first year of high school.

Historical Overview on School Discipline

Court cases have helped schools learn to focus on the big picture when dealing with discipline. Sometimes discipline is needed to punish, deter others, or to make a point. Unfortunately, it is easy to lose sight of the main reason for school discipline, which is to help a student become the best he or she can be. Cases in court have helped schools to focus on what is best for each individual student. Schools have learned to move from what is equal to what is equity.

Goss v. Lopez (1975) and *Wood v. Strickland* (1975) raised questions regarding student discipline and the rights of students. In the *Goss v. Lopez* case students pressed charges against the school district for not allowing their rights to due process upon being suspended. The Supreme Court ruled in favor of the students because the school denied due process guaranteed by law through the Fourteenth Amendment (*Goss v. Lopez*, 1975). The *Wood v. Strickland* (1975) case dealt with students not receiving due process after being expelled for alcohol possession. The Court ruled with the students (*Wood v. Strickland*, 1975).

Goss and *Wood* 's court decisions changed student discipline (Adams, 2000). Documentation that due process had been honored would have to be put in place and school districts had to be cautious of greater public scrutiny (Children's Defense Fund, 1975). Many school policies were developed and implemented and the federal government required districts to create *codes of conduct*. Schools had to create new means of dealing with disruptive students. In-school suspension was one of the responses to growing litigations (Adams, 2000; Fenning & Bohanon-Edmonson, 2006; Gushee, 1984).

The focus on discipline also caused changes in discipline procedures and rights for students with disabilities. *Honig v. Doe* (1988) restated that disciplinary actions removing a student from the classroom could not occur for a student with a disability without proper due process proceedings. Furthermore, Public Law 94-142, better known as the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA), detailed procedural safeguards for students with disabilities (Zantal-Wiener, 1988).

Zero-Tolerance/Current Policies

More than 20 years after the landmark cases described above, publicized school violence caused discipline to transform from more humane methods to *zero tolerance* (Adams, 2000; Sughrue, 2003). Such approaches were considered to be any policies that predetermined consequences for specific punishable offenses. *Zero tolerance* consists of two major parts: punishment and detection. Detection involves surveillance, which ranges from hall monitors to metal detectors and locker searches. Some researchers view this style of supervision as prisonlike (Greenberg, 1999; Koch, 2000; Yang, 2009). However, other researchers (e.g., Hylton, 1996) view detection as proactive. Punishment, the other dimension, is determined before the offense takes place. *Codes of conduct* are developed at state and district level to determine consequences for specific disciplinary infractions. For instance, the consequence is predetermined as to what happens to a student who is engaged in an altercation (Adams, 2000; Theriot, Craun, & Dupper, 2010). The idea was to use the stringent disciplinary movement as a deterrent to violent occurrences.

The Gun-Free School Act of 1994 (GFSA) was one way to enforce *zero-tolerance* policies. One aspect of the act was that GFSA mandated that a student who brought a

firearm to school be expelled for a minimum of one year (Gun-Free Schools Act of 1994). Schools receiving federal funds had no choice but to comply. More recent amendments added to the GFSA any instruments that could be used as a weapon. The percentage of students who reported carrying a weapon on school property declined from 12% in 1993 to 6% in 2007 (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009). However, The Hamilton Fish Institute (2006) argued that a large discrepancy exists between what principals report and the actual number of guns brought on campus. School districts have also expanded *zero-tolerance* policies to include noncriminal offenses such as disruption, fighting, and alcohol (Dupper & Bosch, 1996; Imich, 1994; Skiba & Knesting, 2001). Between 1993 and 2007, the percentage of students who reported having been in a fight on school property declined from 16% to 12% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2009).

An abundant amount of attention has been given to this one-size-fits-all solution (Adams, 2000; Greenberg, 1999; Skiba & Knesting, 2001; Theriot et al., 2010). The largest debate is focused on the implementation of the policies. For instance, recognizing major and minor incidents as severe may cause cloudiness regarding dangerous incidents that require further punishments (Morgan-D' Atrio, Northrup, LaFleur, & Spera, 1996; Skiba & Knesting, 2001). In response to the policy concerns, Congress established George Washington University's Hamilton Fish Institute in 1997 to investigate effective safe school strategies (Hamilton Fish Institute, 2006). Researchers at the institute do not support the one-size-fits-all discipline; they stated *zero tolerance* is ineffective, even for gun control (Hamilton Fish Institute, 2006).

One major concern among researchers and educators is that *zero tolerance* is applied unjustly to minorities (Gregory & Mosely, 2004; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; The Civil Rights Project, 2000; Verdugo, 2002). Researchers (e.g., Gregory & Mosely, 2004; Morrison & D'Incau, 1997; Skiba & Peterson, 2000; The Civil Rights Project, 2000; Velez, 1989; Verdugo, 2002; Williams, 1989; Yang, 2009) have realized that African-American and Hispanic students seem to be the most affected by *zero tolerance*. African-American males are more than twice as likely to be suspended as White males (Gregory, Skiba, & Noguera, 2010; Hinojosa, 2008). Rather than investigating school bias or community violence, individual students' behavior and disengagement are targeted as the reasons for some groups' disproportion in suspension and expulsion (Gregory& Mosely, 2004; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002; Townsend, 2000).

The concern with minorities along with special education students and *zero-tolerance* is a common concern that has been studied by multiple researchers. The link between dropout, suspension, and expulsion rate and disproportionate rates of referrals for minority and special education students is currently a topic of interest in educational research (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Krezmien, Leone, & Achilles, 2006; Morris, 2005; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002; Skiba & Knesting, 2001; Wald & Losen, 2003).

The adoption of *zero tolerance* had coincided with a national increase of school suspensions. The suspension rate nationally increased from 1.7 million students in 1974 to 3.3 million students in 2006. The percent of all students suspended throughout those years increased from 3.7% to 6.8% (Fabelo et al, 2011). Recently, researchers (e.g.,

Fabelo et al., 2011; Smith & Auber, 2011) have recommended that Texas school districts need to reform the state's *zero tolerance* laws.

The Texas legislature established a statewide legal framework in 1995 that was for all public schools. The framework, Chapter 37 of the Education Code, is still in place today. Specified in the Code are two variations of disciplinary consequences: discretionary and mandatory. Mandatory and discretionary offenses are listed in Chapter 37. Mandatory offenses are serious felony offenses that require mandatory removal of the student from school. Discretionary offenses are usually misdemeanor offenses or felony offenses committed outside of the school day. In these cases, schools have the discretion to remove a student from school (Texas Education Agency, 2010). The higher the seriousness of the violation, the fewer discipline options the administrator has. Chapter 37 also requires the district to adopt its own *code of conduct* to provide guidance to all stakeholders in how a discipline matter should be handled (Fabelo et al., 2001). The interpretation of these codes by teachers and administrators is the determining factor. Nonetheless, both the state and district codes have attributes of *zero tolerance*. It is believed that the state needs a new model for school discipline so officials have more discretion when disciplining *zero tolerance* incidents (Fabelo et al., 2001; Smith & Auber, 2011).

Under the current model of discipline in Texas, about six in 10 public school students are suspended or expelled during their secondary school years (Fabelo et al., 2001). In a recent study using data from all Texas public secondary schools, 54% of students received ISS, 31% experienced OSS, 15% were assigned to DAEP, and 8% were

sent to JJAEP. Of all of these placements, only 3% were mandatory placements (Fabelo et al., 2011).

Exclusionary Discipline

A majority of school districts use office referrals to report a discipline incident (Skiba et al., 1997; Yang, 2009). Commonly, discipline issues derive in the classroom (Crosnoe, Johnson, & Elder, 2004; Skiba & Peterson, 1999). High school teachers vary in classroom rules, tolerance, and the number of referrals to the office submitted (Gregory & Weinstein, 2008; Sartori, Bauske, & Lunenburg, 2000). Once the referral reaches the office, the campus administrator then decides what the appropriate consequence will be for the student (Day & Leithwood, 2007; Kralevich, Slate, Tejeda-Delgado, & Kelsey, 2010). Punishment for referrals could include but are not limited to the following: a warning, after-school detention, ISS, OSS, alternative school placement, and expulsion. Skiba, Michael, Nardo, and Peterson (2002) discovered that the majority of administrative consequences are guided by the school board policy that is commonly located in the school district's code of conduct. In-school suspension, OSS, DAEP, and JJAEP assignments must all be reported to PEIMS.

In-school suspension. A student reports to a designated ISS classroom from one class period to several days. Chapter 37 in the State Code of Conduct does not define ISS requirements. In-school suspension became a popular intervention during the late 1970s and early 1980s (Adams, 2000; Allman & Slate, 2011). Child advocacy groups fought for schools to develop humane methods for disciplining students. In-school suspension was a way to humanely discipline students while keeping them in school. Incorrigible students would be isolated from the rest of the school and placed in a classroom, keeping

them from losing valuable instruction (Adams, 2000). In theory, ISS could fix many discipline problems, but in practice it was not the solution it was expected to be (Blomberg, 2004).

Many ISS programs are simply a holding ground for disruptive students. The programs are often supervised by a paraprofessional who lacks training. In-school suspension programs typically lack technology, hands-on manipulative, and other learning aids (Blomberg, 2004). On the other end of the spectrum, few programs are facilitated effectively even by certified teachers (Adams, 2000). Researchers (e.g., Allman & Slate, 2011; Nichols, 1999) have not provided evidence that shows ISS deters discipline infractions.

Out-of-school suspension. A student is sent home and may not be on campus during the suspension time. Chapter 37 states that a student may not be suspended for longer than 3 consecutive days, however, it does not specify a cap on the number of days a student may be suspended throughout the school year.

The leading form of discipline, ISS, for the majority of student misbehaviors involves removing students from the educational setting (Skiba & Peterson, 2003). Nearly 55% of Texas public school students will be suspended at least once between their 7th and 12th grade years (Smith & Auber, 2011). Among those students who are suspended, a majority will be African-American or students with learning disabilities.

Disciplinary Alternative Education Program. An infraction that calls for a more serious punishment than three days of OSS would merit a DAEP assignment. A requirement spelled out in Chapter 37 states that DAEP must have a behavioral component and an instructional component consisting of English, math, science, and

history (Tex Ed Code). Also, a student may be expelled from DAEP for "serious or persistent misbehavior", so a student may be expelled for the same reason he or she was sent to DAEP.

