7-2021

Teacher Biases and Expectations: Impact on Self-Esteem, Self-Efficacy, Delinquent Behavior Among Black Grade School Students

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A Clinical Research Project submitted to the Faculty of the Florida School of Professional Psychology at National Louis University in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Psychology in Clinical Psychology.

The Doctorate Program in Clinical Psychology
Florida School of Professional Psychology
at National Louis University

CERTIFICATE OF APPROVAL

Clinical Research Project

This is to certify that the Clinical Research Project of

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has been approved by the CRP Committee on July 19, 202
as satisfactory for the CRP requirement for the Doctorate of Psychology degree
with a major in Clinical Psychology

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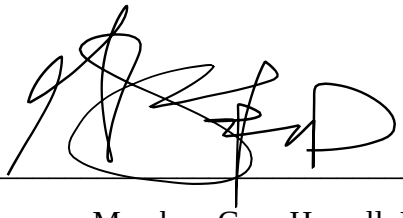

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Abstract

Black children and adolescents in today's society face so many challenges that come about from the hands of authority figures in their life, their environment, the education system, and society as a whole. Through a critical review of literature, the author sought to answer three research questions: (1) What are the indications that teachers may be more biased toward Black students? (2) How do perceived teacher biases and discrimination impact the self-esteem and self-efficacy of Black students? (3) How are teacher bias and the school-to-prison pipeline connected? The literature review exposed a need for a teacher training model, which was developed and presented as a response to revealed need.

DEDICATION

For my loving parents, Raymond and Anita Lloyd. For my supportive siblings, nieces, and nephews. For my entire Lloyd/Ball clan and legacy!

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Heavenly Father, thank you for providing me with vision and purpose. Thank you for being the ultimate strength I needed throughout this journey to break through every barrier that needed to be broken and every hurdle that I had to jump. This is only the beginning! I will continue to stand on Proverbs 3:5-6.

To my parents and siblings, thank you for all of your love and support on this journey. You continually prayed for me and pushed me even when I did not want to be pushed. Thank you for reminding me continually of my purpose and the favor that is over my life. Thank you, Mom and Dad, for instilling principles in me that will last a lifetime. You have always encouraged me to pursue anything that my heart and mind desired. Thank you for your unconditional love. I am full of gratitude and pleased to have made you proud!

A special thank you to my mentor, professor, dissertation chair, and now colleague, Dr. Patricia Dixon. You have helped groom me into the clinician that I am today. You continually inspire me. Your encouragement, support, and guidance throughout the years and this project have been insurmountable and never ceased. I am forever grateful!

I would also like to give a special thank you to my committee member, Dr. Gary Howell. Your support and feedback on this project and throughout my training have assisted me in reaching my goals and growth as a clinician.

To my dearest friends, extended family, fellowship groups, colleagues, and supervisors, I greatly appreciate you. Your words of encouragement, prayers, input, and support did not go unnoticed. You all have been a part of helping me grow personally, professionally, and spiritually. It takes a village, and I cannot imagine how I would have made it without your support along this journey.

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Background

Research supports the notion that early education impacts the overall psychological, emotional, and social well-being of all children. However, underlying racial barriers have prevented Black children and other children of color from receiving equitable education (DeHaney et al., 2021). Teachers and the education system serve as one of the primary gatekeepers of what children learn about in the world and about themselves. Therefore, there is a necessity to be aware of the unconscious biases that may be impacting children during this crucial developmental period. There are many different forms of discrimination that ethnic and racial minority students experience from educators. Some forms of discrimination include patronizing or hostile attitudes toward the students, expressed through microaggressions (American Psychological Association, 2012). Research data indicate that Black children are more likely to face teacher bias. Black children are more likely to be placed in special education classes, given a lower curriculum, and lower grades (Farkas, 2003; Ferguson, 2003; Takei & Shouse, 2008). Contributing factors to these disparities consist of socioeconomic status, access to resources, lack of school readiness, and possible perceived teacher biases (Farkas, 2003).

The impact of teacher bias could have significant long-term effects on the trajectory of Black children's education. One of the key issues within the education system is regarding the achievement gaps. For decades, there has been a discrepancy in the achievement gap between Black American students and their White American counterparts. In the case of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), it was found that the achievement gap was likely due to the segregation of racial groups. Prior to the ruling of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), Black students were segregated from attending "White only" schools and did not receive quality resources or the

inability to attend school, which prevented them from receiving standard education. As *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) upheld the stance of "separate but equal" for the education system, it was proven to be false, and the majority of Black students were receiving an unequal education compared to their White counterparts. Following desegregation, dropout rates decreased (Guryan, 2004). However, the discrepancies in the achievement gap did not.

As early as four years of age, disparities in achievement between Black and White children are recognized. According to Aud et al. (2010), between 18.8% and 28.3% of Black, Latino, and American Indian children are proficient in letter recognition, while White and Asian children are between 36.8% and 49.4% in letter recognition proficiency. There is a higher disparity between groups regarding proficiency in number and shape recognition at about 30%, with Black, Latino, and Indian American children falling behind. Further research has found that three of four Black American children will be behind the achievement level at the start of kindergarten compared to their White American counterparts (Farkas, 2003).

Disparities in achievement continue into grade school and widen into higher grade levels, including higher education. At the start of kindergarten, about three-fourths of Black children fall behind, likely due to social class differences and school readiness (Farkas, 2003; Ferguson, 2003; Washington, 2001). Disparities are demonstrated among mathematic and reading proficiency levels. About 29% to 36% of fourth grade Black, Latino, and Indian American children fall below basic mathematic proficiency level, and 50 to 54% fall below the basic reading proficiency levels, demonstrating two to three times greater deficiency in comparison to their White and Asian counterparts (Aud et al., 2010). Regarding advanced placement tests in high school, only 26% of Black students obtained scores that were considered successful, while 62% to 64% of White students' scores were considered successful (Aud et al., 2010). Furthermore, the

vocabulary of Black high school students at the time of graduation is four years behind White students (Farkas, 2003).

The biases that the teachers possess and demonstrate toward their Black students likely negatively impact the child's self-esteem. As a result, there is an increased likelihood that the Blacks student's academic self-efficacy is negatively impacted, further leading to a lack of belongingness to the school environment. School belonging has been positively correlated with academic self-efficacy, specifically related to when students are invited to participate in school programing (i.e., academic or extracurricular). Self-esteem is the confidence that an individual may possess in their own abilities and worth. Self-efficacy is defined as an individual's belief in their ability to perform and execute tasks effectively (Bandura, 1997; Pajares, 2002; Travis et al., 2020; Usher & Pajares, 2008; Uwah et al., 2008). Black students' self-esteem is influenced by general stressors affecting all students, although their self-esteem is also negatively affected by additional stressors, including experiences with racism and discrimination, educational hegemony, insensitive comments, and questioning their belonging at school (Goodman & West-Olatunji, 2010; Smedley et al., 1993).

Depending on how discrimination is perceived by the student, their self-esteem and racial identity may become impacted. Students who identify with a lower level of their own racial identity may not feel as though they are being discriminated against. Dotter et al. (2009) found that discrimination from teachers and peers impacted students by creating low school self-esteem and school bonding. When Black students are invited to get involved with school activities and programming, they are more likely to want to engage and be motivated to achieve. Their self-efficacy is likely to play a greater role in their academic achievement than self-esteem (Uwah et al., 2008). The reality is, Black students are less likely to be called on in class and more likely to

be viewed as immature, having a decreased ability to pay attention, and less likely to put forth the effort. Factors such as these lead to the likelihood of teachers requesting Black students to be assessed for a learning disability or a behavioral concern.

Research further indicates that children with a lower socioeconomic status (SES) are more likely to face discrimination (Farkas, 2003). Therefore, Black children with a lower SES are at double jeopardy for encountering biases that contribute to negative outcomes. SES is highly influential in youth development. Black individuals are three times more likely to be in poverty than their White counterparts. Within their impoverished neighborhoods, there is a lack of resources, such as books, tutors, and academic activities. Achievement gaps tend to increase with lower-income students during the summer due to lack of support, lack of resources, and environmental factors (Alexander et al., 2007; Allington & McGill-Franzen, 2008; Smith, 2011). These individuals are also at greater risk for learning disabilities with difficulties in reading (Farkas, 2003).

School zoning has also been a major contributing factor toward the discrepancies in the achievement gap. Attending school in one's own neighborhood leads to the separation of students by race and SES. Students who attend schools within low-income communities are more likely to show lower achievement rates and be in lower track courses when they are in higher grades. The students are not prepared for college but rather trained to "get through" (Farkas, 2003). The focus for children in lower SES becomes their daily functioning needs rather than their educational needs. Therefore, they are more likely to have lower scores on standardized tests and perform poorly within the classroom.

School quality is further reviewed throughout grade school. According to Tucker et al. (2003), one's negative perception of the school environment likely contributes to the individual's

lack of school engagement. Research indicates that African American children are more likely to describe outside influences such as the presence of gangs in their school as distractions to their learning. Further stress resistance is related to positive classroom experiences (Brody et al., 2002). Research has shown that emotional investment promotes attitudes and behavior consistent with academic achievement (Nguyen et al., 2016; Overstreet et al., 2005). As a barrier, their perception of the limitations that they may face prevents success. When children feel more warmth and support from their teacher and parents, they are more likely to engage within the classroom. The more the child engages, the greater the likelihood of a better classroom performance (Nguyen et al., 2016; Overstreet et al., 2005).

The warmth, or the lack thereof, that a teacher provides is likely impacted by their implicit and explicit biases. Teacher biases are demonstrated by how teachers treat students with equivalent academic abilities differently based on their racial or ethnic identities (McKown & Weinstein, 2002). Farkas (2003) found that some teacher biases in reference to their Black students were that the students were viewed as immature, that they had a lower ability to concentrate, that less effort was put forth, and that teachers believed that many of the students were of lower income. Microaggressions and stereotypes are likely contributing factors to the biases that teachers may demonstrate.

Teacher biases are also demonstrated through their use of discipline and the discrepancies found between Black students and their White counterparts. Black students are punished more harshly and more frequently than their White counterparts for the same offense. According to the NAEP (2015), 50% of Black boys are suspended compared to 20% of White boys. The rates decrease for girls; however, there is a higher prevalence rate for Black girls (about 33%) than White girls (about 10%). Black students, specifically with emotional disturbances, are often

viewed by their teachers and administrators as aggressive, disruptive, having poor attitudes, and poor academic performance (Cullinan & Kauffman, 2005). The increase of disciplinary actions further contributes to dropout rates, graduation rates, and higher education attainment.

Arguably, the discrimination and disparities that Black individuals face within the school system further perpetuate potential negative experiences outside of the classroom. Recent statistics show that one in three Black males will be incarcerated in their lifetime. Furthermore, Black individuals, who only represent 12% of the nation's population, make up over 36% of the 1.5 million people in prison (Barnes et al., 2015). The United States, currently with the highest incarceration rate globally, has no plans to slow the rate at which individuals are being incarcerated. Some leading causes of these disparities are due to racial profiling, arrests made under "reasonable" cause, and our current social and political climate. As children witness these racial inequalities in the "real world" and potentially face biases and discrimination within the classroom, their views of themselves and their abilities are likely negatively skewed.

Statement of Problem

Although racial discord and division have long since played a role in our society, recent focus has been on police brutality, causing many to overlook how systemic racism continues to impact the classroom. All people hold biases. Unfortunately, the biases that teachers exhibit in the classroom can have negative long-term impacts on their students, especially their Black students. It is likely that biases not only contribute to the achievement gap but impact Black students' self-esteem, self-efficacy, and disparities within disciplinary practices, which contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline. Research recognizes these issues but lacks solutions for teachers and the reduction of biases toward their Black students.

Statement of Purpose

This literature review sought to examine teachers' biases, specifically toward their Black students, and how those biases impact student self-esteem, self-efficacy, and overall academic performance. Furthermore, this literature review examines the connection between how teacher biases contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline for Black students. Solutions to the aforementioned problems are provided through interventions, clinical implications, and suggestions for future research.