   Juvenile Justice Alternative Education Program. Where available, students must attend JJAEP when they are expelled. A hearing is required if a student is expelled, but a student must remain in ISS, OSS, or DAEP while awaiting the results of the hearing. The Texas Juvenile Probation Commission (TJPC) oversees JJAEPs. During the 2008-2009 school year in Texas, 2,396 referrals were made for mandatory expulsion, while 5,806 were made for discretionary expulsion.

   According to Fowler and Rose (2011), "Half of Texas' students identified as emotionally disturbed were suspended or expelled 11 or more times over a six-year period" (p. 1). In response to these findings, Wallace Jefferson, Texas Supreme Court Justice, credits race, poverty, and other factors for influencing discipline rates (Fowler & Rose, 2011). These responses to misconduct are the prominent type of discipline applied when *zero tolerance* policies are in place. Not surprisingly, suspension and expulsion rates have increased since the creation of *zero tolerance* policies (Adams, 2000). In Texas, 60% of all students will be suspended or expelled at least once during their junior high or high school grades, 7th grade through 12th grades (Fowler & Rose, 2011).

   Severely punishing students for discipline is meant to deter both students who commit offenses and also peers witnessing the punishment (Rausch & Skiba, 2004), however, researchers (e.g., Adams, 2000; Allman & Slate, 2011; Fenning & Bohanon-Edmonson, 2006; Nichols, 1999; Skiba & Peterson, 2003) have not indicated a preventive effect related to disciplinary exclusion. In fact, students who are suspended

often view their discipline as ineffective, and these students will most likely be suspended again (Costenbader & Markson, 1998). Furthermore, discipline consequences can actually have a negative affect on student achievement (Andrews et al., 1998). Researchers (Noguera, 2003; Skiba & Peterson, 2000) associate school exclusion with an increase in school dropout, cultural bias, substance abuse, socioeconomic bias, and low academic achievement.

Detrimental Results from School Exclusion

According to Blomberg (2004), students who receive exclusionary discipline are the very students who have the greatest academic, social, and emotional needs. Suspending a student is often used to remove the student from the learning environment to provide relief for the teacher and other students (Bock, Tapscott, & Savner, 1998). When a student is disciplined by suspension or expulsion, the blame is placed solely on the student; the school usually does not question if the student's needs were met (Deridder, 1990). In return, defiant students become targets for further discipline problems, and as long as they receive exclusionary discipline, they will continue to have struggles in school (Gushee, 1984). Most students who are likely to be suspended have difficult home lives, are usually unsupervised when made to stay home, and are more likely to associate with deviant peers (Skiba & Peterson, 1999). Students who have repeated referrals, suspensions, and expulsions are more likely to drop out of school, enter the juvenile-justice system, and eventually become incarcerated (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001).

In a study conducted by The Council of State Governments Justice Center in partnership with the Public Policy Research Institute of Texas A&M University, records

of nearly 1 million students were tracked for at least six years during their secondary education. Students who had been suspended or expelled from school were more likely to be retained or to drop out of school than were their peers who had not received exclusionary discipline (Fabelo et al., 2001). The likelihood of a student coming in contact with the juvenile system nearly doubles with a single suspension or expulsion in only a year's time (Fowler & Rose, 2011).

One clearly detrimental effect is the school-to prison pipeline. Countless studies have been conducted to determine the extent to which a relationship is present between students receiving exclusionary discipline and students who end up incarcerated. Many researchers (e.g., Wald & Losen, 2003) argue that exclusionary discipline increases the likelihood of a student being incarcerated. Removing defiant students from well-behaved students is similar to how prisons work, removing law-breaking citizens from law-abiding citizens to maintain order (Noguera, 2003). The connection between school discipline systems and entry into criminal systems is referred to as *school-to-prison pipeline.* Rather than attempting to overcome obstacles to success, schools remove troubled students from schools, feeding the school-to-prison pipeline (NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 2005). Educational failure is a crucial indicator of a student receiving incarceration (Murray, 2005).

Pupil Control Ideologies

School discipline involves a high level of objective-decision making. In most cases, it is teacher discretion to refer or not to refer a student to the office. Similarly, it is up to the administrator concerning, if any, the specific consequence that is assigned to the

student. The ideology of the teacher and administrator will affect the outcome of how the school attempts to control the student.

The attitudes school staff have toward students and how the school staff control students is important to know when examining discipline in a school. Pupil control is directly related to the organizational life of a school (Glasser, 1992). Gallup's annual poll has revealed for over two decades that pupil control is one of the top concerns of stakeholders (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). Many teachers who are unhappy in teaching would say that the inability to control students is a main contributor to their unhappiness. Viewing pupil control as being a school climate descriptor, Willower, Eidell, and Hoy (1973) claimed pupil control as being on a humanistic and custodial ideology continuum.

Humanistic control ideology. In a humanistic control school, learning is viewed as ongoing engagement rather than absorption of facts. Learning is student-centered, and differentiation plays a major role. Humanistic control schools are open climate schools. A disengaged student is just as much a concern as a discipline-problem student (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). Behavior is viewed psychologically and sociologically. The culture of humanistic control schools is open, and students' perceptions are positively related to their motivation and seriousness about learning (Lunenburg, 1983).

Custodial control ideology. The custodial control school is the traditional, rigid, and highly controlling school. Such schools have closed climates. A pupil-teacher status hierarchy is well defined in a custodial school, and behavior is viewed in moralistic terms. Students are seen as irresponsible and in need of being controlled (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008).

Humanistic/Custodial pupil control ideologies leadership. Researchers have

been consistent in research findings concerning humanistic and custodial ideologies.

Custodialism pupil control leadership was associated with students' negative reactions to

the quality of school life in a study involving elementary and secondary schools in five

school districts (Lunenburg & Schmidt, 1989). In another study, it was observed that the

more custodial the school was, the greater the sense of student alienation that was present

(Hoy, 1972). On the other end of the continuum, an inquiry involving high school

students observed a relationship between humanisticism pupil control leadership and high

levels of student self-actualization (Deibert & Hoy, 1977). Researchers also examined

the extent to which individual teachers' pupil control ideologies affected students'

feelings towards teachers. In line with previous research, custodial pupil control ideology

in teachers was directly related to student hostility towards such teachers (Lunenburg &

Stouten, 1983). Lunenburg (1991) revealed that the more custodial the teacher's pupil

control ideology was, the more severe were the reported reactions to student discipline

incidents. These two ideologies are a clear example of a linkage present between two

variables: school leadership and school discipline. The relationship between these two

variables is especially important to ninth grade students just entering high school.

Ninth Grade

Second to graduation, ninth grade is the most difficult transition period for

students (Glanton, 2001). Ninth graders are confused by credit requirements for

graduation, and by time students understand what is needed, it is often too late (Legters &

Kerr, 2001). Students who fail classes in the ninth grade tend to question their ability to

graduate. Not earning five credits per semester or failing more than one core subject is a

strong indicator the student may not graduate on time or worse, drop out of school

(Allensworth & Easton, 2005). Along with academics, attendance as a ninth grader is

critical. Poor attendance for the first 30 days of ninth grade is a stronger predictor of

failure and potential dropouts than test scores or academic achievement (Jerald, 2006).

According to a study conducted at John Hopkins University, from cities with the highest

dropout rates, 40% of ninth graders repeat ninth grade. Of those 40% of repeaters, only

10 to 15% go on to graduate (Balfanz & Letgers, 2004). Discipline problems, poor

attendance, poor grades, pregnancy, lack of school involvement, mobility rate, and

difficulty transitioning into the ninth grade are all predictors of students dropping out of

school. Most students with these predictors fail 25% of their ninth grade classes, but of

these students who graduate only experience an 8% failure rate (Letgers & Kerr, 2001).

Schools that focus on 9th grade discipline will see positive outcomes within the next four

years for their students (Letgers & Kerr, 2001).

Conclusion

Rodney, Crafter, Rodney, and Mupier (1999) identified that disruptive student

behavior is a predictor of low-test scores and low grades. Several researchers (e.g., Smith

& Auber, 2011) have highlighted the relationship between labeling variables, such as race

and gender, and discipline consequences to assist school districts in targeting potential

disruptive students. In Texas, 83% of African-American males, 74% of Hispanic males,

and 59% of White male students received discipline within their secondary education

years (Smith & Auber, 2011). Also, within secondary education years, approximately

75% of students enrolled in special education were suspended or expelled at least once

(Smith & Auber, 2011). Smith and Auber (2011), Smith (2005), and Rodney et al.

(1999) detected a relationship between student disciplinary infractions and student achievement, therefore, it is imperative for a district to recognize who is more likely to be a candidate for exclusionary discipline, so it may be prevented.

This review of literature shows the complexity of the issue of disciplinary consequences. Exclusionary discipline placement may be harmful to students' futures. Educators need to understand the importance of not only evaluating discipline consequences, especially school exclusion disciplinary placements, but also factors that appear to predispose students to be candidates for exclusionary discipline placements. This review is helpful to educators to understand better the predictive factors for exclusionary discipline placements.

Chapter III

Methodology

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationships among 13 student variables and the number of days ninth grade students in a single suburban high school spent in exclusionary discipline placements during a school year. Specifically examined in this investigation was the extent to which student variables and school-related variables are predictive of exclusionary discipline placement. Independent variables analyzed were gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standards, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement. Also analyzed in this study was whether combinations of student variables best predict exclusionary discipline consequences. Two research designs were used for this study: correlational and an OLS using a backward elimination technique non-experimental design.

Research Questions

Research questions that led the current study are as follows:

1. Which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict exclusionary discipline consequences?

a. Which student variables best predict the exclusionary discipline consequence of in-school suspension?

b. Which student variables best predict the exclusionary discipline consequence of out-of-school suspension?

c. Which student variables best predict student receipt of any exclusionary discipline consequence?

2. For students who received an in-school suspension disciplinary consequence, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days spent in ISS?

3. For students who received an out-of-school suspension, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days in OSS?

4. For students who received any exclusionary discipline consequence, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences,

number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days in exclusionary discipline consequences?

Research Design

The study began with a correlational analysis approach. This technique was used to measure the associations among the 13 variables and the assignment of exclusionary discipline. Correlation coefficients vary from -1 to 1, indicating the degree to which two variables are related (Field, 2009). As the number, regardless of sign, increases from 0 to 1, the relationship that is present becomes stronger. The value of 0 indicates that no relationship exists between two variables whereas a value of 1 reflects a perfect relationship is present between two variables. The sign, whether positive or negative, reflects the nature of the relationship between two variables. When the sign is positive, as one variable increases, the other variable also increases. The same situation occurs when one variable decreases. When the correlation coefficient sign is negative, as one variable increases, the other variable decreases. That is, the variables go in opposite directions (Field, 2009).

Following correlation analyses, each pair of variables was assigned a correlation coefficient. This process allowed the relationship(s), if any, to be determined among the 13 variables and exclusionary discipline consequences. Describing the relationships among the 13 variables and discipline placement will help to provide an understanding of patterns in discipline. Finding correlations between variables and exclusionary discipline placements was the first step because closely analyzing the data and comparing the differences can provide insight for policy and program intervention (Blundell & Dias, 2000).

An Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination technique procedure was the main design used in this study. A regression was conducted for (a) the number of days students spent in in-school suspension, (b) the number of days students spent in out-of-school suspension, and (c) the number of days students spent in any disciplinary consequence. The analysis allowed the researcher to learn about the relationships among the independent or predictor variables, 13 student information variables, and the dependent or criterion variable, 4 exclusionary discipline placements. The interaction effect between the variables was determined. This process helped explain if the predication of receiving exclusionary discipline placement was affected by each of the 13 independent variables when alone or combined with the other variables. The general question the regression analysis answered was, "What is the best predictor(s) of receiving exclusionary discipline placement?" The goal of the regression analysis in this predication model was to recognize identification of a collection of variables that best predicts exclusionary discipline (Cohen, Cohen, West, & Aiken, 2003).

Sample Population

The sample population for this study consisted of records of ninth grade students from a 4A Texas high school in Southeast Texas. The school is located in a somewhat suburban area. In the early 1900s, farmers settled the small community, grew cotton, and began timber operations. Development in the area occurred in 1931 with the oil boom and, naturally, roads were paved and businesses and oil companies began to operate in the area. In the 1940s and 1950s, a store, community center, and churches were erected. As the oil boom subsided, timber became the supportive industry of the community. Today, over 30% of the county's work force is based in the trade industry; so many jobs

were negatively affected by the recent recession. As a result, many students worked part time to help with family expenses during the studied school year.

Data were obtained from the 2010-2011 school year. During this year, the school district was an Exemplary school district and the school campus was rated by the state as an Acceptable school, the second lowest category on a four level rating scale. In May, when the data were downloaded, the school was made up of 61.2% White, 34.2% Hispanic, 1.5% Black, 1.1% American Indian, and 0.3% Asian/Pacific Islander. More than half of the school's students are economically disadvantaged (58.2%). Other important percentages for variables include the following: 36.8% at risk, 12.8 % special education enrollment, 8.9% gifted/talented, and 7.7% Limited English Proficient. The freshmen class comprised 33% of the total student enrollment during the 2010-2011 school year.

The sample population included 539 students, one student from the 2012 cohort, 44 from the 2013 cohort, and 494 from the 2014 cohort. All students who were classified during that year as a ninth grader were included. Each of the students in the group earned $\leq$ 5 credits, therefore, even if they started with another cohort, they were classified as a freshman, and were used in the study.

Data Collection Procedures

The data used for this study was archival in nature. Once approval to conduct the study was received from the University of Houston Human Subjects Committee, the researcher sought permission from the district Research Review Committee to use district-archival data. All of the data used in this study was present in a district-created

program, *ViewIt*. All campus administrators have rights to see data from their own campus, therefore this researcher had privileges prior to the study.

ViewIt is a web-based student information system that was developed by the district technology department. Data from PEIMS and AEIS, amongst other data, are used in the program. The researcher was able to locate information on the 13 studied variables and exclusionary discipline placements in *ViewIt*. All of the data were compiled on an Excel spreadsheet before running the data in IBM SPSS. However, multiple steps were necessary to filter freshmen data and to organize the needed data for the study.

The steps began with running a discipline report, demographic report, TAKS report and student information report in *ViewIt*. PEIMS and AEIS data are inputted directly into *ViewIt*. The discipline report contained the number of discipline referrals, days in ISS, days in OSS, days in DAEP, and whether or not a student was expelled during the studied year. As for the demographic report, it contained whether or not the student was considered economically disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, or at risk. Student ethnicity was also in this report. Student scores on the TAKS for English Language Arts and for Math were utilized from the TAKS Report. Scores will be from the ninth grade test administration. The last report, student information, contained birthdates and the number of days students missed. Being overage was determined by the birthdates.

Gender and prior exclusionary placement were not included in any of the reports. For gender, the researcher looked at each individual student's information page in *ViewIt*. Individual pages contained multiple data points that include gender. A column was

created for each variable. As for previous exclusionary placement, the researcher asked

for permission to access previous year's data. Because the first-time ninth graders were

on a different campus from the one where the researcher is an administrator, the

researcher had to obtain permission from the district to be granted permissions to access

the junior high database. A discipline report was ran from the junior high *ViewIt* access.

The researcher created a new column in the original report and went through each name

that had received previous exclusionary discipline to mark 1 for yes or 0 for no in the

column.

Next, the researcher filtered the data by freshmen students. Once each report only

had information for freshmen students, the reports were merged together. Information

that was not used for the study was deleted. At the point when all the data was in one

Excel spreadsheet, the researcher deleted names and student identification numbers and

used a formula to randomize the order of rows. Then numbers 1 through 539 were

assigned to each row. This process ensured that student information was confidential.

The student information thus compiled included independent and dependent

variables. Independent variables consisted of demographic measures, assessment

measures, and daily record measures. Demographic variables were gender, being

overage, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special

education/gifted/talented, and at risk enrollment. Assessment measures were TAKS

Math scores and TAKS Reading scores. Lastly, daily record measures included number

of absences, number of discipline referrals, and whether or not the student had prior

exclusionary discipline placement. Dependent variables were the exclusionary discipline

placements, which included ISS, OSS, DAEP, and JJAEP. To ensure student anonymity, all information obtained was recorded under the same confidential student identifier.

Variables

Independent variables. Data for 13 independent variables were analyzed for consideration of their predictive nature of exclusionary discipline placement. Independent variables consisted of demographic characteristics, assessment measures, and daily record measures. School characteristics of samples that were either yes or no appear in Table 1. Descriptive absences and discipline record statistics are displayed in Table 2.

Demographic variables.

Gender. Students are classified as male or female. Gender was included as a variable because gender has been viewed as a moderator variable, a variable that influences relationship strength between two other variables (Wallace, Goodkind, Wallace, & Bachman, 2003). The strength between school discipline and other variables may vary depending on gender. Specifically, the influence of race as a variable seems to change depending on gender. For example, the suspension rate of Black males has been recorded as being significantly higher than Black females, White males, and White females (Skiba et al., 2002). However, other researchers have recognized that Black females are suspended more often than are White males and females (e.g., Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003). A strong consistency is not present, therefore, gender serves as a moderator variable (Wallace et al., 2003). In this study, 243 females and 297 males were included.

Being Overage. A student whose age before or on September 1 is two or more years higher than the grade level plus five is considered overage, thus a student who is in the ninth grade (9) and is two or more years older than five (5) plus the grade (9) on September 1 is overage, i.e., 9+5=14. A student that is 16 or older is considered overage for the ninth grade.

In this study, students who were sixteen or older on or before September 1, 2010, were considered overage. Students who are overage were included in the study because teachers, counselors, and administrators have reported that students who are overage have a negative impact on the school. From test scores, student attitudes, and social interactions to discipline and summer school programs, overage students negatively affect the school culture (Reed, 1998). More so, researchers have revealed that being overage is a strong dropout indicator (Hess, 1994; Hess, Wells, Prindle, Liffman, & Kaplan, 1987; Jordan & Anil, 2009). In this study, 34 students were overage.

Economically disadvantaged (Eco Dis). Students eligible for free or reduced-price lunch based on family income limits are determined to be economically disadvantaged. Students on free and reduced lunch are from two to eight times more likely to receive school discipline (Jordan & Anil, 2009). Economically disadvantaged students are also three times more likely to drop out than middle-class students and nine times more likely to become dropouts students from higher social classes (Jordan & Anil, 2009). Furthermore, dropping out of school is usually preceded by a large number of suspensions (Jordan & Anil, 2009; Taylor & Foster, 1986). Therefore, it would aide the educational system to see if a correlation exists between discipline and students who are

economically disadvantaged. In this study, 325 students were economically

disadvantaged.

    Ethnicity. This term refers to cultural factors such as nationality, culture,

ancestry, language, and beliefs with which students identify. Parents submitted the

ethnicity when the student entered the district. Ethnicity is coded in the PEIMS system as

follows: Code 1 is for American Indian or Alaskan Native; Code 2 is for Asian or Pacific

Islander; Code 3 is for Black, not of Hispanic origin; Code 4 is for Hispanic origin; and

Code 5 is for White, not of Hispanic origin. For purposes of statistical analyses, ethnicity

was used as a dummy variable. That is, each ethnic group constituted a separate variable

in the dataset. If a student was of a particular ethnicity, s/he had a value of 1 for that

particular ethnic variable. If a student was not of that particular ethnicity, she/he had a

value of 0 for that particular ethnic variable. According, ethnicity, while in the PEIMS

dataset as a single variable, was formed into five separate variables for statistical

analyses.