Significance of the Study

Black children and adolescents today face so many challenges from the hands of authority figures in their lives, their environment, the education system, and society. As many youths face biases and discrimination in society, unfortunately, they may be subjected to similar experiences within the education system. Like the majority of institutional structures within the United States, the educational system is embedded with a history of systemic racism. Within the education system, there has been segregation, discrimination, issues among school zoning, teacher biases, and racial disparities in achievement and discipline. There is a lack of research that specifically examines teacher biases toward Black students and the impact of those biases. Research acknowledges the existence of the school-to-prison pipeline and disparities in discipline within the school. However, there are limited solutions afforded for the Black community as they face discrimination and disparities in achievement and punishment within the education system. The contributions intended from this review are to assist educators, parents, clinicians, resource officers, and the Black community in understanding how to identify implicit and explicit biases and better serve the needs of Black youths. Ultimately, the hope is that this understanding will assist in positively changing the academic trajectory of Black individuals.

Research Questions

1. What are the indications that teachers may be more biased toward Black students?
2. How do perceived teacher biases and discrimination impact the self-esteem and self-efficacy of Black students?
3. How are teacher bias and the school-to-prison pipeline connected?

Research Procedures

The literature was searched through the PsychInfo/EBSCOhost search engine services provided by National Louis University. Variables searched consists of *teacher bias/biases, Black/African American, Black/African American students, microaggressions, expectations, performance, achievement, achievement gap, low socioeconomic status, referral bias, school zoning, segregation, discrimination in schools, racial disparities in schools, self-efficacy, self-esteem; motivation, racial identity, self-efficacy theory, child and adolescent, grade school, college, racial socialization, racial centrality, racial identity model, stereotypes, critical race theory, school-to-prison pipeline, discipline, teacher-student relationship, dropout, suspension and expulsion, policies, zero-tolerance, teacher training, reform,* and *school resource officers*. The research questions were evaluated by identifying areas in the literature that discuss relative information that may provide evidence in support or against what is being sought.

CHAPTER II: INDICATORS FOR MORE TEACHER BIAS TOWARD BLACK STUDENTS

During the school year, children and adolescents spend the majority of their day and week within the classroom. They are being influenced by the school environment, peers, and, most importantly, their teachers. Educators play a fundamental role in the development of students academically. Teacher impact, positive or negative, can be long-lasting on their student's academic development, view of themselves, and view of their abilities. Furthermore, biases and expectations, conscious or unconscious, implicit or explicit, exist potentially impacting the teacher-student relationship and student academic performance.

Teacher Biases

When investigating what kinds of biases exist, one must first observe potential biases through the lens of microaggressions. Microaggressions are "brief and commonplace daily verbal or behavioral indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory, or negative racial slights and insults that potentially have a harmful or unpleasant psychological impact on the target person or group" (Sue & Sue, 2016, p. 198). Microaggressions can occur through human encounters and environmental factors. In the classroom, microaggressions can occur through assigned seating, posters/pictures hung throughout the school and in classrooms, educational material used, and school dress code policies. Microaggressions can further appear through teacher-student relationships, such as feedback provided by the teacher and overlooking or ignoring. In one study, Black students identified microaggression such as continual mispronunciation of names, using inappropriate humor, and questioning credibility or worth of students in particular courses suggesting, based on stereotype, they should not be enrolled in a particular course (Berk, 2017). As a system, these

aforementioned microaggressions tend to marginalize and ignore the cultural aspects of their minority students (Ogunyemi et al., 2019).

Research has demonstrated that teachers exhibit both implicit and explicit biases toward their students. An implicit bias is "unconscious and involuntary attitudes and perceptions rather than overt and explicit bias" (Scott et al., 2018, p. 2). An explicit bias is a conscious attitude or belief about a person or a group. Due to the implicit occurrence of a microaggression and the perpetrator's view of themselves, it may be difficult for one to recognize themselves as an aggressor and may leave the recipient questioning whether the microaggression occurred (Ogunyemi et al., 2019). Among this study's college participants, Black students demonstrated greater emotional consequences due to microaggressions; however, they were able to resiliently succeed academically (Ogunyemi et al., 2019). Research finds that White teachers tend to exhibit implicit biases based on their own egalitarian self-image, preconceived notions, and the student's prior behavior (Harber et al., 2012). Another study finds that White teachers' implicit biases and anxiety toward teaching Black students were associated, which inhibited the teacher's ability to teach effectively (Jacoby-Senghor et al., 2016). The biases that teachers hold, implicitly and/or explicitly, are projected through their personal expectations of their students' abilities and achievement level, the feedback they provide, how they engage, and decision-making regarding referral.

Teacher Expectation Biases

Researchers find that teacher expectations are developed based on observable and unobservable data such as their student's previous performance, abilities, and behavior. Unconscious and conscious biases are likely to impact the teacher's perspectives of their students (Ferguson, 2003; Jussim, 1989), further developing self-fulfilling prophecies. A self-fulfilling

prophecy is created based on a bias in one's expectation that further manipulates an individual's performance (Ferguson, 2003). Although self-fulfilling prophecies have been found to occur in the classroom, they are less likely to cultivate a long-term impact (Jussim & Harber, 2005). Additional research examines the indirect effects of teacher expectation biases on students' performance, achievement, and motivation.

Perceptions and expectations of authority figures, especially those from a teacher, have impacted student academic performance (Chavous et al., 2008; Honora, 2003; Neblett et al., 2006). If a teacher expects a student to perform to standard, the student is more than likely to perform at the level that meets the teacher's expectations (de Boer et al., 2010; Jussim & Harber, 2005). However, extenuating factors should be considered when expectations are not met, including teacher biases, teaching style, and environment. Research suggests that the longitudinal impact and achievement may be minimal depending on the harshness and rigidity of the expectation (de Boer et al., 2010; Ferguson, 2003; Jussim, 1989). According to Ferguson (2003, "When teacher biases exist but do not affect actual scores or grades, it can be because teachers do not act on their biases or because student performance does not respond to the biased actions that teachers take" (p. 471).

Several factors may impact a teacher's expectations for their student. For example, if a student performed below standard the previous year, teachers expected their abilities and performance to be the same during the current school year (Ross & Jackson, 1991). Perceptions of one's abilities were also determined by the teacher's perception of the student's motivation (Jussim, 1989; Jussim & Eccles, 1992). According to Jussim (1989), teachers expected less from the students who they perceived lacked motivation. Regardless of motivation, studies have found that students who were perceived as high-performing earlier in the school year later

demonstrated an increase in the self-concept of their abilities by the end of the year (Ferguson, 2003; Jussim, 1989).

Biases and Expectations Impact on Black Students

In addition to biases that occur based on the perception of abilities, teachers have held racial biases and skewed expectations about their Black students over their White students. Expectation biases occur when there is a "difference between observed and predicted teacher expectations" (de Boer et al., 2010, p. 176). Research conducted by Gershenson and Papageorge (2018) demonstrated that teachers' expectations for their students correlated with attainment rates. As expectations for Black male students to succeed decreased, rates of attainment lowered as well. Teachers' disbeliefs in what their students could attain negatively influenced their students (Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018).

Additional research supports the notion that students conform to their teachers' beliefs (Jacoby-Senghor et al., 2016). Implicit biases held by White teachers were found to impact Black students' performance by one letter grade compared to their White peers. Results could potentially be exacerbated when learning content becomes more difficult and the teacher provides poor instruction. It is suggested that poor performance could further lead to a lack of sense of belonging and identity threats, contributing to a decrease in academic performance (Jacoby-Senghor et al., 2016). Inside and outside of the learning environment, students need to feel supported. Support, or the lack thereof, is communicated verbally or nonverbally through teacher expectations and encouraging messages (Honora, 2003). Teachers typically appear "warmer and more supportive" to students for whom they hold high expectations. Therefore, they are more likely to exude encouraging messages toward them, positively influencing their academic performance (Jussim & Harber, 2005).

Expectations were found to differ by the racial background of the teacher and the student. As White teachers lowered their expectations for Black students, attainment rates among Black students were also lowered. Minorities perceived racial biases as unrealistically high expectations and received lower grades than they believed they deserved (Fisher et al., 2000). Further data demonstrated that when a White teacher believed that the Black student would not complete a four-year degree, it led to a decrease in the likelihood that the student would actually complete their degree; graduation rates indicated 49% for White students and 29% for Black students (Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018). Black teachers were more optimistic about Black students and did not demonstrate higher or lower expectations for their White students. Completion rates for Black and White students increased when teacher expectations increased (Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018; Harvey et al., 2016). Teacher biases and stereotypes of their students' abilities were identified as racially driven, unconsciously or consciously, and impacted their level of expectation for the Black students compared to the White students (Takei & Shouse, 2008). Black students further perceived that the expectations of their teachers were racially driven, with some students holding the belief that teachers held lower expectations toward them and their ability to do high-quality work compared to their White counterparts (Pringle et al., 2010).

Another study found that both Black and White teachers rated their Black students' work habits and abilities lower than their White students (Scott et al., 2018). For students in a school with lower SES, White teachers' expectations of their Black students' abilities were lower than Black teacher ratings (Ferguson, 2003; Takei & Shouse, 2008). Teachers were likely to consider effort and performance when grading (Harvey et al., 2016). Within schools where there was lower SES, teacher quality appeared to decrease. Heck (2007) measured teacher quality through

teacher certification, passing content knowledge tests, and meeting state performance standards. Teachers who meet all necessary qualifications are more likely to teach at advanced schools and with advanced students (Heck, 2007). When there is access to a higher level of quality teachers, there is a likelihood that the achievement gap decreases. Although teacher quality is argued to have a greater influence than teacher race (Scott et al., 2018), it is important to recognize the racial differences between teacher and student in the classroom as we look further into biases and disparities.

Overall, there are disparities within the racial representation in American classrooms. While Black students make up about 15% of the educational population, only 4% of the teachers identify as non-Hispanic Black (National Assessment of Education Progress, 2015). Misrepresentation and misunderstanding of social and cultural differences among teachers and students of diverse races likely lead to an increase in implicit or explicit bias. Cultural mismatches (i.e., European culture with African American culture) in the classroom often occur as more schools are filled with White educators than Black educators (Vallas, 2009). The researcher further demonstrates the biases that occur among different-race matching classrooms.

Tenenbaum and Ruck (2007) found that teachers were less likely to have positive expectations or provide positive and neutral speech toward their Black and minority students compared to their White students. However, teachers did not use more negative speech with Black students, but the lack of positive feedback created the possibility of negative repercussions in the students learning process. Teachers further demonstrated higher expectations for their Asian American students than any other racial group. Ultimately, results suggest that teachers favored their White students compared to their Black students (Burt et al., 2009; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007). According to Burt et al. (2009), students with Black teachers felt more embraced

and lacked embarrassment as the teachers were more likely to treat them how they were treated at home. The lack of praise and positivity toward Black students can further lead to a misperception of their own abilities and skills equally to exaggerated and lax feedback. Although Scott et al. (2018) suggested that teacher quality may have a greater influence on closing the achievement gap over teacher race, Burt et al. (2009), Harber et al. (2012), and Tenenbaum and Ruck (2007) presented otherwise as disparities within teacher feedback and expectations were found.

According to Harber et al. (2012), teachers exhibited positive feedback bias in their subjective grading of the perceived Black student's written work than with the perceived White student's written work. In other words, teachers were more likely to "go easy" on Black students and attempt to take the egalitarian approach out of fear of being perceived as racially biased (Harber et al., 2012). Positive feedback bias is possibly misleading to the abilities of the student. Furthermore, it increases the likelihood of damaged trust to any true praise that is provided. Positive feedback bias can lead students to ponder if they are being praised based on their actual ability or gaining sympathy based on their race. When the teachers felt minimal support from other faculty and staff, elevated stress, and a decreased egalitarian self-view, they unconsciously provided positive feedback to the anonymous Black student's work even though they perceived the work to be that of a White student (Harber et al., 2012). The teachers' views of themselves led them to grade less critically on the Black student's essays, demonstrating how their own insecurities impacted their ability to effectively criticize those different from them, hindering their Black students' academic enhancement.

Another factor that contributes to teacher biases is found within the gender differences of students. Ross and Jackson (1991) found that teachers tended to rate their Black female students

more favorably than their Black male students. Teachers preferred female students over male students to be in their classroom and tended to predict success for their female students. Teachers held more negative beliefs toward their Black male students. Black males were described as "non-submissive" (i.e., autonomous and independent) and received poor expectation ratings. Nevertheless, these biases were not prevalent when comparing "submissive" boys with "submissive" girls. It can be assumed that degrees of submissiveness would impact the perception of both sexes. However, evidence supports the contrary, suggesting that the degree of submissiveness did not impact how teachers rated the female students (Ross & Jackson, 1991). The negative expectations toward their male students likely led to further non-submissiveness. Therefore, one can question whether the students are non-submissive because they are expected to be (self-fulfilling prophecy) (Ferguson, 2003; Jussim, 1989; Jussim & Harber, 2005), or whether their non-submissive behaviors further lead the teachers to lower their expectations of the students' attainability.

Referral Biases

A wide variety of research has shown disproportionality in rates among Black and minority students referred for special education services compared to their White counterparts. According to Vallas (2009), "While Black students make up just under 15% of the K-12 population, they account for more than 20% of the special education population" (p. 184). Often, Black and minority students enter kindergarten with lower abilities and school readiness, which subjects them to being referred to special education. Referrals further negatively influence teacher expectations and create stigmas related to the child's abilities (Farkas, 2003).

Research studies have argued that many referrals are related to the biases that teachers hold toward their students and the process in which they assess their students for referral.

Referrals are based on teacher observation, which allows for the possibility of bias and discrimination. The law does not distinguish how teachers and administrators should process assessment referrals for special education services, which leaves teachers and administrators to decide for themselves without specific terms and meanings to do so (Moore, 2002), further contributing to overall inconsistencies (Vallas, 2009).

One study demonstrated how teachers' personal efficacy and belief in their own effectiveness contributed to their referral decision. According to Podell and Soodak (1993), teachers with low personal efficacy tended to refer children with mild learning problems and from a low socioeconomic household for special education services compared to if the child was from a higher socioeconomic household, demonstrating how poor students are more susceptible to referral bias. Researchers further found that regardless of the child's SES, teachers believed their teaching could not overcome the external factors. Therefore, they were more likely to refer students for special education services (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Although the aforementioned study did not differentiate the results between racial groups, research further suggests that Black students are more likely to have lower SES due to systematic oppression, further contributing to the disproportionality of the presence of Black students being referred and receiving special education services (Farkas et al., 2020; Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018; Vallas, 2009).

Another method of referring students to special education services is the use of standardized testing. The use of standardized testing creates a disadvantage for students in poorer schools as they are less prepared for the material within the standardized test. They are more likely to lack the resources. Therefore, the standardized test does not properly assess the student's ability, especially if it is not normed for their population. Proficiency in reading and mathematics is considered through standardized testing. Black students more often demonstrate

insufficiencies in reading and mathematics. Therefore, they are referred for special education services (Vallas, 2009; Washington, 2001).

Additionally, as there is an overrepresentation of minority students receiving special education services, there is an underrepresentation of minority students in gifted programs (Ford & King, 2014). Black students in gifted programs were found to make up "far less than 14% of the population in public schools" (Vallas, 2009, p. 185). After the standardized test scores were adjusted, Nicholson-Crotty et al. (2016) found that over half of the Black students compared to White students within their study were recommended for giftedness programs. However, when the teacher was Black, the chances of the Black student receiving a giftedness referral increased (Grissom et al., 2017; Nicholson-Crotty et al., 2016).

Some may assume that Black teachers are more favorable toward their Black students. However, research suggests otherwise. Moore (2002) argued that although Black teachers hold a collectivistic cultural knowledge that assists them in distinguishing behaviors and the students' needs and levels of achievement, they still hold biases. Regardless of race, teachers' and administrators' decision-making behind referrals for special education are subjective, therefore leaving room for bias. Despite cultural knowledge, Black teachers were more likely to refer students who did not conform to the ideal-student attributes (i.e., middle class, two-parent household, fairer skin, mature, and mild-mannered) (Moore, 2002). Although the teachers may have implemented cultural relevance to their students, biases were still prevalent. Nevertheless, the Black teachers in this study were found to be acting in good faith as they sought to ensure that their students would receive the best-suited services for their needs (Moore, 2002).

School Zoning and Biases Due to Socioeconomic Status

Seen significantly, as late as the mid-1900s, segregation, disadvantages, and disparities within the education system and elsewhere existed. Although *Brown vs. Board of Education, 1954,* and *Civil Rights Act of 1964* initiated and solidified legal desegregation, we continue to see racial inequalities and disparities today. Limited research exists in the Unites States related to school zoning and impacts on the education system. However, the residual effects of residential zoning through class segregation are apparent.

As housing policies shifted, neighborhoods began to shift, which created segregation based on class and income. Living in high-income households created opportunities to purchase more land and businesses, giving these individuals the ability to regulate the land and essentially segregate from low-income households (Rothwell & Massey, 2010; Shertzer et al., 2016). As a result, lower-income households became more susceptible to lower-quality schools and less funding. The districts were funded by those who resided within them.

Segregation based on class and income appears to be more prevalent in metropolitan areas. According to Rothwell (2012), across 100 metropolitan areas in their study, housing costs were 2.4 times greater when housed near schools that received high-scoring evaluations compared to schools with low-scoring ones. Therefore, if a low-income family wants to send their child to a school district with high scores, they may not be able to do so if they cannot afford to live within that district. School test score gaps demonstrate that students from low-income households, especially Black and Latino students, tend to attend schools that score within the 42nd percentile on state exams, while their White counterparts in high-income households attend schools that score within the 61st percentile on state exams (Rothwell, 2012). Residential segregation appears to provide an advantage for White children in high-income households

attending better-performing schools, especially when data demonstrate how poorly students within low SES neighborhoods perform in the areas of mathematics and reading on tests (Johnson, 2014).

Black parents appear to be more dissatisfied with neighborhood schools than White parents as they continue to face difficulties even when they move into suburban areas (Rhodes & Warkenstein, 2017). A complication is enrollment can be seen as early as upon entry into kindergarten. When deciding where to enroll their child, parents have used elite measures, such as enrolling in private schools and changing residences, or non-elite measures (i.e., attending assigned school or choosing a school in or out of the district). Lawrence and Mollborn (2017) expressed that parents with children who have high performance have chosen the elite measure strategy instead of the non-elite measure strategy, which holds more of a prevalence in poor achievement levels. Black parents were more likely to investigate information regarding the school and the residence of the school. However, they were more likely to choose public schools but schools outside of their residence (Lawrence & Mollborn, 2017). In addition, higher educated White parents were more likely than less-educated Whites to enroll their children in racially homogenous schools, as they associated lower status schools with the presence of Black and other minority students (Sikkink & Emerson, 2008).

Disparities among housing gaps and access to quality schooling then bleed into disparities within achievement gaps. Students within low-income neighborhoods and households have less access to schools with more resources, fewer quality educators and programs, and lumping students referred for special education services all together, leading to the inability to address their needs properly (Grissom et al., 2017; Vallas, 2009). SES has negatively impacted teacher biases and expectations toward their students, especially toward their Black students

(Diamond et al., 2004; Podell & Soodak, 1993; Washington, 2001), as Black students are two to four times more likely to be living in poverty (Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018; Washington, 2001). When exploring racial risk ratios and district achievement gaps among minority students and their White counterparts, researchers found differences among groups' receipts of special education services. Districts with risk ratios consistent with the overrepresentation of minorities receiving special education services also had a larger achievement gap between groups (Farkas et al., 2020). Teachers are less likely to expect their students, especially Black and other racial minority students, to succeed and perform to standard if the student comes from a low-income household (Ferguson, 2003; Takei & Shouse, 2008).

According to Washington (2001) and Scott et al. (2018), students from low-income households received less positive feedback, were neglected concerning classroom engagement, were provided with poor instruction, and received less interaction with the teacher. When teachers expressed higher expectations, regardless of the student's SES, their performance improved. Impoverished students tended to use a non-European dialect, which contributed to being viewed as less intelligent and less competent by their teachers (Washington, 2001). Students of low-income households were more likely to be referred for special education services (Podell & Soodak, 1993) and less likely referred to giftedness programs (Ford, 2011). Ford (2011, p. 33) reported only "25% of students in the top quartile academically from low-income households" upon enrollment into the first grade. Further, high-achieving Black students from low-income households are more likely to drop out of high school than their higher-income counterparts (Ford, 2011).

Summary

Literature has shown the prevalence of teacher biases and their existence toward Black students. Research further supports the notion that teacher biases negatively impact their referral process, as they are more likely to refer Black students for special education services and less likely to refer for giftedness programs (Ford, 2011; Podell & Soodak, 1993; Vallas, 2009; Washington, 2001). Overall, Black students' performance is likely to falter as a result of biases held against them. Students are more likely to perform to the standards and expectations that teachers hold toward them (Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018). The lack of support, engagement, and proper feedback impact student performance. Teachers' biases, conditional or unconditional, implicit or explicit, occur more frequently with students with low SES. Research further demonstrates how segregation continued as wealth gaps limited the opportunities for low-income households to receive the best educational services (Rothwell & Massey, 2010; Shertzer et al., 2016). Black people were more likely to be in low-income households and school districts. It can be presumed that such environmental factors inadvertently created disadvantages in the classroom as teachers were found to hold biases toward students of low SES (Scott et al., 2018; Washington, 2001). As research revealed biases among teachers of opposite culture and race than their students, biases also existed with teachers of the same race and culture. Black teachers appeared to be more favorable and perceived favorably by their Black students. White teachers tended to overlook the behavior of their White students and were more understanding of their difficulties (Burt et al., 2009; Harber et al., 2012; Tenenbaum & Ruck, 2007).

CHAPTER III: SELF-ESTEEM AND SELF-EFFICACY

Self-esteem and self-efficacy are two constructs that influence performance outcomes. When an individual's self-esteem and/or self-efficacy is low, it can be assumed that their performance outcomes are negatively impacted. Within academia, multiple factors may impact student self-esteem and self-efficacy. The impact of the self-esteem and self-efficacy of Black students' perceived teacher biases and discrimination is worthy of further exploration.

Self-esteem

An individual's view of themself can positively or negatively impact their self-esteem. Self-esteem is defined as the confidence an individual holds regarding their abilities and evaluation of their self-worth (Rosenberg & Simmons, 1972). When individuals lack the confidence to achieve a particular goal, they are more likely not to achieve it. Individuals' beliefs in their abilities can be influenced by others around them and their experiences (Rosenberg et al., 1995). The values, beliefs, and attitudes that one may hold about oneself influence their actions and decision-making across varied settings and situations.

Self-esteem and Academia

Students of all ages are likely to self-evaluate their performance based on the feedback or praise they receive or do not receive. When they succeed at a task, they are more likely to feel good about themselves and want to continue performing that task and/or improving in that task. In contrast, when feeling poor about performance, or given the perception that performance was poor, one's self-esteem is likely to decrease. Rosenberg et al. (1995) suggested that self-esteem can affect a student's academic performance, specifically if the student's academic self-esteem is manipulated by those around them. Depending on the value a student places on their academic

performance, reaching that set standard or not was found to be a contributing factor of decreased or elevated self-esteem (Rosenberg et al., 1995).

Although research suggests that performance can impact self-esteem, additional research suggests that self-esteem has little impact on performance (Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2004). According to D'Mello et al. (2018), the majority of the students within their study demonstrated high self-esteem. However, their academic performance was poor. Additional research suggests that students' self-esteem and emotional engagement did not lead students to actively engage within the classroom and on assignments (Oliver et al., 2019). Students' self-efficacy likely has a greater impact on students' academic performance than self-esteem.

Similar to research regarding global self-esteem, researchers did not find a correlation between self-esteem and academic performance among Black students (Rust et al., 2011; Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2004; van Laar, 2000). Nonetheless, academic self-esteem may factor into educational resiliency. According to Cunningham and Swanson (2010), in addition to parent monitoring, Black students with higher self-esteem were likely to demonstrate more academic resiliency. These students were better able to handle stressful events and held goals of attending college and other future-oriented ambitions. The academic setting was suggested to be a safe space for the students to focus on their academic abilities and distract them from their possible negative environments (Cunningham & Swanson, 2010).