    Extensive literature exists in the area of ethnicity and its relation to discipline

(Ehrenberg et al., 1995; Gregory & Mosely, 2004; Hinojosa, 2008; Jordan & Anil, 2009;

McCarthy & Hoge, 1987; McFadden & Marsh, 1992; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003;

Skiba et al., 2002; Taylor & Foster, 1986; Taylor et al., 2001; Townsend, 2000; Verdugo,

2002; Williams, 1989). Researchers have consistently concluded that minority students

are disciplined at a disproportionate rate (Gregory & Mosely, 2004; McCarthy & Hoge,

1987; Raffaele Mendez & Knoff, 2003; Skiba et al., 2002; Townsend, 2000; Wald &

Losen, 2003). Therefore, it was beneficial to include ethnicity in this study. In this

study, 14 students were coded 1, American Indian or Alaskan Native, one student was

coded 2, Asian or Pacific Islander, 15 students were coded 3, Black, 189 students were coded 4, Hispanic, and 321 students were coded 5, White.

Limited English Proficiency (LEP). Students who were not born in the United States or whose native language is not English may be identified as LEP. In 2003, the Department of Education funded a study that examined the exclusionary discipline rate for LEP students, and LEP students received exclusionary discipline at a lower rate than all students combined (Hopstock & Stephenson, 2003). However, not many researchers have examined students with LEP and discipline, therefore, this variable will be included to help expand the available data. In this study, 68 students were students with LEP.

Special Education (SpEd). Under federal law, a complex set of regulations governs how and when a SpEd may be removed from the classroom (IDEA, 1997). Discipline of SpEd students has created controversy on both sides. Some authors have argued that the provisions limit school administrators ability to properly protect the safety of students and teachers while others contend that students with special needs require more protective rights to due process (Skiba, 2003). Disciplining students enrolled in special education has also been a topic in a series of court rulings (McCarthy, Cambron-McCabe, & Thomas, 1998), therefore, it was important to include this variable. In this study, 91 students were identified as Special Education students.

Gifted and Talented (G/T). Students who were tested and identified as being gifted and talented receive special services in the education setting. Gifted and talented curriculum focuses on self-direct learning and creative productivity (Renzulli, 1988), however, highly creative students are more likely to get in trouble with teachers. Literature reveals teachers have a negative attitude towards gifted students (Aljughaima

& Mowrer-Reynolds, 2005; Dawson, 1997; Stone, 1980). Therefore, it is deemed relevant to determine whether they tend to be disciplined disproportionately. In this study, 42 students were identified as G/T.

At risk (AR). Students who are at risk of failing are identified through 13 criteria. These students need the most support, yet exclusionary discipline pushes them away (Blomberg, 2004). Often at risk students have difficult home lives, and sending them home for discipline can create more problems for the student (Skiba, 1999). In this study, 219 students were identified as being at risk.

Assessment variables.

TAKS Scores. Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) are state level standardized tests that have been administered yearly. Students have to score at least 2100 to meet standards and "pass" the test. If students score considerably higher than the passing rate, they receive commended status. If a student does not achieve the passing rate score, the student did not meet standard. Ninth graders are tested in English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics. Researchers (e.g., Fenning & Bohanon-Edmonson, 2006) have contended that low test scores could be a result of elevated discipline problems and that student achievement is affected by disciplinary placements (Andrews et al., 1998; Costenbader & Markson, 1994; Gregory et al., 2010; Kralevich et al., 2010; Luiselli et al., 2005; Walker, Cheney, Stage, & Blum, 2005).

Moreover, it is a requirement of the state that all students pass the TAKS test, therefore, it would help to see if test scores are a predictor of exclusionary discipline. All ninth graders take the same test, thus the content validity of TAKS scores is high. If a student is absent, s/he will not make up the test unless it is their exit-level test, which is

administered in the eleventh grade. Therefore, students in the sample who were absent on the day of the TAKS testing day(s) did not have data for TAKS scores. In this proposed study, 18 students in ELA and 59 students in Mathematics did not meet standards.

School-recorded variables.

Absences. Daily attendance is taken and submitted to PEIMS. For this study, attendance for the 2nd period of the day, when attendance is officially reported, was used for daily submission. The average daily attendance (ADA) is used to determine how much funding the school receives. Zentner (2001) highlighted attendance as a strong predictor between discipline and achievement, and discovered that schools with high exclusionary discipline rates had poor attendance rates. Similarly, Jordan and Anil (2009) researched four schools and highlighted that in all four schools, significant results indicated that fewer absences meant fewer discipline referrals and more absences meant more discipline referrals. According to Jerald (2006), attendance rate for the first 30 days of a student's ninth grade year is a stronger predictor for failing the grade than previous academic achievement or test scores. If attendance is indeed a predictor for exclusionary discipline placement, schools could possibly look at procedure and policy revision.

Number of discipline referrals. This term refers to the number of discipline referrals a student receives throughout the school year. A high number of discipline referrals is a strong indicator of a student dropping out (Jordan & Anil, 2009; Viadero, 2006), therefore, this variable helped strengthen the study.

Prior exclusionary discipline placement. This term refers to exclusionary discipline placement assigned to a student prior to the year of this study. The severity of

behavior problems for students who are caught in a cycle of receiving discipline consequences increases throughout the years (VanderJagt, 2005). These students tend to learn at a slower pace than their peers (Berliner, 1990; Skiba, 2000). Researchers have indicated a relationship between repeated disciplinary infractions and dropping out of school (Kralevich et al., 2010; Taylor & Foster, 1986; Viadero 2006), thus it would benefit a school to observe this student variable. In this study, 65 infractions received ISS, 39 received OSS, 12 received DAEP, and 0 infractions called for expulsion during the sample students' 7th, 8th grade, or previous 9th grade year. All together, 84 of the 539 students received prior exclusionary discipline.

Table 1

School Characteristics of Sample

Characteristic	Yes	No
Being Overage	34 (5.7%)	505 (84.9%)
Economically Disadvantaged	326 (60.5%)	213 (39.5%)
Limited English Proficient	68 (12.6%)	471 (87.4%)
Special Education	92 (17.1%)	447 (82.9%)
Gifted/Talented	41 (7.6%)	498 (92.4%)
At Risk	224 (41.6%)	315 (58.4%)
Met TAKS Reading Standard	492 (91.3%)	18 (3.3%)
Met TAKS Math Standard	450 (82.5%)	60 (11.1%)
Prior Exclusionary Discipline Placement	84 (15.6%)	455 (84.4%)

Dependent Variables. Data for four variables were used as the dependent

variables. Descriptive statistics for these variables appear in Table 2. The variables (i.e.,

ISS, OSS, DAEP, and JJAEP) are all exclusionary discipline placements. Student

discipline is recorded in PEIMS data. Upon finishing the school year, data were

collected. Data obtained from the studied school year showed the number of days a

student was placed in an exclusionary discipline setting

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics for Absences and Disciplinary Consequences

Variable	*M*	*SD*
Absences	8.63	8.21
Number of Discipline Referrals	6.98	14.73
Number of Days in ISS	1.33	3.19
Number of Days in OSS	0.39	1.45
Number of Days in DAEP	0.72	3.68
Number of Days in Any Exclusionary Discipline Consequence	2.46	6.84

Data Analysis

An Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination technique

analysis was used to determine if any, or a combination of any, of the 13 variables could

predict exclusionary discipline placements. A regression analysis was appropriate to use

to identify a set of variables that yielded the strongest predication of the criterion for the

collected data (Cohen et al., 2003; Miller, 1990).

All 539 students were categorized in each of the 13 independent variables. Nine of the 13 variables (i.e., being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, economically disadvantaged, Limited English Proficient, special education, gifted/talented, at risk, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) were either a yes (1) or no (0) for each student. Two of the variables, gender and ethnicity, were given nominal descriptive the students chose when they registered for school in the district. For ethnicity, Code 1 is for American Indian or Alaskan Native; Code 2 is for Asian or Pacific Islander; Code 3 is for Black, not of Hispanic origin; Code 4 is for Hispanic origin; and Code 5 is for White, not of Hispanic origin. PEIMS coding for ethnicity was not used because using coding according to PEIMS would have made this variable an ordinal variable. Because 59.4% of the sample was comprised of White students, the ethnic category of White was used as the reference group. As such, the ethnic category of White was part of the intercept. This process allowed student ethnic membership to be nominal, so it could be included in the statistical analyses. The regression included American Indian or Alaskan Native, Asian or Pacific Islander, Black, and Hispanic. In the instance of AmIndianAlaskNkid=0, Asiankid=0, Blackkid=0, and Hispanickid=0, the student was White. The last two variables were the absences and number of discipline referrals.

The dependent variables consisted of four groups. In-school suspension, OSS, and DAEP were separated into groups, but JJAEP was either a yes (1) or no (0) measurement for each student.

Delimitations and Limitations of the Study

This study has several limitations that should be considered in the discussion of findings, conclusions derived from findings, and implications for future studies. With regard to the correlational and regression analysis, mere coincidence could occur. A mirror study is recommended. Another potential threat is that archival data were analyzed in this study and, as such, reflect a non-experimental approach. In addition, the sample of students was a pre-existing group and was not randomly assigned.

Limitations of the study include the inability to control teacher experience and expertise in classroom management as well as teachers' frequency of writing student referrals, and differences among administrators in their assignment of disciplinary consequences. Lastly, study findings derived only from suburban ninth grade students that were in one particular school that assigned exclusionary discipline consequences.

Summary

This chapter was guided by four research questions. Present in this chapter was a description of the sample population and the research design. Each independent variable was presented and defined. In the data analysis section, the process of using correlational and regression analysis for this study was explained. Finally, limitations for the study were addressed.

Chapter IV

Results

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between 13 student variables and exclusionary discipline placements. Specifically examined in the study was which student variables, if any, were predictive of exclusionary discipline placement. Variables analyzed were gender, being overage, TAKS Reading standard met, TAKS Math standard met, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement. Also analyzed in this study was whether a combination of the student variables best predicted exclusionary discipline consequences.

Research Questions

Research questions that led the current study were as follows:

1. Which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading standard met, TAKS Math standard met, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict exclusionary discipline consequences?

   a. Which student variables best predict the exclusionary discipline consequence of in-school suspension?

   b. Which student variables best predict the exclusionary discipline consequence of out-of-school suspension?

    c.   Which student variables best predict student receipt of any exclusionary discipline consequence?

2. For students who received an in-school suspension disciplinary consequence, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading standard met, TAKS Math standard met, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days spent in ISS?

3. For students who received an out-of-school suspension, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading standard met, TAKS Math standard met, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days in OSS?