Self-efficacy

According to Bandura (1997), self-efficacy is one's personal beliefs in their abilities, which function through their cognitive beliefs, motivation, and mood or affect. Cognitively, individuals with high self-efficacy are likely to have higher aspirations and set goals for themselves to achieve. An individual is more likely to be self-motivated when they believe in

their abilities to achieve and are able to persevere through setbacks. Furthermore, one's self-efficacy can regulate their mood and affect. When individuals have low self-efficacy, they are more likely to experience depressive symptoms, including hopelessness, stress, and anxiety (Bandura, 1997).

Rendering Bandura's (1977) self-efficacy theory, "efficacy expectation is the conviction that one can successfully execute the behavior required to produce the outcome" (p. 193). People tend to avoid situations where they believe they may not be able to cope effectively. Individuals are more likely to engage in activities that they self-identify as being something they can appropriately attain and those that are less intimidating. Perceived self-efficacy influences the expectation of potential success and how much effort they should put forth on a task, and the length of doing so. The greater one's self-efficacy is, the greater their efforts are likely to be (Bandura, 1977, 1997). As individuals effectively work through a task they believed they did not possess the ability to complete, their defensiveness regarding the task recedes; they are positively reinforced by their achievements, and their self-efficacy likely increases. Nevertheless, if they lack the actual capabilities, despite their expectation or self-efficacy, the individual will not be able to effectively produce the desired performance. Self-efficacy can be considered an accurate predictor of performance as individuals tend to judge their future performance and abilities based on their past performance and experiences (Bandura, 1977).

Self-efficacy and Academia

Extending from Bandura's self-efficacy theory, Pajares (2002) applied the self-efficacy theory within the academic construct. Academic self-efficacy influences academic attainment and mediates what they believe they can achieve (Pajares, 2002). According to Pajares (2002), students are more likely to engage in tasks they feel confident in completing. Levels of self-

efficacy assisted in determining how much effort and time they would put forth on a task. Lower self-efficacy was found to be a predictive factor associated with stress and anxiety as the student attempted to complete a task, while higher self-efficacy produced the necessary confidence to engage freely without apprehension (Pajares, 2002). Students tend to use past behavior and outcomes of their actions to develop beliefs about their capabilities when engaging in similar tasks and activities (Oliver et al., 2019; Pajares, 2002). The developed belief influences students' decision-making regarding what they should do with what they have previously learned. High self-efficacy has been found to influence academic persistence necessary when attempting to maintain academic success and achievement (Pajares, 2002).

According to Oliver et al. (2019), engagement and self-efficacy have the greatest impact on motivational factors that lead to achievement. Self-efficacy contributed to students' emotional engagement and academic achievement up to two years following their baseline experimentation. When students hold a positive perception regarding their abilities, they are more likely to be enthused and interested in doing assignments. Students with high levels of self-efficacy regarding their abilities to achieve demonstrated long-lasting effects, such as improvement in performance and motivation. Their achievement and positive performance further fueled their beliefs in themselves. The higher the student's self-efficacy was, the more likely they were motivated to achieve their goals academically, which further influenced their emotional engagement (Oliver et al., 2019).

In further review of self-efficacy and academia among Black students, studies show that students' belief in their ability to master a task and motivation to do so was a strong prediction of their final course grade (Harvey et al., 2016; Usher & Pajares, 2006). When a student's proficiency in a task or course differed negatively from the belief in their ability, they were more

likely to falter in future tasks and courses. For both girls and boys, final grades impacted self-efficacy (Harvey et al., 2016). A decrease in mastery experiences was likely to lead to a decrease in self-efficacy. Black students' belief in their abilities was shown to significantly increase with positive messages and invitations to participate (Usher & Pajares, 2006).

Self-efficacy continues to differ among Black students as they progress through grade levels. Self-efficacy tended to be more prevalent among high school students than middle school students, even though grades in high school tended to be lower (Long et al., 2007). Higher learning goals and self-efficacy were found to be predictive of subject interests. Therefore, when students' self-efficacy and learning goals are encouraged by their teachers and peers, the more likely they will become interested in specific tasks, further empowering personal achievement. For high school students, a positive correlation was found between interests and self-efficacy. However, higher self-efficacy was not an indicator of how strong their actual skillset and efforts were (Long et al., 2007).

Academic performance outcomes, such as grade point averages (GPA), further impacts Black students' self-efficacy. Students who earned a higher GPA were more likely to have higher self-efficacy. The transition from middle school to high school negatively impacted students' self-efficacy and GPA. Specifically, among poor Black students, researchers found a decrease in GPA during the transition from elementary to middle school. Support from teachers and parent involvement assists students in mitigating difficulties during the transition. However, this assistance was not an indicator of an increase in GPA (Gutman & Midgley, 2000).

When students face a stereotype threat regarding their abilities and skillset, they are likely negatively impacted. According to Wasserberg (2014), "Stereotype threat refers to a situation in which a member of a group fears that his or her performance will confirm an existing negative

performance stereotype" (p. 502). For instance, if a stereotyped perception that Black students underperform on standardized tests exists and students are aware of this stereotype, they likely fear that depending on the outcome of their performance, they will falter to the existing stereotype. Lowered self-efficacy was further related to the schools' focus being test-centered instead of student engagement in learning and when the students perceived a stereotype threat regarding their abilities on standardized testing. Anxiety related to their perception of standardized testing arises, and students begin to feel incapable of achieving what is expected of them. Students further perceive testing outcomes to hold precedence over their level of engagement within their overall learning (Wasserberg, 2014; Wasserberg & Rottman, 2016).

According to Wasserberg (2014), regardless of their personal values on achievement, the student participants demonstrated similar performance, anxiety, and self-efficacy levels while they were held subject to stereotype threat. The higher their value in achievement, the more likely they would be restricted by stereotype threat, further hindering their performance (Wasserberg, 2014). Students may value performing at a higher level, but the threat of performing poorly hindered their ability to perform at the level they valued. Nevertheless, when not subjected to stereotype effect, high personal achievement values contributed to lower anxiety, higher self-efficacy, and better performance (Wasserberg, 2014). Therefore, as an educator, it is imperative to recognize when their Black students may be subjected to stereotype threat and further consider how to remove the possibility of negative perceptions.

Teacher Expectation Biases

Impact on Self-Esteem

According to Meškauskienė (2017) and Phan and Ngu (2018), self-esteem in students increased when they received praise and feedback from their teachers. Praise and feedback were

found to influence the student's self-esteem, strengthen the teacher-student relationship, enhance learning interest, and positively impact end-of-term grades (Phan & Ngu, 2018). Throughout childhood development, children are heavily influenced by those around them and who they are being taught by.

Research indicates that the teacher-student relationship deeply influences the student's self-esteem (Meškauskienė, 2017; Phan & Ngu, 2018). Students indicated a need and desire for attention from their teachers. A student with low self-esteem and distrust in the teacher may require additional support to help increase their efforts. When additional support and attention are given, it more than likely provides the student with a sense of security (Meškauskienė, 2017). Teacher empathy and warmth positively influence student affect, behavior, and cognition (Phan & Ngu, 2018).

According to Fox et al. (1983), individuals with low self-esteem rejected the teachers who provided kindness and understanding and accepted teachers who did not. Results suggest that this finding was further evidence of the student's low self-esteem by rejecting positive feedback. Positive feedback from the teacher likely does not reflect how the student feels about themselves and their confidence in academic abilities. It is suggested that students with high self-esteem accept the positive feedback and behaviors of their teachers, while students with low self-esteem reject it (Fox et al., 1983).

Meškauskienė (2017) suggested that students rely on their teacher's evaluations, which further contributes to the development of their self-confidence. Furthermore, students identified public humiliation and insults as two behaviors of their teachers that diminished their self-esteem. They felt disrespected by their teachers when they spewed negative and disrespectful comments toward them, especially in the presence of their peers. Students in this study

emphasized the necessity of teachers' need for poise and self-control. Students' self-esteem tended to diminish through teachers' mockery and irony when occurring both directly and indirectly. Comparisons to peers and their peers' achievement against their own by teachers were further found to negatively impact the student's self-esteem. Without overdoing it, it is necessary for teachers to provide their students with praise and positive feedback to assist in enhancing their self-confidence. Constant criticism can lead to the student feeling inferior and potentially diminish their self-esteem (Meškauskienė, 2017). Students who have minimal coping skills are more likely to feel the impact of criticism and may express their affect via frustration and disdain toward their teacher (Fox et al., 1983).

Students are more likely to respect teachers when they perceive reciprocal respect. The more tolerant the teacher is of the students learning process, thoughts, and opinions, the more respected the student feels, the further influencing their self-esteem and confidence. When there is mutual trust between the teacher and the student, the teacher may be more inclined to rely on the students for certain tasks, which provides the student with a greater sense of autonomy. Students want to feel respected and objectively evaluated without any biases (Meškauskienė, 2017; Phan & Ngu, 2018).

Prior success was determined to influence future success and self-esteem (Ferguson, 2003; Phan & Ngu, 2018), while failure likely leads to a sense of helplessness and diminished self-esteem. When teachers focus on enriching the learning experience of their students, it serves positively. An enriched learning experience is reflective through academic success and outcomes, creating an environment that fosters enjoyment in learning. Additionally, personal interest in a subject positively influenced the student's motivation and drive to achieve academically (Phan & Ngu, 2018).

When working with Black students, research suggests it is important for educators to focus on imploring a perceived sense of belonging (Uwah et al., 2008). Students further feel a sense of belonging when they engage in the classroom and are involved in extracurricular activities. Students who engaged in extracurricular activities, whether it be sports, clubs, or a mixture of the two, were more likely to have higher self-esteem than students who did not. Self-esteem growth was found to continue from mid-adolescence into young adulthood when students experienced a sense of belonging (Kort-Butler, 2012; Kort-Butler & Hagewen, 2011). Although Sirin and Rogers-Sirin (2004) found no correlation between self-esteem and performance, they suggested that Black students are more likely to have better academic performance when they are academically engaged and experience positive educational expectations.

When students are subjected to discrimination, biases, and lack of warmth, their confidence in their abilities may negatively shift (Dotter et al., 2009; Fisher et al., 2000; Phan & Ngu, 2018). However, how they view themselves can serve as a protective factor. According to Fisher et al. (2020), a healthy ethnic identity was found to positively affect the relationship between self-esteem and components of the school climate, such as school connectedness, school safety, and peer relationship. When Black students demonstrated a high rating of ethnic identity, their self-esteem ratings were elevated despite high or low ratings of school connectedness. When Black students receive equitable treatment in school, they are more likely to feel a sense of belonging, further increasing their self-esteem.

Self-esteem Among the College Population

Studies among college students suggest that Black students' confidence was associated with higher self-esteem and higher GPA (Jaret & Reitzes, 2009). Nevertheless, for Black college students and consistent with other findings, self-esteem was not correlated with academic

performance demonstrated through GPA (Awad, 2007). Students who felt estranged from their ethnic group were found to have lowered self-esteem (Jaret & Reitzes, 2009; Wong et al., 2003), demonstrating a need for school systems to have cultural representation among faculty, the school environment, and educational material. According to Jaret and Reitzes (2009), Black students were found to have higher self-esteem than White and Asian students, suggesting the potential of stronger perseverance through discrimination and teacher biases.

Impact on Self-efficacy

According to You et al. (2016), when students perceive their teacher's motivation positively, they are more likely to have increased self-efficacy and intrinsic motivation, further improving their reading, English, and mathematics performance. Atabey (2020) suggested that students are more likely to have greater expectations for their future when they have a sense of belonging to the school and their teachers. Further, students' higher future expectation positively influences their self-efficacy (Atabey, 2020).

Congruent to findings of self-esteem, for Black students, sense of belonging and self-efficacy were positively correlated (Walker & Green, 2009). Among the Black male participants, students who felt encouraged to participate had greater perceptions of themselves and increased self-efficacy (Uwah et al., 2008). Walker and Green (2009) suggested that students who reported a sense of belonging were more likely to use their developed cognitive understanding not only to focus on the development of their understanding but put forth effort and apply their understanding. It is important for teachers to consider how the classroom environment may encourage and discourage their students' sense of belonging. Implementing a curriculum that reflects the diverse culture and having posters and art within the classroom that fully represent all students can increase an individual's sense of belonging.