4. For students who received any exclusionary discipline consequence, which student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading standard met, TAKS Math standard met, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) best predict the number of days in exclusionary discipline consequences?

Descriptive Results

Of the sample of 539 students, 296 were boys and 243 were girls. With respect to ethnic membership, the majority of the sample were White students ($n = 320$, 59.4%),

followed by Hispanic students ($n = 189$, 35.1%), and then Black students ($n = 15$, 2.8%). Students in the Asian/Pacific Islander and/or Native American categories constituted 2.8% of the sample. As such, only the ethnic categories of White, Hispanic, and Black were analyzed in this study.

Concerning the variables of interest in this study, Table 1 depicts the number of students who met each characteristic. Regarding being overage, only 34 (5.7%) out of the sample of students were overage, compared with 505 (84.9%) who were the appropriate age for their grade level. A majority of the students (60.5%) met the criteria for being economically disadvantaged. Concerning meeting or not meeting the TAKS Reading and Math standards, 18 students failed to meet the TAKS Reading standard whereas 60 students failed to meet the TAKS Math standard. Twenty-nine students for both the Reading and Math TAKS tests did not have TAKS data available. Either the students were absent or LEP exempt, therefore the TAKS met percentage did not equal 100%.

Table 3

School Characteristics of Sample

Characteristic	Yes	No
Being Overage	34 (6.3%)	505 (93.7%)
Economically Disadvantaged	326 (60.5%)	213 (39.5%)
Limited English Proficient	68 (12.6%)	471 (87.4%)
Special Education	92 (17.1%)	447 (82.9%)
Gifted/Talented	41 (7.6%)	498 (92.4%)
At Risk	224 (41.6%)	315 (58.4%)

Met TAKS Reading Standard	492 (91.3%)	18 (3.3%)
Met TAKS Math Standard	450 (82.5%)	60 (11.1%)
Prior Exclusionary Discipline Placement	84 (15.6%)	455 (84.4%)

For school absences and disciplinary consequence, readers are directed to Table 2. The average number of student absences from school was 8.63, and the average number of discipline referrals was 6.98. Interestingly, the average number of days spent in DAEP was higher (0.72) than the average number of days students spent in OSS (0.39).

Table 4

Descriptive Statistics for Absences and Disciplinary Consequences

Variable	*M*	*SD*
Absences	8.63	8.21
Number of Discipline Referrals	6.98	14.73
Number of Days in ISS	1.33	3.19
Number of Days in OSS	0.39	1.45
Number of Days in DAEP	0.72	3.68
Number of Days in Any Exclusionary Discipline Consequence	2.46	6.84

Results for Research Question 1

To address the first research question, an Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination procedure was conducted for (a) the number of days students spent in in-school suspension, (b) the number of days students spent in out-of-

school suspension, and (c) the number of days students spent in any disciplinary

consequence. The disciplinary consequences of DAEP and JJAEP could not be analyzed

due to the small number of students who received a DAEP ($n = 28$) or who received a

JJAEP ($n = 8$) placement.

For the first Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination

analysis, the number of days students spent in ISS was the dependent variable and the

independent variables were gender, being overage, TAKS Reading standard met, TAKS

Math standard met, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient,

special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline

referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement. The resulting regression model

was statistically significant, $F(3, 506) = 484.0328.55$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 74.2%

of the variance in days students spent in in-school suspension. The percent of variance

accounted was a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Three variables contributed to the

statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals, TAKS Reading

standard met, and TAKS Math standard met. Regarding the relative importance of each

statistically significant variable, readers are directed to Table 3. The most important

variable in predicting the number of days students spent in in-school suspension was the

number of discipline referrals. Students who had more discipline referrals spent more

days in in-school suspension than did students who spent fewer days in in-school

suspension. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, or r, that was

calculated as part of the regression procedure was .856 ($p < .001$) between the number of

discipline referrals and days spent in in-school suspension. This relationship was

reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). By squaring the correlation coefficient, 73.27% of the variance was shared by these two variables.

The next most important variable was meeting the TAKS Math standard. Students who spent more days in in-school suspension were also less likely to have met the TAKS Math standard than were students who spent fewer days in in-school suspension. The correlation between these two variables was -.225 ($p < .001$) and was reflective of a small effect size (Cohen, 1988). Squaring this correlation revealed that the degree of overlap or shared variance between meeting the TAKS Math standard and days spent in in-school suspension was 5.06%. The final variable in the statistically significant regression equation was meeting the TAKS Reading standard. This variable was not statistically significantly related to the number of students spent in in-school suspension, $r(510) = -.037$, $p = .402$.

Present in Appendix A are the final models for each of the Ordinary Least Squares Regression Backward Elimination Procedures for each of the research questions addressed herein. Because of the number of variables in each initial analysis, only the final models and the variables that were determined to be statistically significant are present in Appendix A.

Table 5

Regression Coefficients for Statistically Significant Variables in Ordinary Least Squares Regression *Backward Elimination Procedure for Days Students Spent in In-School Suspension*

Characteristic	Beta	*r*	Adjusted R^2	*p*-value
Number of Discipline Referrals	.853	.856	.740	.001

Met TAKS Math Standard	-.049	-.225	.742	.055
Met TAKS Reading Standard	.058	-.037	.741	.020

For the second Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination analysis, the number of days students spent in OSS was the dependent variable and the independent variables were gender, being overage, TAKS Reading standard met, TAKS Math standard met, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement. The resulting regression model was statistically significant, $F(2, 507) = 128.66$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 33.4% of the variance in days students spent in out-of-school suspension. The percent of variance accounted for reflected a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Two variables contributed to the statistically significant prediction: absences from school and the number of discipline referrals. Depicted in Table 4 are the beta weights, correlations of each statistically significant variable to the days students spent in out-of-school suspension, adjusted R^2 values, and p-values.

Similar to the results for the days a student spent in in-school suspension, the variable with the most relative importance was the number of discipline referrals. That is, the most important variable in predicting the number of days students spent in out-of-school suspension was the number of discipline referrals. Students who spent more days in out-of-school suspension had more referrals for disciplinary reasons than did students who spent fewer days in out-of-school suspension. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, or r, that was calculated as part of the regression procedure was

.573 ($p < .001$) between days spent in out-of-school suspension and the number of disciplinary referrals. This relationship was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). By squaring the correlation coefficient, 32.83% of the variance was shared by these two variables.

The final variable in the statistically significant regression equation was the number of school absences. This variable was statistically significantly related to the number of students spent in out-of-school suspension, $r(539) = .316$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 9.99% of the variance, a small effect size.

Table 6

Regression Coefficients for Statistically Significant Variables in OLS Backward Elimination Procedure for Days Students Spent in Out-of-School Suspension

Characteristic	Beta	*r*	Adjusted R^2	*p*-value
Number of Discipline Referrals	.534	.573	.336	.001
Absences from School	.097	.316	.334	.015

For the third Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination analysis, the number of days students spent in any disciplinary consequence was the dependent variable and the independent variables were gender, being overage, gender, being overage, TAKS Reading standard met, TAKS Math standard met, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented, at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement. The resulting regression model was statistically significant, $F(2, 507) = 257.41$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 50.2% of the variance in days students spent in any disciplinary consequence. The percent of variance explained in days spent in any

disciplinary consequence reflected a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Two variables

contributed to the statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals and

absences from school.

Present in Table 7 are the regression coefficients for the two statistically

significant variables in the regression equation and the correlations of these variables

with days spent in any disciplinary consequence. Regarding the relative importance of

each statistically significant variable, number of discipline referrals was again the

variable with the highest degree of importance (Beta = .648). The Pearson product-

moment correlation coefficient, or r, that was calculated as part of the regression

procedure was .700 ($p < .001$) between days spent in any disciplinary consequence and

the number of disciplinary referrals. This relationship was reflective of a large effect size

(Cohen, 1988). By squaring the correlation coefficient, 49.00% of the variance was

shared by these two variables.

Similar to the previous two analyses, an important variable in predicting the

number of days students spent in any disciplinary consequence was the number of

absences from school. Students who spent more days in any disciplinary consequence

had more absences than students who spent fewer days in any disciplinary consequence.

The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, or r, that was calculated as part of

the regression procedure was .391 ($p < .001$) between days spent in any disciplinary

consequence and the number of student absences from school. This relationship was

reflective of a moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988). By squaring the correlation

coefficient, 15.29% of the variance was shared by these two variables.

Table 7

Regression Coefficients for Statistically Significant Variables in OLS Backward Elimination Procedure for Days Students Spent in Any Exclusionary Discipline Consequence

Characteristic	Beta	r	Adjusted R^2	p-value
Number of Discipline Referrals	.648	.700	.502	.001
Absences from School	.128	.391	.503	.001

Results for Research Question 2

Next an Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination analysis was conducted, using data from only the students who had been assigned an in-school suspension. Data from students who had not received an ISS were not included in this analysis. Prior to performing this statistical procedure, descriptive statistics were calculated for just the students who had been assigned to an in-school suspension disciplinary consequence. Readers are directed to Table 8 for these descriptive statistics. The majority of students who received an in-school suspension were economically disadvantaged (63.5%). A small percent (10.1%) of students were overage for their grade level. Similarly, only a small percent of students failed to meet the TAKS Reading standard (5.2%) or the TAKS Math standard (20.3%).

Table 8

School Characteristics of Students Who Received an In-School Suspension

Characteristic	Yes	No
Being Overage	16 (10.1%)	143 (89.9%)
Economically Disadvantaged	101 (63.5%)	58 (36.5%)
Limited English Proficient	17 (10.7%)	142 (89.3%)
Special Education	40 (25.2%)	119 (74.8%)
Gifted/Talented	13 (8.2%)	146 (91.8%)
At Risk	80 (50.3%)	79 (49.7%)
Met TAKS Reading Standard	145 (94.8%)	8 (5.2%)
Met TAKS Math Standard	122 (79.7%)	31 (20.3%)
Prior Exclusionary Discipline Placement	24 (15.1%)	135 (84.9%)

For school absences and disciplinary consequence, readers are directed to Table 9. The average number of student absences from school for only students who had received an in-school suspension was 12.59, with the average number of discipline referrals being 19.79. Even though this question focused on ISS, days in OSS, DAEP, and any disciplinary consequences were included to observe other consequences other than ISS that were received. Generally, ISS is the first step in exclusionary discipline placement, followed by OSS then DAEP. Interestingly, the average number of days spent in DAEP was higher, 1.96, than the average number of days students spent in OSS, 1.21.