Although a sense of belonging is an important factor to consider, self-efficacy was not the sole motivational factor in reinforcing learning. Likely, higher self-efficacy is merely an addition to cognitive-motivational variables that are important in predicting achievement outcomes. Moreover, teacher support is likely to influence students' perception of belonging and self-efficacy (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Tyler & Boelter, 2008; Walker & Green, 2009). Positive relationships could be used as a tool to assist in changing their student's efforts. Black students are more likely to benefit from their teachers and have an increase in self-efficacy when positive relationships are established and the teacher is positively involved with their students. In reverse, increased self-efficacy does not necessarily equal stronger or more effective teacher support, parent involvement, or a sense of belonging toward one's motivation to be academically successful. This outcome is likely a result of social bias and inferior resources that further impair academic success (Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Tyler & Boelter, 2008).

Self-efficacy Among the College Population

For Black college student participants attending a historically Black college or university, academic interventions and communication were found to be more important than self-efficacy and social activity (Niranjan et al., 2015). Interventions and communication at this level of education require the students to initiate relationships with their teachers and advisors. Social activity alone was not found to motivate the students, but social support influenced academic success (Niranjan et al., 2015). In addition, Black college students were just as goal-oriented as their White counterparts, with both groups equally as likely to avoid challenges. However, Black college students were negatively impacted by stereotype threat, heightening levels of anxiety related to their performance abilities (Harper, 2010). Outcome expectations were found to be

more of a predictor of achievement than self-efficacy. However, regardless of race, higher self-efficacy likely led to increased achievement (Defreitas, 2012).

Discrimination

Experiencing discrimination is an additional aspect to be explored and found to lower the self-esteem and self-efficacy of Black students when encountered in school (Fisher et al., 2000). The experience of discrimination can lead students to think poorly of themselves. However, we must first explore how an individual racially identifies to gain an understanding regarding how they may perceive biases and discrimination.

Racial Identity

Students who may not fully identify with their presented race may not feel as though they are being discriminated against. In reflection of the psychological nigrescence model (the process of becoming Black), an individual in the pre-encounter stage demonstrates an anti-Black presentation with the perspective of being “American” and not “African American” (Cross, 1991; Sue & Sue, 2016, p. 327; Vandiver, 2001). Furthermore, studies have shown that individuals within the pre-encounter stage are more likely to appear unhappy and experience lower self-esteem (Sue & Sue, 2016, p. 372; Worrell et al., 2014). For Black individuals who identify within the pre-encounter stage, there is likely miseducation regarding culture and experience of negative images portrayed through society, media, and education system, which may further perpetuate a negative image of self (Sue & Sue, 2016, p. 373; Vandiver, 2001). Black individuals who identify within the immersion-emersion stage experience fewer internalizing symptoms of distress due to their emotions mainly being directed outward toward White Americans (Worrell et al., 2014). Greater psychological well-being and lower psychological distress has been found among the presentation of individuals who identify as

multiculturalist within the internalization stage (Worrell et al., 2014). Additionally, self-esteem is likely higher when a more stable and consistent racial identity is held (Elion et al., 2012).

Racial Identity and Impact on Self-esteem, Self-efficacy, and Perceptions of Success

When students are subjected to discrimination, biases, and lack of warmth, their confidence in their abilities may negatively shift (Dotter et al., 2009; Fisher et al., 2000; Phan & Ngu, 2018). However, how they view themselves can serve as a protective factor. Researchers found that Black students with a strong sense of racial and ethnic identity are more likely to combat real or perceived racial discrimination in the academic setting (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013; Thomas & Wagner, 2013). Such students were more likely to persevere academically, have higher motivational beliefs, self-efficacy, and self-acceptance. A strong ethnic identity was found to serve as a protective factor, therefore minimizing the potential effect on one's academic self-efficacy (Thomas & Wagner, 2013). According to Fisher et al. (2020), a healthy ethnic identity was found to positively affect the relationship between self-esteem and components of the school climate, such as school connectedness, school safety, and peer relationship. When Black students demonstrated a high rating of ethnic identity, their self-esteem ratings were elevated despite high or low ratings of school connectedness. When Black students receive equitable treatment in school, they are more likely to feel a sense of belonging, further increasing their self-esteem (Fisher et al., 2020).

Students who identified with their own cultural assets and background not only expressed a higher self-efficacy, private regard, and self-acceptance but were more likely to perceive their academic success and success thereafter as attainable (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). Students with a low perception of their racial identity and racial assets also had a higher perception of discrimination than those with a stronger sense of racial identity. Despite reporting higher

academic performance, researchers believed these individuals likely feel as though they have no control over their environment due to their negative educational experience; therefore, their heightened awareness may negatively impact their sense of self, further contributing to lower levels of self-efficacy and racial pride (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). Alliman-Brisset and Turner (2010) found that when there is increased perceived racism in one area of a Black youth's life, there is a likelihood to perceive racism in another area of their life and further deem that these two different areas of their lives are either directly or indirectly connected. Students are likely to approach situations based on past experiences.

Research has suggested that when Black students feel as though they are unable to succeed based on past experiences, their working efforts may feel ineffective (Dotter et al., 2009). When this occurs, students further begin to view school as less important, view their performance as less important to their future outcomes, and lower their beliefs regarding their academic competence (Dotter et al., 2009; Neblett et al., 2006). Black students are more likely to experience depression when exposed to racial discrimination within their educational setting. As a result, they are more likely to lose the ability to maintain their efforts in completing challenging work, lose curiosity, lose the desire to learn more, and disengage in the classroom (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013; Neblett et al., 2006). As educators and administrators recognize the importance of racial identity and self-esteem, they can further attempt to positively influence their students in these areas by incorporating culture into their teaching, engaging more with the students, and encouraging the students (Tyson, 2003).

Furthermore, research has suggested that an increase in racial pride positively impacts academic performance. According to Butler-Barnes et al. (2013), when their Black student participants reported a decrease in racial pride, self-efficacy, and self-acceptance, there was a

higher likelihood for their academic persistence to decrease and experience a heightened perception of racial discrimination. The opposite was found true when the Black students had a higher belief in racial pride (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). A positive sense of self was found to increase academic performance. A higher sense of self was likely to occur when students experienced additional support to help them cope with discrimination. Still, discrimination within the academic setting negatively impacts Black students. They are likely to feel that regardless of the amount of effort they put forth, they are less likely to be rewarded the same way or similar to their White counterparts (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013). However, one way to buffer the impact of discrimination is through racial socialization.

Racial socialization is the occurrence of older generations transmitting information to younger generations regarding the development of one's attitudes, behaviors, beliefs, and values related to their race, racial identity, and intragroup and intergroup interactions (Banerjee et al., 2017). When parents discuss with their children the existence of discrimination and systemic inequalities, children become more aware of the possible negative racial encounters they may have. The impact of racial socialization can be seen within the classroom among Black students. Neblett et al. (2006) discovered that the students who received racial socialization from their parents were more likely to succeed academically. Students who received more self-worth messages and racial socialization education were found to better persevere through academic challenges. In contrast, students who faced discrimination received negative messages (i.e., disregarding the importance of Black history) about Blacks from parents, and fewer self-affirming messages were less persistent through academic adversities (Neblett et al., 2006). Adverse effects have been found due to racial socialization, suggesting that students who received preparation for the bias may not have been effectively equipped to cope with negative

messages and discrimination. Therefore, academic performance still suffered (Banerjee et al., 2017).

Racial centrality refers to the personal significance related to belonging to one's racial group and the shared racial experiences among group members (Ellis et al., 2018). According to Ellis et al. (2018), racial centrality was found to be a strong predictor of academic self-efficacy. When considering racial centrality, individuals demonstrated a decline in academic self-efficacy when impacted by race-related factors, such as internalizing racial academic stereotypes. Racial centrality and expectations are significant factors for promoting academic self-efficacy. However, the internalization of racial academic stereotypes prohibits one's beliefs in their abilities to succeed and how they perceive the attainability of their academic success. Racial centrality may serve as a buffer between the internalization of racial academic stereotypes and academic self-efficacy by positively promoting one's belief in their abilities (Ellis et al., 2018).

Shin (2011) found that negative stereotypes damaged Black students' sense of self. However, the more connected they were to their culture, the more confidence they had in their academic abilities. Kinship and awareness of their communal responsibilities and resources likely brought forth an increase in confidence. When taught traditional values, Black students were more likely to better grasp the importance of education and their values than protect their self-efficacy as they were equipped to deal with negative messages toward them (Shin, 2011). Students reported an increase in their academic abilities when they felt safer within their communities and became more persistent and confident in their academic abilities. However, unlike previous studies, there was no correlation in this study found regarding ethnic identity and self-efficacy beliefs (Shin, 2011).

Summary

Research suggests that self-efficacy plays a greater role in achievement than self-esteem (Jonson-Reid et al., 2005; Uwah et al., 2008). Teachers who are biased and discriminatory toward their Black students negatively impact how they feel about their ability to perform. Of note, it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure that all students are involved in the learning process despite the students' previous efforts and performance. Continual encouragement and positive reinforcement appear to be the driving force for increased performance. Furthermore, students' aspirations were a predictive factor of their academic competence, indicating that teachers should assist their students in their personal areas of interest (Uwah et al., 2008). Students perceived their teachers to be more interested in receiving a paycheck than educating them, further expressing that they were less prepared for college (Payne et al., 2009). The detachment of the student-teacher relationship prevents students from achieving their highest potential. The more teachers invest in their students, the increased likelihood the child will have an increased self-efficacy and begin to invest in themselves, despite additional outside influences that they may encounter.

The literature further suggested that a healthy ethnic identity serves as a protective factor against biases and discrimination. Students with increased recognition of racial/ethnic identity are more likely to increase academic performance and self-efficacy (Butler-Barnes et al., 2013; Fisher et al., 2020). Despite experiencing discrimination, stereotypes, and racial biases, racial centrality served as a driving force of academic success (Ellis et al., 2018; Shin, 2011). Results demonstrate the importance of being aware and knowledgeable regarding one's racial identity, belongingness to a racial group, and racial pride. However, it is imperative for teachers to

recognize their biases based on racial and cultural differences, which influence their behavior toward their students, and how their biases can negatively impact their students' self-efficacy.

CHAPTER 4: DELINQUENT BEHAVIOR

Thus far, teacher biases have been identified, and the impact on students' self-esteem and self-efficacy has been presented. Throughout this chapter, the relationship between teacher biases and delinquent behavior is explored to discover whether teacher biases and discrimination toward Black students' behavior exist and the contributing factors toward the school-to-prison pipeline. The school-to-prison pipeline refers to funneling children from schools into the criminal justice system (Dancy, 2014). One consistent factor contributing to the funneling into the criminal justice system is school discipline (Fowler, 2011). Many schools have set in place a zero-tolerance policy. The necessity for the policy is undeniable. However, discrepancies within the enforcement of the policy can be seen through the discipline rates among Black students compared to their White counterparts.

Critical Race Theory

The critical race theory (CRT) in education is best explained as the concepts related to systemic and institutional racism within academia (Allen & White-Smith, 2014; Tate, 1997; Yang et al., 2018). According to Tate (1997), CRT attempts to bring to light the existence of racism within society through law, education, and other institutions and the negative impact on non-White individuals. CRT challenges the viewpoint of "color blindness" (Tate, 1997), which White people have used to mask the existence of White privilege. Addressing racism within systems would then require White individuals to recognize their privilege and see how systems are created for their advantage.

Yang et al. (2018) recognized CRT as (a) "Whiteness as a process of protecting the rights of the most dominant racial group at the expense of the marginalized group" (Yang et al., 2018, p. 319) and (b) colorblindness in the context of education that holds the belief that behavior is

not held to specific cultural contexts and that all students should be held to the same standards. The concept under these tenets can be observed in school when kids receive harsher punishments for being “disruptive” as a means of protection for others in the classroom. It just so happens that Black students are deemed as disruptive at higher rates than their White counterparts. Furthermore, in review of behavior, Black students’ behaviors are often subjectively perceived as disrespectful or defiant and less than the normative standard set by the majority (White) community (Dancy, 2014).

Participants presented with extrinsic and intrinsic factors, which they believed contributed to the disproportionality in discipline rates (Yang et al., 2018). As an extrinsic factor, participants recognized that racial disparities existed within the education system and acknowledged a need for change. Participants further recognized Black students in their schools as being disciplined at disproportionate rates for more subjective offenses than objective. This perception is consistent with research findings suggesting Black students are more likely to be disciplined for subjective violations than objective violations (Carter Andrews & Gutwein, 2020; Smolkowski et al., 2016). Additionally, participants believed that disproportionality in discipline had more to do with school practices and cultural differences between students and teachers than the individual’s misbehavior or developmental deficits. Some teachers held the perspective that they were responsible for supporting all students’ needs. Researchers suggest that if schools do not review their current exclusionary practices, they risk further continuity of contributing to the school-to-prison pipeline at disproportionate rates (Yang et al., 2018).

As for intrinsic factors, some participants reconciled punishment with the belief that some students are just “bad” and misbehaving students, “especially those of color” should be removed from the school setting, further contributing a facet of CRT, suggesting the need for

protection of White norms (Yang et al., 2018). They further believed that it was the responsibility of the student's home to care for each student's behavioral needs and challenges. The participants who held such beliefs were more likely to blame students for their behavior and did not factor in the dynamics of the system. They further lacked awareness of cultural differences and were more likely to hold the "colorblind" approach to ignore the problems of the system and continued to view the student's misbehavior as their own personal/individual problem (Yang et al., 2018).

It appears that as teachers place full responsibility for outcomes on the students, they ignore their own biases in how they discipline. Allen and White-Smith (2014) found that Black males are more likely to be perceived as deviant, aggressive, and disrespectful, leading to an increase in monitoring and experiencing disciplinary actions. White teachers are more likely to rely on their own stereotypes to judge the abilities and behaviors of their Black students. White educators serve as the gatekeepers of education. More White teachers are likely to be employed in schools within growing culturally diverse student populations (Allen & White-Smith, 2014). Therefore, it is imperative for teachers to be mindful of their own biases and practices that contribute to discipline, referrals, etc.

Teacher Biases Regarding Behavior

Students' behaviors inside and outside of the classroom have been found to be predictive factors of how they are perceived by their teachers. Often, perception of past behaviors influences presenting perceptions. Within a study conducted by Scott et al. (2018), students with previous negative behaviors were more likely to encounter negative feedback biases. Previous negative behavior led to an expectation that the negative behavior would continue. This negative bias was apparent regardless of the teacher's race. Black students would receive fewer and

poorer instructions, experienced failures academically, and encountered more exposure to negative interaction with the teachers. Negative biases received have likely perpetuated a continual negative cycle. Teachers expected the student to misbehave, therefore exhibiting negative attention to the student and creating a setting for the student to misbehave (Kunesh & Noltemeyer, 2019; Scott et al., 2018). Further data suggest that Black and White teachers would provide negative feedback to the Black students regardless of their behavior, which led to increased discipline, even when their behavior was similar to White students. Results were similar in high-poverty schools, demonstrating the prevalence of implicit biases as teachers tended to overgeneralize the probabilities of their students' behavior and potential failures (Scott et al., 2018).

Similar results were found specifically among Black female students (Zimmerman, 2018). When considering teacher perception of past behaviors, Black female students' behaviors were perceived as more problematic than White male students, while this was not found to be the case among non-Black female students. According to Zimmerman (2018), upon entry to kindergarten, all female students, except Black students, were expected to exhibit positive classroom behavior and have a better relationship with the teacher than the teacher would with the male students, specifically when accounting for past behaviors. Teachers were also found to have more conflictual relationships with their Black female students when they considered the students' past problematic behavior (Zimmerman, 2018). Beliefs can eventually contribute to how teachers decide to discipline students.

The relationships that form between individuals can be influential on the course of one's life. Outside of the home, one's first experience developing relationships with an authority figure is likely to occur upon entry into the school setting (daycare or kindergarten). The relationship

between teacher and student has impacted the student's mood and behaviors (Harme & Pianta, 2001; Wang et al., 2013). According to Wang et al. (2013), students who experienced a positive relationship with their teacher likely felt a sense of belonging to the school. The greater the sense of belonging, the less likely the child was to experience loneliness and depression. Findings further suggest that positive relationships with male students developed opportunities for them to rely on their teachers for assistance in helping them regulate their emotional problems; no effect was found in the female student and teacher relationship (Wang et al., 2013). Teachers have the power to serve as an agent of change toward their students' behavior. Pouring positivity into students, especially male students, can alter the potential problem behaviors.

A study consisting of majority White participants found that students described as disruptive and aggressive did not feel as close to their teachers. Students would more frequently focus on the interactions of discipline experienced than interactions involving praise for positive behaviors, academically and socially (Madill et al., 2014). Results pose the question, if White students who are perceived negatively based on their behavior feel distant from teachers, how would Black students, who may potentially face additional discriminatory factors, then feel?

According to Thomas et al. (2009), perceived discrimination plays an important role in how Black male students emotionally cope with difficulties and how they adjust to consequences in school. A significant difference was found in how students chose to act on their emotions when they were aware of racial discrimination related to their classroom behavior. Teachers were more likely to view their students with blatant anger as overactive compared to students whose anger responses were suppressed or well managed. Further, teachers held a more favorable impression for students' classroom behavior when they were able to suppress their anger. According to Thomas et al. (2009), "Rejection sensitivity, anger expression, and racial

socialization were all important determinants for teacher perceptions of behavioral activity for Black male student" (p. 184).

Racial socialization was found to positively impact teachers' perceptions of students' behavior in the classroom (Thomas et al., 2009). Students with more cultural heritage awareness and hypersensitivity of how they may be perceived were less likely to engage in risky behaviors that would afford them negative perceptions. Students with a lack of awareness regarding one's own cultural heritage were more at risk for being viewed as unruly and harmful toward others by their teachers (Thomas et al., 2009). It is safe to affirm that reflection of oneself and cultural relevancy served as protective factors against negative perceptions, leading to a need for racial socialization.

Biases in Service Referrals

Teacher biases can further be viewed through the disproportion in rates of Black students in emotional disturbance (ED) classes. The perception of students with ED was that they were disruptive, aggressive, conflictual, and had poor relationships with teachers and classmates, and poor academic performance regardless of race (Cullinan & Kauffman, 2005). However, when teachers do not recognize cultural differences, they are more likely to misconstrue acceptable cultural differences and negatively view students' behaviors as maladaptive. These biases toward Black students lead to increased referrals and assessments for ED classes, further contributing to the disproportion rates.

According to Cullinan and Kauffman (2005), teachers (White or Black) demonstrated biases in their views in distinguishing which students showed greater characteristics of depression and fear. Teachers were found to believe that their White students demonstrated an increase in depression and fear than their Black students. Black middle school students were

rated to have more problems related to inappropriate behavior and depression than any other grade level (Cullinan & Kauffman, 2005). Overcontrolled behaviors such as anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal are less likely to be viewed as a concern by teachers and often overlooked, which reduces the risk of being referred for treatment services and left untreated (Chang & Sue, 2003).

According to Honora (2003), Black male students perceived teacher feedback based on their behaviors instead of their academic performance. Both male students and lower-achieving female students perceived their teachers as unsupportive and inaccessible. Only high-achieving female students perceived their feedback based on academic performance and not their behavior (Honora, 2003). The disadvantage of being placed in an ED class is that it segregates the students from their own environment, leading to further stigmatized labels and limitations to additional services and resources. The disciplinary segregation excludes these students from school, limiting positive social interactions and the opportunity to develop positive social skills. Although Cullinan and Kauffman (2005) did not find a correlation for racial bias contributing to the disproportion in prevalence rated in ED classes, it was suggested that the Black teachers held stricter standards concerning classroom behavior and were assigned majority students of the same race.

Referral biases can further be attributed to teachers holding White students to different behavioral standards than Black students. According to Hosterman et al. (2008), White teachers did not demonstrate a rating bias toward Black students, as their ratings of possible symptoms of attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder was consistent with observable behaviors, but rather, they are biased in their rating of symptomology in their White students. These biases were likely present within their own culture as they may have reconciled with the off-task behaviors that are

common in their own culture. Although the teachers' ratings were consistent with observable data, they demonstrated a heightened awareness of inappropriate and appropriate behaviors for minority students (Hosterman et al., 2008). This heightened awareness leads to increased referrals for special education services, further contributing to the disproportionality in referral rates. Thus, it can be suggested that disproportionality in rates is due to the underrating of White students' off-task behaviors even when there are relative observable symptoms present but overlooked due to teacher biases on their behalf.

Fowler (2011) found an overrepresentation of minority and Black students referred for special education classes. Students in special education classes were at three times the risk for receiving an in-school suspension, six times more likely to receive out-of-school suspension, four times more likely to be referred to an alternative school, and three times more likely to be expelled. The students who were removed for classroom disruption and received in-school suspension fell further behind due to a lack of training within in-school suspension classrooms (Fowler, 2011).

Cultural Consideration and Same-Race Matching

There have been mixed results in a review of research regarding same-race matching. However, one primary contributing factor of potential biases is related to cultural differences. Downey and Pribesh (2004) found that Black students were more likely to receive poor classroom behavior ratings than their White counterparts when rated by different-race teachers but rated more favorably when rated by same-race teachers. Researchers have suggested that lack of recollection regarding cultural differences and the White teacher's teaching style and management style may have contributed to the differing results. When teachers lack differing cultural knowledge, they are less likely to consider other factors potentially contributing to the

behaviors of their students. The teachers' ratings of their students may be less about race and more about ignorance of culture. Racial considerations began as early as kindergarten and into adolescence. However, researchers found that the teacher's race did not appear to impact Black students upon entering kindergarten (Downey & Pribesh, 2004).

According to Wright et al. (2017), same-race matching did not relate to how teachers rated their students internalizing problem behaviors, self-control, approaches to learning, and social skills. In this study, it is believed that teachers did not consider cultural implications. Contrarily, when Black students were matched with the same race, researchers found a decrease in externalizing behaviors, further demonstrating how same-race matching may lead to extinguishing the behavioral disparities and discipline gap between White and Black students, potentially by the end of students' kindergarten year (Wright et al., 2017).

An increase of representation in the classroom of same-race teachers is likely a positive way to address negatively perceived externalizing behaviors. As cultural factors are considered, Black students may be less likely to be viewed as "acting out" when assessed by a same-race teacher. Wright et al. (2017) found that race matching played a significant role in students' behavior beginning as early as kindergarten, supporting the importance of same-race matching at the beginning of the school year for potential success and the need for diversity training for all teachers.

Lack of cultural considerations and preestablished viewpoints and expectations based on one's own biases can impact one's decision-making and perception of students of different backgrounds. In a study conducted by Neal et al. (2003), teachers perceived both Black and White students with a certain "stroll style of movement" as less academic achieving, more aggressive, and more likely to need special education services than Black and White students

with a “standard movement style.” It is further suggested that the White students with a “stroll style of movement” were perceived as “acting Black,” which this viewpoint further held a negative connotation. This negative perception of “acting Black” likely resulted in their lowered expectation for students with the “stroll style of movement” (Neal et al., 2003).

As discussed in prior chapters, biases can be implicit and unconscious or conscious/intentional and explicit. Teacher biases and stereotypes influence their perception of their Black students’ behavior. According to Kunesh and Noltemeyer (2019), teachers believed that Black male students who were previously identified as defiant were more likely to misbehave than their White counterparts, even when the students behaved in the same manner. Their stereotypes further influenced their decision-making regarding disciplinary actions and referrals. Researchers concluded that teachers’ decision-making was less likely based on explicit discrimination and prejudices than negative stereotypical beliefs. Nevertheless, teacher biases of misbehavior and lack of cultural considerations contribute to the disproportionality in discipline within the school system, even if treatment differences are unintentional (Kunesh & Noltemeyer, 2019).