Table 9

Descriptive Statistics for Absences and Disciplinary Consequences Only for Students Who Received an In-School Suspension

Variable	*M*	*SD*
Absences	12.59	9.59
Number of Discipline Referrals	19.79	21.83
Number of Days in ISS	4.50	4.49
Number of Days in OSS	1.21	2.42
Number of Days in DAEP	1.96	6.12
Number of Days in Any Exclusionary Discipline Consequence	7.71	10.51

The Ordinary Least Squares Regression backward elimination model was statistically significant, $F(1, 59) = 308.09$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 83.9% of the variance in the days that students who were assigned to ISS spent in ISS. The percentage of variance explained by this model was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). One variable contributed to the statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals. The standardized Beta coefficient was .916 ($p < .001$), with an adjusted R2 value of .837.

The only statistically significant variable in predicting the number of days students spent in in-school suspension was the number of discipline referrals. For only this subset of students who had received in-school suspension, students who spent more days in in-school suspension had more discipline referrals than did students who spent fewer days in in-school suspension. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, or *r*, that was calculated as part of the regression procedure was .882 ($p < .001$) between

days spent in in-school suspension and the number of discipline referrals. This relationship was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). By squaring the correlation coefficient, 77.79% of the variance was shared by these two variables.

Results for Research Question 3

For the next Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination analysis, data were utilized from only the students who had been assigned an out-of-school suspension. Data from students who had not received an OSS were not included in this analysis. Table 10 displays characteristics from students who did receive OSS. Prior to performing the regression analysis, descriptive statistics were calculated for the sample of students who had received an out-of-school suspension. The majority of students who received an out-of-school suspension were economically disadvantaged (65.5%). A small percent (13.8%) of students were overage for their grade level. Interestingly, although only a small percent of students failed to meet the TAKS Reading standard (3.4%), more than a fourth (27.6%) of this subset of students failed to meet the TAKS Math standard.

Table 10

School Characteristics of Students Who Received an Out-of-School Suspension

Characteristic	Yes	No
Being Overage	8 (13.8%)	50 (86.2%)
Economically Disadvantaged	38 (65.5%)	20 (34.5%)
Limited English Proficient	8 (13.8%)	50 (86.2%)
Special Education	14 (24.1%)	44 (75.9%)
Gifted/Talented	5 (8.6%)	53 (91.4%)

At Risk	33 (56.9%)	25 (43.1%)
Met TAKS Reading Standard	56 (96.6%)	2 (3.4%)
Met TAKS Math Standard	42 (72.4%)	16 (27.6%)
Prior Exclusionary Discipline Placement	8 (13.8%)	50 (86.2%)

For school absences and disciplinary consequence, readers are directed to Table 11. The average number of student absences from school for only students who had received an out-of-school suspension was 15.81, with the average number of discipline referrals being 31.90. Interestingly, the average number of days spent in DAEP was much higher, 9.43, than the average number of days students spent in OSS, 2.79.

Table 11

Descriptive Statistics for Absences and Disciplinary Consequences Only for Students Who Received an Out-of-School Suspension

Variable	*M*	*SD*
Absences	15.81	9.57
Number of Discipline Referrals	31.90	27.34
Number of Days in ISS	7.26	5.75
Number of Days in OSS	3.66	2.79
Number of Days in DAEP	6.36	9.43
Number of Days in Any Exclusionary Discipline Consequence	17.41	12.67

The Ordinary Least Squares backward elimination regression model was statistically significant, $F(4, 30) = 22.24$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 74.8% of the

variance in the days that students who were assigned to out-of-school suspension spent in out-of-school suspension. The percentage of variance explained by this model was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Four variables contributed to the statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals, absences from school, enrollment in special education, and gender. Readers are directed to Table 12 for the regression statistics for these four variables.

For only this subset of students who had received an out-of-school suspension, students who spent more days in out-of-school suspension had more discipline referrals than did students who spent fewer days in out-of-school suspension. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, or r, that was calculated as part of the regression procedure was .786 ($p < .001$) between days spent in out-of-school suspension and the number of discipline referrals. This relationship was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). By squaring the correlation coefficient, 61.78% of the variance was shared by these two variables.

Similarly, for only this subset of students who had received an out-of-school suspension, students who spent more days in out-of-school suspension had more absences from school than did students who spent fewer days in out-of-school suspension. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, or r, that was calculated as part of the regression procedure was .430 ($p < .001$) between days spent in out-of-school suspension and the number of school absences. This relationship was reflective of a moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988). By squaring the correlation coefficient, 12.9% of the variance was shared by these two variables. Readers will note in Table 12 that enrollment in special education and gender were predictive of receipt of an out-of-school suspension. With the

manner in which both these variables were coded, boys and students who were enrolled in special education were more likely to have received an out-of-school suspension than were girls and students who were not enrolled in special education.

Table 12

Regression Coefficients for Statistically Significant Variables in OLS Backward Elimination Procedure for Students Who Received an Out-of-School Suspension

Characteristic	Beta	r	Adjusted R^2	p-value
Number of Discipline Referrals	.780	.786	.714	.001
Absences from School	.227	.430	.717	.024
Special Education Enrollment	-.231	.136	.723	.027
Gender	-.219	-.283	.723	.026

Results for Research Question 4

Finally, data were utilized from only the students who had been assigned to any school exclusionary discipline consequence (i.e., ISS, OSS, DAEP, or JJAEP). Data from students who had not received any of these disciplinary consequences were not included in this analysis. Depicted in Table 13 are the descriptive statistics for this subset of students. The majority of students who received any disciplinary consequence were economically disadvantaged (64.3%). A small percent (10.1%) of students were overage for their grade level. Interestingly, although only a small percent of students failed to meet the TAKS Reading standard (4.9%), more than a fifth (20.4%) of this subset of students failed to meet the TAKS Math standard.

Table 13

School Characteristics of Students Who Received Any Exclusionary Discipline Consequence

Characteristic	Yes	No
Being Overage	17 (10.1%)	151 (89.9%)
Economically Disadvantaged	108 (64.3%)	60 (35.7%)
Limited English Proficient	19 (11.3%)	149 (88.7%)
Special Education	42 (25.0%)	126 (75.0%)
Gifted/Talented	16 (9.5%)	152 (90.5%)
At Risk	86 (51.2%)	82 (48.8%)
Met TAKS Reading Standard	154 (95.1%)	8 (4.9%)
Met TAKS Math Standard	129 (79.6%)	33 (20.4%)
Prior Exclusionary Discipline Placement	27 (16.1%)	141 (83.9%)

For school absences and disciplinary consequence, readers are directed to Table 14. The average number of student absences from school for only students who had received a disciplinary consequence was 12.45, with the average number of discipline referrals being 19.10. Interestingly, the average number of days spent in DAEP was higher, 2.32, than the average number of days students spent in OSS, 1.26.

Table 14

Descriptive Statistics for Absences and Disciplinary Consequences Only for Students Who Received Any Exclusionary Discipline Consequence

Variable	*M*	*SD*
Absences	12.45	9.40
Number of Discipline Referrals	19.10	21.49
Number of Days in ISS	4.26	4.49
Number of Days in OSS	1.26	2.39
Number of Days in DAEP	2.32	6.32
Number of Days in Any Exclusionary	7.88	10.38
Discipline Consequence		

The resulting regression model was statistically significant, $F(3, 158) = 33.65$, $p < .001$, and accounted for 39.0% of the variance in the days that students who were assigned to any exclusionary discipline consequences spent in those consequences. The percentage of variance explained in this model was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Three variables contributed to the statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals, absences from school, and enrollment in special education. Depicted in Table 15 are the Beta weights of the three statistically significant predictors and the correlation coefficients of these variables with the number of days students spent in any exclusionary discipline consequence.

For this subset of students who had received any disciplinary consequence, the most important variable was the number of discipline referrals. The Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient, or *r*, that was calculated as part of the regression

procedure was .587 ($p < .001$) between days spent in any disciplinary consequence and the number of discipline referrals. This relationship was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). By squaring the correlation coefficient, 34.46% of the variance was shared by these two variables.

Table 15

Regression Coefficients for Statistically Significant Variables in OLS Backward Elimination Procedure for Days Students Spent in Any Exclusionary Discipline Consequence

Characteristic	Beta	*r*	Adjusted R^2	*p*-value
Number of Discipline Referrals	.501	.587	.378	.001
Absences from School	.224	.415	.380	.002
Enrollment in Special Education	-.117	-.036	.380	.066

For this subset of students, absences from school was the second most important variable in the regression equation. Absences from school were statistically significantly related to the number of days students spent in any disciplinary consequence, $r(168) = .415, p < .001$. This relationship was reflective of a moderate effect size (Cohen, 1988). For this subset, students who were absent more from school spent more days in disciplinary consequences than did students who were absent fewer days from school. These two variables overlapped 17.22%. Though a statistically predictor in the regression model, being enrolled in special education was not statistically significantly related to days spent in disciplinary consequences ($r[168] = -.036, p = .644$).

Summary of Results

Each of the Ordinary Least Squares Regression using a backward elimination analyses yielded statistically significant results. One variable, the number of discipline referrals, was present in all of the statistically significant results. Each time, the number of discipline referrals constituted the variable with the highest degree of importance in the regression equation. Similarly, in each analysis, the number of discipline referrals had the strongest relationship with the dependent variable (i.e., days spent in in-school suspension, days spent in out-of-school suspension, and days spent in any exclusionary discipline consequence). Students who had more discipline referrals were more likely to experience significantly more days in in-school suspension, in out-of-school suspension, and in any disciplinary consequence than were students who received less discipline referrals. Appearing in four of the six analyses as the second strongest statistically significant predictor was school absences. Being absent from school was predictive of more days spent in out-of-school suspension and in any exclusionary discipline consequence. Being enrolled in special education appeared in two of the analyses as a statistically significant variable, albeit a very small relationship. The variables of meeting the TAKS Math standard and meeting the TAKS Reading standard were a statistically significant predictor in only one of the analyses. One other variable that appeared in at least one statistically significant analysis was gender.