School-to-Prison Pipeline

Following the Colorado Columbine High School shooting in 1999, schools began to develop zero-tolerance policies. Zero-tolerance policies were developed to create stricter disciplinary guidelines to deter students from committing criminal activities in school and keep the student body safe. Policies were expected to address serious drug and weapon offenses (Schiff, 2018). Over time, policies began to add minor offenses to their policy, further leading to an increase in disciplinary action. Unfortunately, Black and minority students were more likely to be held accountable for minor offenses than their White counterparts. Zero-tolerance policies

appeared to be causing more harm than good. Zero-tolerance policies increased student risk by decreasing students' connectivity to the school, leading to poor achievement, potential dropout, and entry into the school-to-prison pipeline (Schiff, 2018).

Moreover, Black students represent 16% of all student enrollment, but 27% of students referred to law enforcement, and 31% of students subjected to a school-related arrest. On the other hand, White students represent 51% of enrollment, 41% of students referred to law enforcement, and 39% of those arrested. Black children represent 18% of preschool enrollment, but 42% of those suspended once, and 48% of preschool children suspended more than once (Department of Education Office of Civil Rights, 2014; Schiff, 2018).

In addition to zero-tolerance policies, more schools began to utilize school resource officers (SROs) as another measure of monitoring in hopes of deterring students from engaging in criminal activity at school. Furthermore, SROs are used to intervene and control disruptive students through arrests and suspensions (Schiff, 2018). SROs can ticket students for disorderly conduct, disruption in class, disruption of transportation, and truancy, which then require them to face fines and punishment in court (Fowler, 2011). A presenting problem is that most states do not have policies regarding SROs, and their treatment and involvement with students and regulations regarding the training of SROs are lacking (Counts et al., 2018). Therefore, it can be presumed that the use of SROs is a different form of policing over students. Despite problems such as "an increased use of student removal from the school without providing services" (Piggot et al., 2018, p. 137), researchers have found benefits to the use of SROs and security guards in schools.

According to Piggot et al. (2018), having additional security on campus was found to positively impact the school environment as it reduced the overall amount of seriously violent

acts within the school. As a result, expulsions and suspensions appeared to reduce. Researchers did not find any evidence supporting the notion that the use of SROs increased the likelihood of removal from school or criminal justice processing. In contrast, Owens (2016) suggested an increase in arrests for minor offenses, and as a chain reaction, off-campus crime was managed better. Owens (2016) found that the use of SROs increased school safety and brought awareness regarding drug use, violence, and weapons violations within the school. Although the use of SROs reduces violent and illegal acts on school campuses, alternatively, they are assisting in the funneling of the school-to-prison pipeline. As Black males are disproportionately disciplined (Allen & White-Smith, 2014; Fowler, 2011; Morris & Perry, 2014; Pesta, 2018; Schiff, 2018; Skiba et al., 2002; Smolkowski et al., 2016; Young et al., 2018), they are at greater risk of having encounters with SROs and school security (Allen & White-Smith, 2014). Depending on their environment, students may perceive or experience similar encounters off school grounds.

Biases in Office Referrals and Discipline

Across all grade levels, K-12, Black students are more than twice as likely to be disciplined in school, and this discipline gap continues to increase as students progress through grade levels (Morris & Perry, 2014; Pesta, 2018; Young et al., 2018). When controlling factors such as SES and family structure, Black students are 2.58 times more likely to be suspended or expelled (Pesta, 2018; Skiba et al., 2002), creating an elevated risk for criminal involvement. The disproportionality in discipline does not appear to differentiate between Black male students and Black female students compared to their White counterparts. Black students are more likely to receive harsher punishment, such as suspension and expulsion for minor infractions (Fowler, 2011; Morris & Perry, 2014; Young et al., 2018).

The effects of negative labels in school through disciplinary actions strongly influence their trajectory and adulthood outcomes (Pesta, 2018; Skiba et al., 2002). Students who are suspended and expelled are more likely to drop out and/or engage in criminal offending (Fowler, 2011). Although dropout rates are similar to White counterparts, Black students demonstrated an increase in risk for criminal offending after dropping out of school. Suspension and expulsion deterred criminal behavior for White students. However, Black and Hispanic students were not deterred, further demonstrating the differences within discipline among race and ethnicities (Pesta, 2018).

Morris and Perry (2014, p. 84) suggested, “suspension is harmful to academic achievement” and found that students who were suspended from school during the school year were more likely to perform poorly on end-of-the-year tests. Researchers further identified long-lasting effects continuing into subsequent years despite the nonexistent suspension. The disproportionality in suspension rates hinders academic progression, contributing to the disproportionality in rates apparent in the achievement gap (Morris & Perry, 2014).

According to Smolkowski et al. (2016), Black students are more likely to be referred to the office as a disciplinary action than White students. In a review of the vulnerable points of the day, the first 90 minutes of the school day was found to be one of the most vulnerable decision points for teachers concerning the referral of students to the office. Black male students were more likely to be referred to the office during such vulnerable decision points. Furthermore, researchers found greater disproportionality in discipline among Black female students than White female students, twice as likely to be referred to the office as disciplined (Smolkowski et al., 2016).

Decisions for referral to the office have been found to be more subjective (e.g., defiance, disruptive, disrespectful) than objective (e.g., fighting, theft, truancy) (Carter Andrews & Gutwein, 2020; Smolkowski et al., 2016) and can differ between teachers and classroom settings for the same individual student (Gregory & Thompson, 2010). Subjective discipline creates more opportunities for teachers' decisions for referral to be consciously or unconsciously biased. Skiba et al. (2002) found that office referrals for White students appeared to be due to more objective events (e.g., vandalism, obscene language), while referrals for Black students appeared to be for subjective events (e.g., disrespect, excessive noise). Black male students were more likely referred to the office for minor infractions (e.g., throwing things) to major offenses (e.g., fighting/threats, sexual offenses). Upon facing administration, male students were more likely to be suspended than female students regardless of race. However, racial discrepancies were found to occur at the point of referral rather than via administrative decisions for school suspension. Biases appeared to be more prevalent at the point of referral than contact with administration (Skiba et al., 2002).

Among elementary school students, Black students were less likely to be suspended or expelled as punishment when enrolled in a Black teacher's classroom, regardless of previous disciplinary infractions (Lindsay & Hart, 2017). Data presented a decrease in disciplinary actions regardless of the gender of the teacher and student when there was same-race matching. Same-race matching was found to be beneficial regardless of SES. Little evidence suggests that White students benefit from having a White teacher (Lindsay & Hart, 2017). Employing Black teachers to educate Black students could potentially reduce the risk of suspension and expulsion, further assisting in reducing the discipline gap.

In lieu of progression through grade levels, prior grade performance was found to influence how teachers perceived their students (Gregory & Thompson, 2010). Black student participants with lower grades during their entry into high school were more likely to be perceived as defiant and referred to the office as a disciplinary action. Students who believed that they were mistreated by their teachers were more likely to be viewed by teachers as defiant and more likely referred to the office as a disciplinary action. However, students could receive the perception of uncooperative by one teacher but viewed more positively by the next (Gregory & Thompson, 2010), further contributing to the variation in biased perception and discipline.

Although Gregory and Mosely (2004) presented various theories and beliefs that teachers hold regarding why discipline problems occur, most teachers did not consider race and culture a factor in discipline problems. Many teachers theorized that their high school students, in general, acted out due to the developmental stage that they were in that consisted of challenging authority and developing their own independence. However, the conflict with this theory is that if it were true, the discipline gap would not exist.

Researchers highlighted the “color blindness” of teachers’ beliefs and the way the teachers discipline (Allen & White-Smith, 2014; Gregory & Mosely, 2004). Teachers theorized that their students discipline problems were correlated to low-income factors rather than race while further ignoring the underrepresentation of White and Asian students who were either suspended or expelled. Only 11% of the participating teachers considered race and culture a theory for discipline problems (Gregory & Mosely, 2004). Researchers suggested that by teachers “not seeing” the disparities in the discipline gap, they are able to avoid their own biases in the way that they practice. The research implicates the need for training that considers culture and race when conceptualizing discipline problems (Gregory & Mosely, 2004).

Student Perceptions of Biases

Carter Andrews and Gutwein (2020) conducted a focus group study with middle school students. Students expressed feeling "picked on" to describe situations where they believed they were disciplined unfairly or unjustly. Students reported that they felt picked on or observed peers being picked on based on race. Students perceived their teachers as "spotlighting students of color with unwarranted scolding" (Carter Andrews & Gutwein, 2020, p. 33). Students appeared to recognize the ambiguity in the way teachers enforced their expectations and later disciplined when expectations were not met. Carter Andrews and Gutwein (2020) further found that positive relationships between the teacher and student prevented teachers from relying on cultural stereotypes in their disciplinary decision-making. Students held a negative perception of teachers and felt the teachers did not hold substance behind their decision-making when unjustly punished or witnessing unfair punishment. Students reported that teachers used intimidation tactics by calling out students' misbehavior based on prior acts, and students were unfairly used as "examples." Tactics appeared to be used more frequently toward Black and Latinx students. Students felt called out and isolated from the school community when the intimidation tactic was used and when perceived negative behavior led to discipline (Carter Andrews & Gutwein, 2020).

Skinner and Belmont (1993) found that the more involved the teacher is with the student, the more likely the student was to positively perceive the teacher. When teachers are perceived by their students as less involved, the teachers are then further viewed as inconsistent and coercive. Perceptions of the teacher and the teacher's actual behaviors have been found to influence the child's engagement in the classroom. Students tend to be more effortful and emotionally engaged when teachers demonstrate clear expectations, strategic help, and are warm

and affectionate (Skinner & Belmont, 1993). If teachers expect their students' behavior to change, through this research, it can be suggested that they must first be the agent of change.

Impact of Expulsion and Suspension

Wolf and Kupchik (2017) found several negative consequences due to exclusionary school problems. Students who were suspended between ages 7-17 were at greater risk of criminal activity, criminal victimization, and incarceration well into adulthood. Black students who were suspended as adolescents were at greater risk for experiencing victimization, criminal activity, and incarceration as adults compared to their White counterparts (Fowler, 2011; Wolf & Kupchik, 2017). According to Fowler's (2011) sample, students with at least one disciplinary action were 23.4 times more likely to be involved with the Department of Juvenile Justice system; the percentage increased by 1.5% for every additional infraction. In addition, for each day a student was suspended, their risk for referral to the Department of Juvenile Justice increased by 1%, and they were more likely to drop out of high school (Fowler, 2011). Furthermore, Black students were more likely to experience drug use, depression, and anxiety as adults (Wolf & Kupchik, 2017).

In addition, students who were suspended once or multiple times in grade school were more likely to lose ties with same-grade peers (Jacobsen, 2020). Black students were suspended at disproportionate rates, placing them at greater risk of experiencing a loss of previous interpersonal relationships. Separation, because of suspension, was found to be a likely cause of friendship withdrawal and rejection. Friendship networks change, and suspended students tend to gravitate toward others who are more accepting due to similar antisocial behaviors. Researchers found that, following suspension, students are more likely to engage in substance use and other delinquent behavior (Jacobsen, 2020).

Summary

The literature review suggests that teacher biases exist and can be seen through the discrepancies in how they perceive the behavior of their students, referrals, and discipline. Across studies, it is evident that Black students are more likely to be perceived as exhibiting negative behaviors, referred for ED services or special education, and experience harsher punishments such as suspension and expulsion (Allen & White-Smith, 2014; Cullinan & Kauffman, 2005; Fowler, 2011; Morris & Perry, 2014; Pesta, 2018; Schiff, 2018; Skiba et al., 2002; Smolkowski et al., 2016; Young et al., 2018). Biases and discriminatory practices occur as early as preschool and continue throughout grade school (Gilliams & Shahar, 2006; Morris & Perry, 2014; Pesta, 2018; Young et al., 2018). Research suggests that Black students are more likely to be punished for subjective violations rather than objective violations (Carter Andrews & Gutwein, 2020; Dancy, 2014; Smolkowski et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2018). Teachers' perceptions are likely based on negative stereotypes and cultural differences that could be avoided with diversity training and developing positive relationships with their students of opposing race and cultural backgrounds.

The literature further demonstrates how teacher biases contribute to disparities in discipline and funnel Black students through the school-to-prison pipeline (Fowler, 2011). Black students who are suspended or expelled are at greater risk of experiencing multiple suspensions, dropping out, disconnecting from positive relationships with peers, and engaging in substance use and other negative behaviors (Fowler, 2011; Jacobsen, 2020; Wolf & Kupchik, 2017). In addition, these exponential factors place Black students at greater risk of being involved in the criminal justice system, further contributing to the disproportionate rates of Black individuals involved in the criminal justice system. Although many externalizing factors were not reviewed,

it is apparent that the funneling into the school-to-prison pipeline begins with the individual teacher and the implicit or explicit biases they hold.