Chapter V

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine the extent to which relationships were present between student demographic characteristics, school-related characteristics, and student assignment to exclusionary discipline placements. Making such a determination of the likelihood that students would become discipline issues would be helpful for educators, parents, and even students. To the extent that specific variables could be delineated that permit predictions of students who are likely to misbehave, exclusionary discipline could possibly be prevented or, at least, placements could be made to minimize negative effects on student learning and development. As noted previously, Dupper and Bosch (1996) and Kaufman (2001), among other researchers, have demonstrated that excluding students from the learning environment may be harmful to their academic achievement. Other researchers (e.g., Allman, 2010; Andrews et al., 2001; Ehrenberg et al., 1995; Hilberth, 2010; McFadden & Marsh, 1992; NAACP Legal Defense and Educational Fund, 2005; Skiba et al., 2002) have established the presence of relationships between race and gender and disciplinary placements. Also documented in the literature is that special education students are disciplined at a higher rate than are their non-special education peers (Allman, 2010; Allman & Slate, 2011; Cooley, 1995; Fabelo et al., 2001; Fowler & Rose, 2011; Katsiyannis & Maag, 1998).

Results for Research Question One

In research question one, the focus was on determining the extent to which specific student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, grade-level retention, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity,

Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) could predict exclusionary discipline consequences for all students in this investigation. Three exclusionary discipline consequences were examined: in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, and any disciplinary consequence.

For in-school suspension, a statistically significant regression model was obtained in which 74.2% of the variance in days students spent in in-school suspension was explained. As such, this result constituted a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Three variables contributed to the statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals, TAKS Reading standard met, and TAKS Math standard met. The most important variable in predicting the number of days students spent in in-school suspension, with a large effect size, was the number of discipline referrals. The next most important variable, with a small effect size, was meeting the TAKS Math standard. The final variable in the statistically significant regression equation, but was not significantly related to days spend in in-school suspension was meeting the TAKS Reading standard.

Regarding out-of-school suspension, the regression model was also statistically significant and explained 33.4% of the variance in days students spent in out-of-school suspension. This result was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Two variables contributed to the statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals and absences from school. The variable with the most relative importance, with a large effect size, was the number of discipline referrals. School absences was significant with a small effect size.

Concerning the receipt of any disciplinary consequence, the regression model accounted for 50.2% of the variance in days students spent in any disciplinary consequence. This result comprised a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). Similar to OSS, two variables contributed to the statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals and absences from school. Number of discipline referrals, with a large effect size, was again the variable with the highest degree of importance, followed by absences from school, with a moderate effect size.

Results for Research Question Two

Examined in the second research question was the extent to which specific student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, grade-level retention, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) could predict the number of days students spent in in-school suspension. This analysis differed from the analyses conducted for the first research question in that only data on students who had received an in-school suspension were analyzed.

The regression model for this analysis was statistically significant and explained 83.9% of the variance in the days that students who were assigned to ISS spent in ISS. This result constituted a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). The number of discipline referrals was the only statistically significant variable, therefore, the most important variable.

Results for Research Question Three

Analyzed in the third research question was the extent to which specific student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, grade-level retention, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient, special education enrollment, gifted/talented at risk, absences, number of discipline referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) could predict the number of days students spent in out-of-school suspension. This analysis differed from the analyses conducted for the first research question and for the second research question in that only data on students who had received an out-of-school suspension were analyzed.

The regression model was again statistically significant, explaining 74.8% of the variance in the days that students who were assigned to out-of-school suspension spent in out-of-school suspension. This result was reflective of a large effect size (Cohen, 1988). In this analysis, four variables contributed to the statistically significant prediction: number of discipline referrals, absences from school, enrollment in special education, and gender. The number of discipline referrals, again with a large effect size, was the most important. Next, with a moderate effect size, absences from school was statistically significant. Lastly, enrollment in special education and gender, both with trivial effect sizes, were not statistically related to days spent in OSS.

Results for Research Question Four

Finally, for this research question, the extent to which specific student variables (i.e., gender, being overage, TAKS Reading met standard, TAKS Math met standard, grade-level retention, economically disadvantaged, ethnicity, Limited English Proficient,

special education enrollment, gifted/talented at risk, absences, number of discipline

referrals, and prior exclusionary discipline placement) could predict the number of days

students spent in any exclusionary discipline consequence. This analysis differed from

the analyses conducted for the first three research questions in that only data on students

who had received any school exclusionary discipline consequence were analyzed.

The resulting regression model was statistically significant and accounted for

39.0% of the variance in the days that students who were assigned to any exclusionary

discipline consequences spent in those consequences. This result constituted a large

effect size (Cohen, 1988). Three variables contributed to the statistically significant

prediction: number of discipline referrals, absences from school, and enrollment in

special education. For this subset of students, with a large effect size, the number of

discipline referrals was the most important variable in the regression equation. Once

again, with a moderate effect size, absences from school was the second most important

variable in the equation. Enrollment in special education appeared in the regression

model, but was not statistically related to days spent in any exclusionary discipline

consequence.

Summary of Results

Each of the analyses for the four research questions yielded statistically

significant results, with small to large effect sizes being revealed. One variable, number

of discipline referrals, was present in all of the statistically significant results. Each time,

number of discipline referrals constituted the variable with the highest degree of

importance in the regression equation. Similarly, in each analysis, number of discipline

referrals had the strongest relationship with the dependent variable (i.e., days spent in in-

school suspension, days spent in out-of-school suspension, and days spent in any disciplinary consequence). Students who received more discipline referrals were more likely to experience significantly more days in in-school suspension, in out-of-school suspension, and in any disciplinary consequence than were students who received less discipline referrals. Being absent from school was statistically significant in four of the six regressions. Students who were absent more often were more likely to receive OSS and any disciplinary consequence. The variable of meeting the TAKS Math standard was a statistically significant predictor in one of the statistically significant results. Students who failed to meet the TAKS Math standard were more likely to experience significantly more days in in-school suspension than were students who met the TAKS Math standard. Other variables that appeared in at least one statistically significant analysis were enrollment in special education, failing to met the TAKS Reading standard, and gender. These variables were identified as being much less important than were the variables of number of discipline referrals, school absences, and meeting the TAKS Math standard.

Connections with the Existing Literature

Exclusionary discipline placements were originally created to prevent students from repeating discipline infractions, however, students who are suspended often view their discipline as ineffective, and these students will most likely be suspended again (Costenbader & Markson, 1998). Receiving multiple discipline referrals can affect students even after the current school year. Students who have repeated referrals are more likely to drop out of school, enter the juvenile-justice system, and eventually become incarcerated (Baker, Sigmon, & Nugent, 2001).

As noted previously, attendance or its counterpart, school absences, is critical. Being absent excessively from school is a strong predictor of failure and of becoming a dropout (Jerald, 2006). Balfanz and Letgers (2004) noted that discipline problems and poor attendance are predictors of students dropping out of school. Results of this study support claims that attendance has a negative correlation with student disciplinary placement (Balfanz & Letgers, 2004; Jordan & Anvil, 2009; & Zentner, 2001). Previous studies and this study should alert educators that as students' attendance rate decreases, meaning they are missing more school days, their exclusionary discipline rate increases, meaning that they are receiving more exclusionary discipline placements. Based on these alarming results, disciplinary interventions that prevent students from being removed from the learning environment should be analyzed as well as interventions to increase student attendance.

This study also contributes to the conclusion that there is a correlation between student achievement on state-mandated tests and disciplinary placements (Andrews et al., 1998; Costenbader & Markson, 1994; Gregory et al., 2010; Kralevich et al., 2010; Luiselli et al., 2005; Walker, Cheney, Stage, & Blum, 2005). According to this study, which lines up with previous studies, the more often students received exclusionary discipline placement, the lower their chances were of meeting the TAKS standard.

Though other researchers have discovered stronger results (Fabelo et al., 2001; Fowler & Rose, 2011; Katsiyannis & Maag, 1998), the results from this study corroborate that enrollment in special education has at least a small degree of statistical importance. Similarly, results align with previous findings (Jordan & Anil, 2009; Kralevich et al., 2010; & Skiba et al., 2002) that boys receive discipline at a higher rate than girls.

Suggestions for Practice

Results from this study are useful to educational leaders and educators in their professional practices. The two major variables that were delineated to be predictors of days students spent in disciplinary consequences are both alterable variables. That is, both variables of number of discipline referrals and school absences a can be altered or modified through interventions.

Students receive a discipline referral when a staff member deems it necessary. However, the point of necessity varies amongst faculty. During the studied year, 8 staff members campus-wide did not write a referral, 84 wrote fewer than 20 discipline referrals, 56 wrote from 20-99 referrals, and 7 wrote between 102-200 referrals. The ISS paraprofessional wrote 336 discipline referrals last year. This means that 336 incidents involved students who were already in a discipline setting receiving a discipline referral.

Many questions rise from that the range of submitting discipline referrals being so wide. There has to be a solution to, at least, reduce the number of discipline referrals. New teachers are trained on classroom management, but after the first 3 years in the classroom, teachers usually do not receive professional development on classroom management. Most paraprofessionals never receive training on discipline management, yet on a school campus, they interact daily with students. Why is it that one faculty member never has to write a discipline referrals while another writes at least one a day? Could it be relationships with students? My suggestion would be for the school to look into professional development options on helping teachers and other staff members learn how to develop relationships. Schools try to use one measurement on all students and it

obviously is not working. The same students are receiving discipline referrals, so they are not deterred from committing infractions.

Removing a student from the learning environment as punishment may not be the answer anymore. At one time, students learned from a teacher lecturing in front of the classroom, however, that is now frowned upon. Schools have pushed differentiated instruction, yet discipline is one area that is rarely differentiated. Sure there is a continuum and the more often a student is referred to the office, the more severe his or her discipline may be, claiming "prior discipline" is the reason. Is that differentiating or is that setting a student up for failure?