CHAPTER V: PROPOSED MODEL

Discussion

The author conducted a review of the literature to explore how teacher bias toward Black students impacts their students' self-esteem, self-efficacy, and overall academic performance. The literature review was further conducted to reveal how teacher biases contribute to the school-to-prison pipeline. The author sought to answer three research questions: (1) What are the indications that teachers may be more biased toward Black students? (2) How do perceived teacher bias and discrimination impact the self-esteem and self-efficacy of Black students? (3) How are teacher bias and the school-to-prison pipeline connected? It is important to recognize that all people hold biases, implicit or explicit, and as a result, may exhibit microaggressions toward others due to ignorance. Unfortunately, children are subjected to biases upon entry into the education system that further negatively impact their academic performance. Research findings indicate that Black students are more likely to be subjected to teacher biases than their White counterparts; evidenced by teacher expectations, view of performance, referral practices, and teacher-student engagement (Chavous et al., 2008; Farkas, 2003; Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018; Honora, 2003; Neblett et al., 2006; Podell & Soodak, 1993; Ross & Jackson, 1991). Teachers' perceptions of Black students were skewed and found to be based on the student's past performance (Jacoby-Senghor et al., 2016; Ross & Jackson, 1991). Black students perceived teachers as unsupportive, unfair, and they did not feel a sense of belonging (Fisher et al., 2000; Honora, 2003). Black students reasoned that their experiences occurred due to their race/ethnicity (Pringle et al., 2010; Takei & Shouse, 2008). Such perceptions can be deemed as the turning point for students. At times, biases and microaggressions are overlooked. However, once the receiver becomes aware or perceives an action or statement as biased, it becomes most

impactful. A power dynamic and lack of understanding that influence the teacher-student relationship must be considered. Students may not recognize the biases, and when they do, the question arises about how they combat against the individual (adult teacher) who holds a position of power over them and the outcomes of their academic success.

When a student perceives that they are not being held to an appropriate standard and lacking engagement, support, and fair treatment, one must ask: "How could educators expect the student to perform at a satisfactory level?" Research suggests that students conform to the beliefs of their teachers (Jacoby-Senghor et al., 2016), which falls under the theory of self-fulfilling prophecy. Although a long-term impact is less likely to occur, in the short-term, students' performance is impacted negatively or positively based on teacher expectation (de Boer et al., 2010; Jussim & Harber, 2005). It is important for teachers to offer all their students, regardless of race/ethnicity, encouraging messages as they are found to positively influence academic performance (Jussim & Harber, 2005).

Furthermore, research indicates teachers are more likely to refer Black students for special education services and less likely to refer for gifted programs (Farkas et al., 2020; Gershenson & Papageorge, 2018; Hosterman et al., 2008; Moore, 2002; Podell & Soodak, 1993; Vallas, 2009). Referrals for special education services are based on several factors including, teacher observations. Teachers' decision-making is influenced by the biases that they may hold, and referrals can be subjective (Moore, 2002). Research suggests that when teachers believed they could no longer assist the student, based on external factors contributing to the student's performance, teachers were more likely to refer for special education services (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Students of lower SES experienced biases; teachers believed that external factors outweighed their ability to effectively educate and for students to perform to standard.

External factors such as low SES serve as an extra layer of disadvantage for Black students. According to Washington (2001) and Scott et al. (2018), students from low-income households were found to receive less positive feedback, neglected from classroom engagement, provided with poor instructions, and received less interaction with the teacher. Students of low SES are more likely to be in a poorer neighborhood and receive lower-quality teachers, programs, and resources; therefore, their academic performance, demonstrated through standardized testing, was found to be poorer (Diamond et al., 2004; Grissom et al., 2017; Podell & Soodak, 1993; Washington, 2001). Black students of low SES are less likely expected to succeed (Ferguson, 2003; Takei & Shouse, 2008), further demonstrating the biases that teachers hold.

Logistically, one may argue that students should not be expected to perform above the resources offered, which is potentially true. However, the biases and discrimination within the system have contributed to the disparities. School zoning has created barriers for students to receive proper educational resources for success. Low-income-status students continue to be held to the same academic testing standards as middle to high-income status students. Residential segregation has been shown to benefit White children in high-income neighborhoods more than Black children in low-income neighborhoods (Johnson, 2014). As we focus on the immediate teacher biases that existed and were presented through literature, we must also examine the system in its entirety. Nevertheless, teacher biases appear to hold the most influential direct impact on Black students.

There are significant consequences to teacher bias; teacher biases impact Black students' self-efficacy and self-esteem (Fisher et al., 2000). However, there is no correlation between self-esteem and academic performance (Sirin & Rogers-Sirin, 2004). Research suggests that

equitable treatment and a sense of belonging increase the student's self-esteem. There is a need to further expand research regarding the direct impact of teacher bias, expectation, and/or discrimination on Black students' self-esteem. Further research focused on teacher biases impacting students' self-efficacy is of necessity.

Additional research supports the notion that Black students' self-efficacy increases when they feel a sense of belonging, are motivated by their teachers, and feel support from their teachers (Atabey, 2020; Gutman & Midgley, 2000; Tyler & Boelter, 2008; Walker & Green, 2009; You et al., 2016). A sense of belonging occurred when teachers included their Black students in classroom activities and tasks, experienced appropriate cultural representations through coursework, classroom art, and material, and when they received encouragement and praise. Teachers are one of the primary gatekeepers to the information that our children and adolescents receive and how they receive it. Motivating and including all students through the education process improves their belief in their abilities, which improves academic performance and persistence. It is the role of the teacher to ensure that they are providing not only resources but experiences that motivate their students to learn. Biases and discrimination produced by teachers were found to negatively impact Black students' self-esteem and self-efficacy (Fisher et al., 2000; Shin, 2011).

Experiencing any form of discrimination from a teacher or the education system lowers both self-esteem and self-efficacy (Fisher et al., 2000). However, a healthy racial/ethnic identity serves as a protective factor against biases and discrimination. Despite experiencing discrimination, stereotypes, and racial biases, racial centrality served as a driving force of academic success (Ellis et al., 2018; Shin, 2011). Results demonstrate the importance of having a sense of belonging to one's racial group, having racial pride, and being aware and

knowledgeable regarding one's racial identity. Nevertheless, it is imperative for teachers to recognize their biases based on racial and cultural differences, which influence their behavior toward their students, and how their biases can negatively impact their students' self-efficacy.

The literature review revealed that teachers exhibit discriminatory biases that impact their perspectives of students' behaviors and disciplinary decision-making, which further contributes to the school-to-prison pipeline. Comparable to findings within research question 1, teachers were found to hold negative biases based on the student's past behaviors (Scott et al., 2018). Although this belief may assist teachers in navigating and controlling their classroom efficiently, they are likely to have a heightened awareness toward students who have exhibited negative behavior in the past, potentially skewing their decision-making. Furthermore, research finds that teachers tend to view the behavior of Black students, more frequently Black male students, as problematic compared to their White counterparts (Zimmerman, 2018). In addition, reasons for referral and discipline are based on subjective misbehavior (e.g., disrespect, talking back, disruptive) rather than objective misbehavior (e.g., vandalism, physical aggression, obscene language) (Carter Andrews & Gutwein, 2020; Dancy, 2014; Skiba et al., 2002; Smolkowski et al., 2016; Yang et al., 2018).

Decision-making for subjective violations leaves room for biases based on cultural differences (Gregory & Thompson, 2010; Skiba et al., 2002). When teachers lack differing cultural knowledge, they are less likely to consider other factors potentially contributing to the behaviors of their students (Downey & Pribesh, 2004). Without cultural knowledge, teachers can perceive student behaviors through a lens of stereotypes and preconceived notions regarding the student's behavior. Research has found that when same-race matching exists, Black students exhibited a decrease in perceived externalizing behaviors (Wright et al., 2017). This finding

indicates how perceptions of students can adjust by the acknowledgment of cultural behaviors. What may be deemed as “acting out” or “disruptive” in one culture may not be the same in another. Recognition of differences prevents the teacher from acting based on biases and protects the student from unnecessary disciplinary actions. As students become more self-expressive and inquisitive in the classroom, teachers have to adjust their teaching style and classroom management style.

Teacher biases influence decision-making in referral for ED classes and referral to the office, further creating a chain of events. Depending on the offense, referral to the office leads to suspension or expulsion, separating the student from peers, missing school, and reducing resources, which can further lead to potential school dropout, delinquent behavior, and substance use (Fowler, 2011; Jacobsen, 2020; Morris & Perry, 2014; Wolf & Kupchik, 2017; Young et al., 2018). Students who are suspended and/or expelled are at an elevated risk for criminal involvement. As Black students are 2.58 times more likely to be suspended or expelled (Pesta, 2018; Skiba et al., 2002), we can see not only the disproportionality in discipline but also contributing factors to the disproportionality of Black youths involved in the criminal justice system. Nevertheless, when Black students are enrolled in a Black teacher’s classroom, they are less likely to receive punishment (Lindsay & Hart, 2017). It can be argued that Black teachers may be more culturally aware or sensitive to their Black students’ behaviors and racial disparities in discipline, therefore making more conscious decisions in referral. Although relevant, this argument should not dismiss or excuse non-Black teachers’ unconscious biases that influence their decision-making. While many externalizing factors were not reviewed, it is apparent that the funneling into the school-to-prison pipeline begins with the individual teacher and the implicit or explicit biases that they hold.

Clinical Implications

The review of the literature presents a need for a training model to assist with the presented issues. Teacher biases toward Black students, implicit or explicit, conscious or unconscious, were found to impact the student-teacher relationship, skew their perspective of their students, and impact decision-making practices with referral for services and disciplinary actions. Cultural differences and lack of knowledge of diverse cultures have presented for training within the education system. Vallas (2009) suggested a need for cultural responsiveness in schools, which consists of “in-service” and “pre-service” training to all educators, review of teaching methods, and for pre-referral methods to be put in place prior to referring for special education services. In addition, Sealey-Ruiz (2011) indicated the necessity for teacher racial literacy to change teachers' perspectives and attitudes about their Black students.

Future Direction

The development of a training model could be utilized and required as a continuing education credit for educators. The training model can serve as a pre-service and in-service within the educators’ annual and quarterly educational training to assist teachers and administrators in recognizing their own biases and work toward diverse cultural intelligence. Training throughout the schoolyear would assist educators in evaluating and reflecting on their biases continually. Teachers should track the success of their students as the teachers become self-aware of biases and make necessary changes in how they interact, teach, and discipline their students. School guidance counselors or school psychologists could be utilized in the implementation and training of this model.

The training model can also be utilized through undergraduate courses. As budding educators, it would be most beneficial to reflect and gain insight on potential biases before

working with students. The goal is to reduce harm and create success. Recognition of biases through early interventions in undergraduate studies would assist in reducing biases as a licensed educator.

Researchers and clinicians should utilize findings from this literature review and developed training models to create longitudinal studies. Studies should find the long-term effects of the implementation of the training model. It is projected that, through the implementation of the developed training model, teachers will begin to recognize their biases and change how they interact with their students of color, further reducing discrepancies in achievement and discipline.

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Appendix A

Teacher Training Model

OBJECTIVE 1: Teachers will obtain insight toward individual and systemic biases

- Cultural training
    - Antibias in practices
    - Cultural responsiveness
    - Identifying disparities in referrals for services, discipline, and achievement

OBJECTIVE 2: Teachers learn a variety of ways to encourage ethnic/racial minority students.

- Student/Teacher relationship building
    - Student engagement
    - Effective feedback
    - Receiving feedback from students/parents
    - Instilling hope
- Reducing expectation bias
    - Assistance with the higher education process

OBJECTIVE 3: Teachers and administrators will develop new practices to reduce punishment

- Restorative Practices
    - Build trust
    - Talk out conflicts
    - Eliminate immediate removal for subjective infractions
    - Culturally responsive teaching and disciplinary policies