Positive reinforcements could help schools with students who tend to receive discipline. Rather than waiting until the students gets in trouble to call home, contact parents and praise the student for something positive. Also, mentor programs have proven effective, so it would behoove schools to look into starting a mentor program either with teachers or community leaders. High school students today, especially in a low socioeconomic area, must form a positive relationship with a teacher to be successful.

As a former assistant principal who mainly dealt with discipline, I found that often teachers escalated the situation by engaging in an argument with a student. Maybe if the state focused on the lack of classroom management as much as it focuses on state testing, teachers would strive to handle discipline situations effectively. The state could possibly include a classroom management measurement in accountability as it already does with attendance.

Accordingly, efforts to improve student school attendance currently present at schools should be examined and evaluated for their efficacy. Evidence-based strategies to monitor and facilitate higher levels of school attendance need to be incorporated into the strategies currently used by schools. As previously stated, students receive differentiated instruction, but not differentiated consequences when absent. In the past, students received discipline referrals for missing school, and could end up in ISS or even worse, OSS, if they missed too many days. Recent changes in this school's discipline consequences have stopped students from receiving discipline referrals for absences, however, they now may receive citations and end up in court. The exception is for students who are absent due to "skipping" school without parental permission.

In the studied year, a letter was sent home when a student missed 3 days then again at 6 days. Once a student received 10 or more absences, a citation may be written to the student. Finally, a student who was absent 12 or more days had to attend an attendance hearing to see if credit was lost due to absences. The hearing gave the campus committee, which consisted of a teacher, the student, the student's parent(s), an assistant principal, a counselor, and the associate principal, the chance to hear exactly why the student had multiple absences. This allowed the committee to make decisions based on each individual student. Basically, it took a student being absent almost 10% of the semester for differentiation to occur. As with discipline, if the school could intervene before attendance became a problem, it may see a decline in absences. Attendance records follow a student to and through high school, so the school could handpick schedules for those students who tend to struggle with getting to school. Once again, if a

student had teachers who were good at making positive relationships, he may be more likely to show up everyday.

Programs currently offered by schools to their students who fail to meet the TAKS Math standard also need to be evaluated. Again, evidence-based strategies to monitor and facilitate higher levels of math achievement need to be incorporated into the strategies currently used by schools. Many schools still use after school tutorials, so it would benefit a school to examine the characteristics that constitute a successful tutorial program (Baker, Rieg, Sue, & Clendaniel, 2006). Gamoran, Porter, Smithson, and White (1997) evaluated successful Math courses for low-achieving, low-income youth to determine what curriculum would serve individual students best. For this study, a deeper investigation into specific variables that were predictors of students not meeting TAKS Math standard would help schools justify where needs for curricular modifications and Math initiatives are warranted.

Suggestions for Further Consideration and Research

Is it possible that exclusionary discipline causes absences? Discipline referrals? Or Math TAKS failures? Does a student become apathetic towards school and stop showing up after he feels excluded from classmates due to discipline? Are students who are disciplined by being excluded from the learning environment more likely to continue to get in trouble because they feel segregated? Is a student missing valuable Math lessons when in ISS with a paraprofessional rather than a certified teacher?

It is reasonable to assume the two strong variables, number of discipline referrals and absences, are not directly causal. Meaning, there are many students who receive discipline referrals and are never absent, and there are students who are absent and never

receive discipline referrals. However, is there something that leads to both discipline referrals and absences? A future qualitative study may answer the question. Interviewing students, parents, teachers, counselors, and assistant principals could give insight into the reason students are receiving multiple discipline referrals and absences. Another study with exclusionary discipline placements as the independent variables with possible explanation for the multiple referrals and absences as the dependent variables could find an answer.

Based upon the results of this study, several other recommendations can be made for future research. Whereas data in this study were obtained from a single school in a single district, a larger study in which data were obtained from multiple schools and districts is encouraged. If possible, a study, similar to the one conducted by Hilberth (2010) in which she analyzed PEIMS data for all middle school students regarding school discipline and academic achievement for Black students, should be conducted. In such a study, data on other ethnicities, gender, or economic status could be analyzed. Hilberth's (2010) investigation could be extended to students in high schools, as well as to students in elementary school. An examination of statewide data could permit the generation of results that state educators and policymakers could use in evaluating the effectiveness of current disciplinary practices.

Furthermore, more investigation could be conducted on specific topics as followed: (a) What times of year students are more likely to receive discipline referrals? be absent? A mixed-method research design could reveal both the time of year and the student and parent perspective on why they are absent or why they receive a discipline referral. The qualitative component could reveal if it was at the beginning, when possibly

a student did not feel like he fit in or later in the year when a hypotheses may be that the student felt he was too far behind. (b) A qualitative study where in-depth interviews with students and parents reveal what is the main cause for absence (e.g., transportation, illness, apathy, etc.) or discipline referrals (apathy, lack of confidence, teacher, etc.) could enlighten schools as far as what programs and incentives could aid the problem. (c) Another mixed-method study examining teachers that do and those that do not generate many discipline referrals. The research could investigate what dynamics are present in the classrooms, what characteristics the teachers possess, and what perceptions are evident amongst teachers and students. (d) A replication of this study to determine if the findings were consistent district, state, and even nation wide. These suggested studies would help educators realize the most effective practices and incentives for improving attendance rate and/or classroom management.

Another suggestion is to examine the same issue present in this dissertation but for students enrolled in special education, enrolled in gifted/talented, or being labeled at risk. Allman (2010) examined school discipline and academic achievement for Grade 10 students in special education in Texas through the use of PEIMS data. Her study could be extended to middle school and to elementary school students. Although Allman (2010) did not address the extent to which ethnic and/or gender differences were present in her investigation, these variables could easily be examined in a future study.

Clearly other variables of importance are present that contribute to students receiving exclusionary discipline placements because repeat offenders continue to receive exclusionary discipline placements (Allman & Slate, 2011; Costenbader & Markson, 1998). Future researchers are encouraged to research not only what other variables

contribute to receiving exclusionary discipline placements, but also what makes exclusionary discipline placements effective. Moreover, researchers should conduct studies to determine if exclusionary discipline placements are effective or whether schools should focus more on positive interventions and reinforcement to change student behavior successfully.

Conclusion

In this investigation, the focus was on determining the extent to which student demographic characteristics and school-related variables could be used to predict student receipt of disciplinary consequences. Results revealed that the number of discipline referrals was the strongest and most consistent predictor of days students spent in in-school suspension, out-of-school suspension, or in any disciplinary consequence. The second best predictor was the number of absences. Students who were absent more often were more likely to receive out-of school suspension or any disciplinary consequence. Lastly, Students who failed to meet the TAKS Math standard spent more days in in-school suspension. As such, educational leaders and educators are encouraged to use these results in improving their school's disciplinary consequences.

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APPENDIX A

STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Regression for RQ 1a

Results of the Final Model Depicted for Days Spent in In-School-Suspension

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
13	(Constant)	-.520	.401		-1.296	.196
	TAKS Reading Standard	1.030	.440	.058	2.343	.020
	TAKS Math Standard	-.497	.258	-.049	-1.927	.055
	Number of discipline referrals	.184	.005	.853	36.678	.000

Regression for RQ 1b

Results of the Final Model Depicted for Days Spent in Out-of-School-Suspension

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
14	(Constant)	-.121	.079		-1.536	.125
	Absences from School	.017	.007	.097	2.447	.015
	Number of discipline referrals	.053	.004	.534	13.520	.000

Regression for RQ 1c

Results of the Final Model Depicted for Days Spent in Any Disciplinary Consequence

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
14	(Constant)	-.582	.321		-1.816	.070
	Absences from School	.108	.029	.128	3.757	.000
	Number of discipline referrals	.302	.016	.648	18.961	.000

Regression for RQ 2

Results of the Final Model Depicted for Days Spent in In-School-Suspension for Only Students Who Had Received an ISS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
14	(Constant)	.159	.150		1.056	.295
	Number of discipline referrals	.197	.011	.916	17.553	.000

Regression for RQ 3

Results of the Final Model Depicted for Days Spent in Out-of-School Suspension for Only Students Who Had Received an OSS

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
11	(Constant)	.939	.543		1.730	.094
	Recoded Gender	-.753	.321	-.219	-2.344	.026
	Special Education Enrollment	-.988	.426	-.231	-2.319	.027
	Absences from School	.044	.018	.227	2.385	.024
	Number of discipline referrals	.107	.014	.780	7.632	.000

Regression for RQ 4

Results of the Final Model Depicted for Days Spent in Any Disciplinary Consequence for Only Students Who Had Received a Disciplinary Consequence

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
12	(Constant)	.870	1.145		.760	.448
	Special Education Enrollment	-2.832	1.528	-.117	-1.853	.066
	Absences from School	.250	.078	.224	3.215	.002
	Number of discipline referrals	.243	.033	.501	7.330	.000

APPENDIX B

UNIVERSITY OF HOUSTON RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

November 2, 2011

Ms. Lisa Meeks
c/o Dr. Patricia E. Holland
Curriculum and Instruction

Dear Ms. Lisa Meeks,

Based upon your request for exempt status, an administrative review of your research proposal entitled "Exclusionary Disciplinary Placements" was conducted on November 2, 2011.

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,

Dr. Scott B. Stevenson, Chair
Research Compliance

*Approvals for exempt protocols will be valid for 5 years beyond the approval date. Approval for this project will expire **October 1, 2016.** 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: 12102-EX

APPENDIX C

ISD RESEARCH CONSENT FORM

INDEPENDENT SCHOOL DISTRICT
Committee to Excellence

Deputy Superintendent

October 24, 2011

RE: Permission to Conduct Research Study in ☐ Independent School District

To Whom It May Concern:

Lisa Meeks, a Doctoral student at the University of Houston, is requesting permission from ☐ Independent School District to study the predictive nature, if any, of demographic variables on exclusionary discipline.

☐ Independent School District grants permission for Lisa Meeks to conduct this study as outlined in her proposal. The following procedures will be followed in using district archival data and completing this study i☐ Independent School District:

- The study will make no identifiable references to the specific school district, school, or students (data) involved in this research.

- Archival data will be accessed through *ViewIt*.

- The research study will be shared with ☐ Independent School District when completed.

Should you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me.

Respectfully,

Deputy Superintendent of Schools
ndependent School District